House and Household

A study of Families and Property in the Quarter of Santa Croce, Florence during the Fifteenth Century

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Abstract

This thesis investigates Florentine housing of the fifteenth century in the light of the residential requirements and architectural preferences of its inhabitants. The aim of the study is to establish and characterise the processes by which Florentines became identified with their domiciles and to see how such a relationship influenced both the physical structure of these buildings and the make-up of the families living within them. The evidence on which the work is based is drawn from private, fiscal and legal sources created by twelve 'clans' settled in the Quarter of Santa Croce.

The first half of the thesis consists of a thorough investigation of three aspects of Florentine domestic life based upon a comprehensive analysis of the evidence presented in the *Catasto*. In Chapter One each family within the twelve clans is examined to establish the nature of its household structure and the changes which it underwent in the years 1427 to 1480. The second chapter investigates the physical settlement of the families and the issue of whether clans were still living in cohesive enclaves in the fifteenth century. Following a brief topographical history of the *gonfalone* of Leon Nero, the locations of the houses occupied by three of the clan families resident in the area are carefully mapped out. Chapter Three examines the management of the property belonging to the twelve clans through an extensive analysis of their rental of urban property.

In the second half of the study the physical appearance of residential architecture in the quarter is considered in the light of the analysis undertaken in the first half. In Chapter Four, following an introduction concerning the building history of the area, the issues raised by the construction of two palaces on Piazza Santa Croce – the Galilei and the Cocchi-Donati – are used to demonstrate the priorities of residential building work in the mid-fifteenth century. The extent to which use of the 'renaissance' style in Florentine houses was determined by the emergence of a new family typology in the period is then discussed using the evidence established in Chapter One. Chapter Five is dedicated to Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli's patronage in the *gonfalone* of Leon Nero. His construction of a striking palace in Borgo Santa Croce is considered in the light of both his previous ecclesiastical patronage at the friary of Santa Croce and his clan's established habitation in the area. The Conclusion considers the wider implications of the bond between house and household. Further details, along with an explanation of the methodology used, are presented in three appendices.

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All the buildings and sites shown in the illustrations are in Florence.

References to the illustrations in the text appear in brackets, for example: {23}

All the photographs, maps and diagrams shown here were created by the author.

Note on Citations and Archives

The findings of this thesis are based on a large number of unpublished primary sources held in archives in the city of Florence. In citing these documents, attention has consistently been given to creating a reference which should enable the relevant passage to be located easily. However, the names of the various *fondi* in the archives and the numeration of volumes within them do change from time to time. For example, in the indices kept in the *Sala degli Inventari* of the Archivio di Stato the *fondo* of the *Ripudie di Eredità* appears as part of the *Consiglio del Cento* within the *Archivio della Repubblica*. In fact, it now actually constitutes a *fondo* in its own right and has therefore been cited as such. The numeration of the *Notarile antecosimiano* has also changed in the last decade and in order to facilitate comparison with older references, I have provided the names of all the notaries cited and the dates of their cartularies on page 209. Likewise the full details of each of the fifteenth-century fiscal registers cited in the text appear on page 208.

Most of the documents cited here are in large, bound *filze*. Some however, consist of loose sheets which are collected in bundles, put in numbered envelopes (*buste*) or just tied up with string. When referring to unbound material, it was occasionally necessary to give rather wordy references. In each case, the primarily intention of this is to provide the practical information necessary to enable the passage to be found again.

In some cases a reference is marked '(pencil pagination)'. This is for instances in which the pages of a particular *filza* have been rebound in a different order than that of their original ink pagination. As the pencil numeration generally post-dates the rebinding, it usually follows the actual pagination of the *filza*.

In cases in which neither the name of a collection nor a particular archive is given, the document cited is to be found in the Archivio di Stato in Florence.

All dates in the text are given in the modern style, in which the year begins on 1 January. Those within quotations from fifteenth-century sources naturally follow the Florentine style, in which New Year's Day fell on 25 March.

Preface and Acknowledgements

My primary debt of gratitude is to my supervisor, Amanda Lillie. She gave me enough rope and trusted me with it. Despite the academic pretensions of any thesis, she allowed the creation of this one to be a learning process and I am grateful for that. In Florence my thanks go to Lorenz Böninger, who would persevere in deciphering the illegible squiggles in my documents long after I had given up hope. In this same vein, I must thank Gino Corti, without whose help I would never have had the courage to tackle the *Notarile*. I would like to thank Michael Cole, my neighbour in Florence. His perceptive insight into my work occasionally made me wonder whether he should not switch subjects. Tom Kuehn offered indispensable help on a number of legal issues, for which I am very grateful. I am also beholden to my mother, whose pedagogy took a curtain call to proof read and offer a worryingly large number of pertinent suggestions to improve the clarity of what follows. It is not only customary, but also quite true to point out that the errors, typos and nonsense which remain are, however, all my own work. Literally scores of others made suggestions, offered criticism or provided amusement, and although I cannot list all their names here, I have not forgotten their help. Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to Anuschka Žižka, for her patient acceptance of my four-year *Seitensprung* with Florence.

This thesis could not have taken the shape it has, nor have had such an extensive documentary basis without the monies which various bodies saw fit to give me during my two-year stint in Florence. The help provided by The Leverhulme Trust of London allowed me the time to read everything I could want – a rare privilege for a young student. In the other years of my study I was also fortunate enough to have a *borsa di studio* from the Italian Ministero degli Affari Esteri and later, the London-based Society for Renaissance Studies granted me bursary to tide me over as I wrote up.

I have benefited from the kindness and efficiency of librarians from Yale to Melbourne and I would like to express my especial thanks to those in the Zentralbibliotek in Zürich. They seldom failed to meet the various challenges which I asked of them. I am grateful to staff members at the Archivio di Stato for allowing me to see the *Ginori Conti – Rinuccini fondo* before it was indexed and made more widely available. I would also like to acknowledge help from staff at the Archivio degli Innocenti, the Biblioteca Riccardiana and the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence.

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Some Notes on Aims, Sources and Methods

Recent years have seen the appearance of a number of monographs focusing on family and household structure in late-medieval Florence[1] and of others investigating several of the city's prominent palaces[2]. However, no serious attempt has yet been made to synthesise this research and illuminate the common ground which lies between the habitation and its inhabitants. The idea of a bond between a family and its house is not new to Florentine historiography; yet its very familiarity has made it such an established assumption that it has not appeared necessary either to prove or even characterise it. The existing studies on the social aspect of the household generally acknowledge the importance of the residence to the sense of family, but they tend to present the physical building itself as merely the sphere in which families played out their lives, rather than seeing it as having an integrated role in the family's evolution[3]. Likewise, architectural historians tend not to reintegrate the family with the houses they study, despite the fact that the buildings were primarily family homes. Thus, my aim in this thesis is to bring these two strands together in an attempt to at least start bridging the gap between the historians of 'the family' and those of 'the house'. Each of the six chapters presented here investigates a different aspect of the relationship between a household and its domicile and, where appropriate, is prefaced by a brief survey of literature relevant to the topic.

The first three chapters draw heavily on the data contained in the fifteenth-century Florentine tax, the *Catasto*. In 1963 Raymond de Roover lamented that despite its richness and variety, the *Catasto* was still a 'much neglected' source in Florentine historical writing. In 1978 it finally received a systematic investigation with the publication of David Herlihy and Christiane Klapisch-Zuber's monograph, *Les Toscans et leurs familles*. This monumental study focuses on the nature of family structure and is based on a computerised

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[1] The most notable of which are Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth in Renaissance Florence*, F. W. Kent, *Household and Lineage in Renaissance Florence* and Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans et leurs familles*. A more recent study on a related topic is Molho's *Marriage Alliance in Late Medieval Florence*.

[2] The most important recent work in this field is by Brenda Preyer, prominent among these studies are "The Rucellai Palace" in *Giovanni Rucellai ed il suo Zibaldone*, vol. 2., *Il Palazzo Corsi-Horne* and an indispensable article, "The 'chasa overo palagio' of Alberto di Zanobi".

[3] Two striking exceptions to this trend are Goldthwaite, "The Florentine Palace as Domestic Architecture" and Owen Hughes, "Domestic Ideals and Social Behaviour: Evidence from Medieval Genoa".

analysis of data taken from the first *Catasto* of 1427. Yet, as de Roover also noted, besides demographic data, the *Catasto* contains information on "the distribution of wealth and income, the class structure, the institution of slavery, the public debt, family life, urban and rural property, agrarian problems, business organization, and other topics"[4]. Moreover, the Archivio di Stato in Florence contains records of a further nine subsequent tax redactions from the *quattrocento* alone. Thus, although Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber undertook what has proved to be the most incisive and structured investigation into the *Catasto*, this source still contains even more information that has yet to be analysed systematically.

The data on which this study is based is drawn from all the fifteenth-century *Catasti*[5] and the *Decima repubblicana* of 1495-98. This allows for a diachronic analysis on a scope which, to my knowledge, has not been previously attempted. The depth of this sample naturally required some restrictions to be placed on its breadth and therefore it is based on the following twelve families, which were all resident in the Quarter of Santa Croce: Bartoli, Castellani, Corsi, Donati, Galilei, Giugni, Guidi, Morelli, Rinuccini, Salterelli, Spinelli and Zati. There is nothing particularly extraordinary about any of these families and they could probably be exchanged for any others without greatly influencing the conclusions of this study. They were, however, chosen to give a variety of clan size, wealth and antiquity.

Throughout this study I shall refer to each of the family groups with a common surname as a 'clan'. It will become clear that important bonds existed between those linked by common ancestry and thus a collective term of reference is required to identify them. I have rejected the Italian possibilities of *consorteria*, *casata*, *brigata*, or *stirpe*, as they have definitions which could exclude certain elements of these families' affinity, or imply others which are not relevant here. The term 'clan' however is both comprehensive and sufficiently alien to bear no misleading definitions in this context.

The majority of the families of these twelve clans paid their taxes in the Quarter of Santa Croce and the study is thus restricted to this area in general and, in Chapter Two, to the ward (*gonfalone*) of Leon Nero in particular. This is not because I claim the area to be

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[4] *The Rise and Fall of the Medici Bank*, p. 21. It is perhaps ironic, but not unrepresentative of general historical interest in the *Catasto* that de Roover omits to add fiscal data to his list.

[5] Strictly speaking only five (1427, 1430, 1433, 1458 and 1469) of these tax redactions were actually *Catasti*, the others were *Estimi*, *Decime* or variations thereon. The *Catasto* is merely the generic name given to the archival *fondo*. However, the data from all the other taxes used in this study has been adapted to make it immediately comparable with that drawn from the various *Catasti*.

unique – on the contrary, I hope that it proves to be typical of the city as a whole – but because it was necessary to impose some geographical limitations on the area of study to allow an analysis which would be narrow enough to be manageable, whilst being deep enough to be reliable. In itself, the arbitrary boundary which I have drawn should not be construed as a frontier beyond which my conclusions have no relevance.

A further criterion determining the choice of clans was the location of their settlement. Three resided in each of the four *gonfaloni* of Santa Croce. As tax papers did not initially need to be filed in the *gonfalone* of one's residence[6], registration need not have implied a family's actual physical presence there. However, through a careful analysis of the prose of the hundreds of *portate* which these families created, it has usually been possible to identify those who were merely registered in a *gonfalone* as opposed to those who actually lived there. This study is based on the latter.

The novelty of this thesis lies not only in its theme but also in its methodology and to some extent this is due to the various sources on which it is based. This is especially the case with the *Catasto*, which provided not only the information for the first three chapters, but also directed the manner of the analysis. For the clarity with which this document was compiled and the ready commensurability of the data it contains permitted the collation of large quantities of information. However, while a different approach to the *Catasto* may well give rise to a quite different set of conclusions about families and houses in this period, I feel that the nature of the analysis used here is fundamentally complementary to the source itself.

The choice of source material is largely responsible for a number of the differences in two of the more important existing contributions to this topic mentioned above: Richard Goldthwaite's *Private Wealth in Renaissance Florence* and F. W. Kent's *Household and Lineage*. Simply put, the former relies on mercantile and private account books and the latter on more literary sources such as letters, *ricordanze* and wills. The two books come to different, but not mutually exclusive conclusions, and I feel that this is as much a result of the documentation consulted as of any fundamental difference between the various clans on which they concentrate – indeed, the various families of the Capponi are common to them both. As we shall see in the following chapters, the gradual detachment of the clan families

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[6] *Catasto* (hereafter *Cat.*) 2, fol. 61*r*. (pencil pagination). From 1458 however, citizens could only register their taxes in the *gonfalone* in which they "fussono trovati habitare familiarmente e habitassino in vero e realmente con le loro famiglie"; *ibid.*, fol. 94*r*. (pencil pagination).

from one another in this period, which Goldthwaite inferred from the account books, has perhaps more to do with contemporary business practices than family life. Likewise, the co-operation between Kent's clan families has much to do with the advantages which cohesion would bring to the aspects of their lives which he studied: politics, commemoration, settlement and patronage. Given that the Florentine archives harbour more pertinent information than one scholar can ever master, such varied approaches and conclusions will remain part and parcel of Florentine historical writing and I am aware of the inevitable selectivity of the conclusions presented here.

The first chapter of this study consists of a close analysis of the twelve clans' households from 1427 to 1480. This serves two main functions. Firstly, it establishes their various household typologies and shows how they evolved over the century; secondly, it demonstrates the fundamental tie between household and patrimonial unity. None of the existing studies of Florentine families charts precisely any household group over an extended period. Establishing here who exactly was living in a particular clan house at any one time and what their relationship was to the other residents, facilitates an appraisal of the links between the size of a household and the actual property in which each family lived. This is a theme which will be taken up again in Chapter Four. The second strand arising from the chapter is the strong correlation between the household and the patrimonial unit, for it appears that there was a fundamental desire for those sharing a single patrimony to also live together. This imperative exercised a strong influence on the make-up of households and the properties they lived in, even to the point where one house might be physically incorporated into a neighbouring property to preserve patrimonial cohesion.

This physical use of clan housing forms the theme of Chapter Two. The settlement patterns of three clans resident in the *gonfalone* of Leon Nero over the period 1427 to 1495 are analysed through the careful mapping of the residential space that each of them occupied. The idea of densely-colonised clan territories is well-established in historical literature[7], but little has been done to document how the individual families that constituted an enclave actually used and adapted their property in relation to one another[8]. Plotting the physical layout of these three clans' domiciles shows how the enclaves developed over the century

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[7] A general overview of the topic is given in Heers, "Consorterie familiari", pp. 301-306.

[8] The work of Diane Owen Hughes cited in footnote 3 however, discusses this topic extensively.

and also how each constituent family contributed to either the enlargement or the erosion of the clan colony as a whole.

Chapter Three is concerned with the practice of property rental. Its aim is to demonstrate the clear differentiation in the management of those houses in which the clan families lived and those which they tended to lease out. Besides documenting the extent of rental in this period, the manner in which the *Catasto* itself was implemented proved to have a marked influence on the rental market and this too is illustrated, for it had a crucial impact on the use of space within a number of family domiciles. A brief excursus concerning the real cost of residential property rental follows the chapter proper.

Each strand of property management investigated in the first three chapters highlights the importance of the domicile to the family inhabiting it. In Chapters Four and Five the focus moves to the visual significance of these properties. Through an analysis of the priorities motivating three fifteenth-century building projects in the area it is demonstrated how architectural patrons formed and projected a public image for themselves by undertaking construction. Here Florentine renaissance architecture is studied less in terms of its style *per se* than with the aim of demonstrating how the evolution of a new style served the changing visual imperatives of clan housing and the aspirations of those who commissioned it.

The Workings of the *Catasto*

Given the extent to which this study relies on the systematic use of information from the *Catasto*, it is essential to explain a little about the working of this tax and also to establish why it can be depended upon as a source to report accurately the details of fifteenth-century Florentine life investigated here.

The *Catasto* has had a chequered history in Florentine Historiography. It has been cited with increasing frequency since the eighteenth century[9], yet despite, or perhaps because of the ease with which any particular *portata* can be found, conclusions have often been drawn from it which have ignored its fundamentally fiscal *raison d'être*[10]. Unfortunately, the frequency with which such misunderstandings have needed correction seems also to have brought its overall reliability into question. It is true that the tax initially lasted only from

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[9] Gian-Francesco Pagnini's *Della Decima* was the first work to explore Florentine taxes in any detail.

[10] Procacci, *Studio sul Catasto fiorentino*, p. 10.

1427 to 1433 before being abandoned in favour of the previous system of arbitrary reckoning and this suggests that it failed to meet the idealistic standards with which it had been introduced[11]. However, just because it is a tax document does not mean that it is laced with dissemblance. No source is immune from duplicity and care must always be taken to understand the context and the purpose for which it has been created. The *Catasto* is therefore, in itself, no more 'tainted' than any other official source. It is only right to approach all records with a degree of scepticism, but it is better still to be able to interpret them with an understanding of their purpose, for that will enable informed allowances to be made for how the questions they posed and the circumstances they created might have influenced the answers they prompted.

In fact, it is *because* the *Catasto* is a tax that certain fraudulent declarations are easier to anticipate[12]. For example, it was recognised before the *Catasto* was even introduced that trade debts were bound to be impossible to gauge accurately and indeed, because of this, they were not included in the *portate* after 1442[13]. However, it should not be inferred from this that all the information in the *portate* is suspect. This study is not primarily concerned with trade but with houses and households, and for this purpose there is good reason to suppose that the *Catasto* is fundamentally trustworthy, and not just because in a city it is much easier to conceal liquid assets than a three-storey palace.

A rather more solid indication to the reliability of this source as the basis for a study of houses and households is the simple fact that, as a tax, it promoted the full disclosure of any information which could have ameliorated one's levy. It is on just such data that the investigation of family structure in the period from 1427 to 1480 in Chapter One is based. We can be sure that the *portate* report urban family membership accurately, as each individual present entitled the head of the household to claim a reduction of *f* 200 from the

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[11] Much of the background to the introduction of the *Catasto* is reproduced in Berti, "Nuovi documenti intorno al Catasto fiorentino", pp. 40-62. The fact that the 1430 *Catasto* raised only 74.4% of the income of its predecessor and that the 1433 tax just 45.8% of the income of 1427 does indeed suggest that it had serious shortcomings; Conti, *I catasti agrari della Repubblica fiorentina*, p. 64.

[12] Opening the tax ledgers to public inspection may have dissuaded some fraud, as might have the *tamburi*, into which citizens were invited to put any denunciations of "...qualunque che non avesse rapportato i beni, ragioni, crediti et substantia come di sopra è tenuto o vero rapportera et sança giusta stima"; *Cat.* 2, fol. 11*r*.-11*v*.

[13] Conti, *L'imposta diretta a Firenze nel quattrocento*, p. 198.

capitalised total of his assets[14]. This naturally created an incentive to declare everybody in the house – even those who had not yet quite arrived. In 1480 Gianone di Simone Castellani reported his wife as being pregnant and added; "quando sarà nata la creatura, vi si darà il nome e'l tenpo"[15]. He was by no means the only one to pursue this opportunistic policy, which eventually resulted in children being born after the *portate* had been handed in only being admissible as *bocche* if they were recorded in the city's baptismal records[16]. The loss of the *f* 200 deduction may have tempted some not to report deaths in the family within the stipulated ten day period[17], but, given that a burial was unlikely to pass unnoticed, it can still be concluded that the *portate* provide a fairly accurate record of all the households' inhabitants at the time of each *Catasto* redaction[18].

Although it does not seem that the actual workings of the *Catasto* had an effect on the membership of households[19], we should be mindful of the inevitable dangers of basing a survey exclusively on one source – even if in this case the *Catasto* is the only one which can guarantee a structural comparison of hundreds of households. Likewise, it should be understood that even though the cultural and emotional bonds which helped to unite clan families across the lines demarcating their patrimonies might be reflected in the contents of the *portate*, this source does not permit them to be equitably compared.

Chapter Two deals with the physical location and use of family domiciles. The fiscal incentive to include this particular type of property in the *portate* was not particularly

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[14] The definition of exactly who was entitled to this reduction changed over the century. At no point were servants (who were not kin) or slaves (who were chattel) admitted. After 1458 illegitimate offspring and kin living outside Florence also became inadmissible; *Cat.* 2, fols. 93*v.* and 98*r.* (pencil pagination) respectively. However, this in itself did not stop their inclusion in the *portate*. In 1458 ser Ricco di Domenico Spinelli added his illegitimate son Ataviamo to his *bocche*, only to have the tax officers cancel the entry and write "Non fu aprovato dagl'uficiali, perchè non è legittimo"; *Cat.* 806, fol. 166*v.* For similar cases see *Cat.* 799, fol. 540*r.* (pencil pagination), *Cat.* 915, fol. 799*v.* and *Cat.* 911, fol. 532*r.* The latter example also includes a number of *bocche* who were discounted because they were then living outside Florence, in Ferrara.

[15] *Cat.* 1002, fol. 193*v.*

[16] In 1458 Gualberto di Giovanni Morelli reported his wife Betta as "grorsa da mesi 3½". Below this, an entry by a tax officer reads, "Agiungnesi uno fanciuollo, à nome Bartolomeo, è suo figliuolo nati a dì 6 di settembre 1458, per fede di San Giovanni"; *Cat.* 806, fol. 320*r.* See also *ibid.*, fol. 436*v.* and *Cat.* 807, fol. 779*r.*

[17] *Cat.* 2, fol. 62*r.*-62*v.* (pencil pagination). See also footnote 20 on page 187 below.

[18] Because of the inconsistent nature of the data reported in the *Decima repubblicana*, it has been excluded from the systematic analyses of the first three chapters. See also the comments concerning the 1451 *Estimo* in footnote 17 on page 31 below.

[19] The rubric of the *Catasto* alludes to only one fraud concerning the constituency of households in forbidding Florentines to create or divide existing households with the intention of diminishing their taxes. The provision was passed in 1458; *Cat.* 2, fol. 94*r.* (pencil pagination) and reiterated in 1469; *ibid.*, fol. 124*r.* (pencil pagination). However, as it seems that households were being both dissolved and amalgamated, it is likely that the net effect of this was minimal.

strong. It was of course required that it be included[20], but as it attracted no taxes[21], the money spent on its upkeep was inadmissible as a deductible expense[22]. This might have led to a certain degree of indifference to including it in the *portate*. However, as the legal title to any property not declared in the *Catasto* could be put in doubt and even opened to contestation, it was likely that Florentines would have included their important property in their *portate*[23]. This had the effect of guaranteeing that the family residence became the very first item entered in the huge majority of tax returns. The fact that some *portate* lack mention of a domicile does not contradict this. As we shall see in Chapter One, *portate* were records of the assets of patrimonies and not households *per se* and thus those individuals living away from their own estate in the house of another would have no domicile to declare.

The material for Chapter Three is drawn from the records of property rental entered in the various *portate*. As any income generated by property was added to a patrimony's taxable value, there was a strong disincentive for a landlord to declare it[24]. However, the same income which augmented the lessor's taxable wealth diminished that of his tenant. Thus, for every recalcitrant lessor, there was a lessee keen to notify the tax officials of his occupancy of a property. From 1442 the accuracy of rental reports can be assured, as the tax officials compared the rental values in the current *portate* with those from past *Catasti* and then also cross-checked them with the corresponding entry in the tenant/landlord's tax return[25]. The vast majority of the thousands of resulting annotations are accurate[26]. The officials also followed up any property which had been sold or passed from a patrimony by whatever means, recording into whose hands it had passed. Cases also exist where the tax officers independently entered property income not declared by the owner into his redaction[27]. An

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[20] See the text of the *Catasto* rubric cited in footnote 1 on page 204.

[21] *Cat.* 2, fol. 31*r*.

[22] *Cat.* 2, fol. 62*v*. (pencil pagination).

[23] Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans*, p. 72.

[24] The *Catasto* imposed a ½ percent levy on a patrimony's *sovrabbondante*, which was the total value of its property after the deduction of its outstanding debts, the on-going costs of capital upkeep and the living costs (*bocche*) of its members.

[25] The status of each property in the preceding and following *portate* was generally added to the respective entry. However, cross-references to the current tenant or landlord's *portata* only occur in particular cases. See for example *Cat.* 698, fol. 58*r*. concerning the suspect declaration of a house leased by the Cocchi-Donati.

[26] Elio Conti also checked a number of rental values declared in the *Catasto* against those in private *ricordanze* and likewise found a high level of accurate disclosure; *I catasti agrari della Repubblica fiorentina*, pp. 48-63.

[27] One example can be found in Domenico di Giovanni Giugni's return of 1458, in which the officer wrote, "Agungesi a questa inscritta per partito degl'uficiali per beni di m[a] Chosa, donna fu di Bartolomeo di Verano Peruzi, sua sirochia", for he judged the property to come within Domenico's patrimony; *Cat.* 810, fol. 849*v*.

indication of the thoroughness of these safeguards is the fact that there are very few cases in which a member of the twelve clans declared a property which had previously not been recorded in any *Catasto*[28]. If this were true of the city as a whole, it would demonstrate that most properties were at least registered somewhere.

Testaments and other Legal Documents

After the fiscal records of the *Catasto*, this study has relied most extensively on a number of legal sources, such as the *Magistrato dei Pupilli*, the *Atti di Emancipazione* and the *Ripudie di Eredità*. The importance of notarial acts in the writing of medieval Italian history is generally accepted[29], yet the systematic use of these sources by historians is somewhat less widespread, perhaps because of the sheer volume of the surviving records[30]. Here I would like to concentrate on the issues raised by just one particular form of legal act found in the cartularies of the *Notarile antecosimiano*: the testament, or more precisely *donatio causa mortis*. It might seem a foregone conclusion that the richness of detail to be found in wills can only be a boon for the social historian, yet just like the *Catasto*, wills must be used with great care. This is because in themselves they indicate very little beyond the testator's inclinations at the time of their redaction. In essence a will is the means by which an individual plans to perpetuate control over his property (and even his body) from the hereafter; a strategy which naturally can present difficulties[31].

Propertied Florentines were often conversant with Roman Law by virtue of the frequency with which they dealt with notarised acts. However, this familiarity did not usually give rise to the confidence to dispense with a notary when they came to make a will. Thus testaments are not only not written by the person whose will they portend to represent but, because they are generally in Latin, they are also translations of those wishes. The thirteenth-century

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[28] Much of the property noted as coming "da chi non soporta" had previously been in the possession of a hospital (*Cat.* 699, fol. 266*v*.) or a religious foundation (*Cat.* 1005, fol. 528*r*.). Very few houses had no provenance whatsoever, and those that did may well have been created by the recent division of an existing property or else were given a description which was just too obscure to enable it to be pinpointed. For example in 1469, Matteo di Matteo Corsi entered a new house as "una chasetta in Santa Croce chon sue gofini", which unsurprisingly the officers were unable to identify; *Cat.* 914, fol. 581*v*.

[29] Two perceptive articles dealing with the notarial act as a source for social history are Hughes, "Toward Historical Ethnography" and Kirshner, "Some Problems in the Interpretation of Legal Texts".

[30] As a result of the pioneering work of Robert Reynolds and Robert Lopez in the 1930s, Genoese notarial studies have borne a steady stream of works. The Florentine notaries however have yet to find their champion.

[31] The aspiration of the testator was phrased rather more rhetorically in a passage ascribed to Mirabeau: "What is a testament ? It is the expression of the will of a man who no longer has any will, respecting property which is no longer his property…"; Champlin, "Why the Romans made wills", p. 215.

guild statutes obliged notaries to copy a testator's wishes verbatim[32], but in translating a will more was involved than the mere replacement of spoken Italian with written Latin, for the formulae which the notaries larded on ossified the often lively phrases of the first draughts (which are sometimes also found in the cartularies[33]) into a codification, which though it was perhaps more resilient to legal challenge, lacked the flavour of the original[34]. It should also be kept in mind that the notary himself, being well-versed in testamentary technique, would have made suggestions concerning provisions to the testator; indeed this explains both the formulaic wording of bequests and the standardised order in which they appear. If one also keeps in mind that few other undertakings are likely to be so conducive to benevolence and idealism as the making of a will, one can perhaps view their charitable bequests as an accepted part of the contractual relationship of debit and credit which pervaded fifteenth-century Florence; although in this case the balance was to be reckoned in the next world[35]. This does not of course make them any less sincere, but it does raise the possibility that they might not accurately reflect the testator's previous behaviour.

Florentine testaments were also expected to contain donations to public bodies. By statute the *Comune* expected a small sum to be left for the upkeep of the city walls and another for the cathedral. Many men nobly restituted their widows' dowries, though in actual fact the money was not theirs to withhold. They also tended to give their daughters the right of *tornata* in their houses if they became widowed, but this too was already a right of natural law.[36] Even their own burial was similarly covered by natural law. Moreover, in practice, even the personal property which those studied here would have wished to bequeath was often already bound by an ancestor's fideicommissum which had been imposed on it to guarantee its unmolested passage down the lineage *ad infinitum*[37]. The frequency of these stipulations and of other formulae means that in the last analysis a testament was perhaps as close to being a systematised rhetorical gesture as it was a faithful representation of the testator's desires.

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[32] "Et de verbo ad verbum sub breviloquio scribat que oratenus dixerit ipse testator"; Calleri, *L'arte dei Guidici e Notai di Firenze*, page 54, footnote 3.

[33] The notarised version of Bernardo di Domenico Giugni's will of 1437 is in *Notarile antecosimiano* (hereafter *NA*) 1595, fols. 95*r. ff.* An earlier version in Italian starts in the same cartulary on fol. 100*r.*

[34] It was also common to redraft a will several times before arriving at the fair copy; Petrucci, "Note su il testamento come documento", pp. 11-12.

[35] "Any legacy to a pious cause was considered an investment by the medieval testator"; Trexler, "Death and Testament", p. 266. See also F. W. Kent and Lillie, "The Piovano Arlotto", p. 351.

[36] See footnote 25 on page 34 below.

[37] This theme will be examined in the Conclusion.

Leaving aside the problem of the degree to which a testament reflected the testator's ultimate will, I shall now turn my attention to the extent to which wills can be used to describe what actually happened. Many were drawn up to avoid disagreements later[38]. However, as most Florentines died intestate, it can be inferred that in general heirs either knew what to do with an estate, or that it was too small to argue over. In consequence, the mere fact that a testament exists indicates that there was at least some ambiguity concerning the testator's wishes and its very existence makes its contents extra-ordinary. One last potential for difficulty lay in the fact that since a will is reliant on the executors for its interpretation and implementation, its mere existence merely added another point-of-view to those with an interest in the disposal of the testator's property – for ultimately, most cases of contestation concerned the apportioning of the testator's property. In effect, a testament might only add to the complications of inheritance[39].

The above factors made it possible for a will to be executed contrary to its actual stipulations. If, however, the beneficiaries of a will declined to accept it, the gap between the testator's intentions and reality could grow even wider. A legatee was quite within his right to refuse a bequest and many, thinking that its debts outweighed its benefits, did just that. When Alamanno Rinuccini drew up his will in 1491, he was certainly aware that its terms and his estate could be rejected, since it was only three years previously that he had refused his own brother Cino's estate "per omnia...portione et rata"[40]. Consequently, Alamanno stipulated that if his brother and heir designate Neri refused the estate, it was to pass to Neri's eldest son, Filippo[41]. In reality he must have known that he had little chance of forcing others to follow this succession. This was especially the case with poor estates and it probably accounts for the frequency with which they were passed on intestate.

Overall, of the twelve clans I have studied here, between 1421 and 1503 a total of ninety-two people rejected a part, or the entirety of thirty-four of their kinsmen's estates and publicly declared themselves as doing so in the registers of the *Ripudie di Eredità*. There

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[38] Alamanno di Filippo Rinuccini wrote his will in the hope that "dopo la sua vita non abbia a nascere lite o questione alcuna intra quelle persone a chi tali sustanze o facultati avessino a pervenire"; *NA* 1740, fol. 396*v*.

[39] Thomas Kuehn, "Law, Death and Heirs in the Renaissance", p. 487. The fact that some individuals drew up new wills with an alarming regularity (see the example of Riccardo Spinelli on page 159 below) may have merely further complicated the state of affairs.

[40] *Ripudie di Eredità* (hereafter *Ripudie*) 23, fol. 22*r*., (27 March, 1489). This was in fact Alamanno's second rejection of the estate in little over a month. See *ibid*., fol. 19*r*. from 18 February.

[41] *NA* 1740, fol. 398*v*.

are also examples of repudiations which, although notarised, were not reported to the *Consiglio del Cento* (at the cost of one florin), and it can perhaps be presumed that others were also rejected without any notarial redaction[42].

If we consider only those estates which were rejected officially, we see that they add up to a substantial proportion of the total. This in itself invalidates all these wills as a reliant indicator of what actually happened and renders any exhortatory clauses or threats they contained mere wishful thinking. Another advantage of the *Ripudie* cartularies is that they mention which estates were rejected "ab intestato", thereby proving that no valid testament existed[43]. Abstentions in these cases show legatees were sufficiently convinced of the estate's worthlessness as to refuse it without even perusing a will.

It should not be concluded from this that familial honour was entirely dead, for although abstention from an estate indicates that it was perceived as potentially detrimental, acceptance does not mean that it was necessarily healthy. In 1461 Domenico di Giovanni Giugni took his father's debt-ridden inheritance for the sake of his own honour and his father's good memory[44]. Yet, the mere existence of the *fondo* of the *Ripudie di Eredità* shows that such a lineage-conscious policy was not always the practice.

Even if an inheritance were accepted, there were still other ways by which it could be managed differently from the testament's stipulations. One example concerns the provisions for charitable donations. Despite the fact that they were tax-deductible[45], the *Catasto* shows many of these payments were still outstanding years later[46]. Some testators introduced time

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[42] Lodovico and Lorenzo di Cipriano Spinelli refused their father's inheritance; *Decima repubblicana* (hereafter *Dec. Rep.*) 17, fol. 89*r*. However, there is no record of the repudiation in the Communal ledgers.

[43] See for example, *Ripudie* 13, fol. 142*r*., *Ripudie* 16, fol. 69*v*., *Ripudie* 18, fol. 97*v*. and *Ripudie* 20, fol. 93*v*.

[44] "Resto avere da mio padre chome si vede non paghando altro che quello m'ebbi paghato che anchora ha debito, che per mio honore et della memoria sua io voglo paghare, sono *f* 5395"; Biblioteca Laurenziana, (hereafter BL) *Acquisti e Doni* 103, fol. 23*r*. (pencil pagination).

[45] *Cat.* 2, fol. 66*r*. (pencil pagination). As this provision created an opportunity for fictitious claims, the tax officers would verify with the appropriate priest that the testamentary obligations were actually being fulfilled, adding comments such as "veduto la testamento di…suo padre…per ser Andrea Nachianti, sotto dì 22 di luglio 1464, è fede dell'oservanza delle sue parte da' frati di Santa Croce per Girolami addì 18 di dicembre 1495"; *Dec. Rep.* 13, fol. 225*v*. If the bequest was not being observed, the claim would be disallowed; see *Cat.* 800, fol. 571*v*.

[46] It was noted in the rubric of the *Catasto* in May 1431 that "la maggior parte di tali cittadini sono in indugio per loro colpa et difecto in hedificare et satisfare dicte gravezze"; Trexler, "Death and Testament", p. 268. In 1447 Niccolò di Cocco Donati's sons had "uno inchariche d'1° testamento che ci lasciò nostro padre quando morì, che dovessimo fare 1ª chappella nella chiesa di Santa Croce di Firenze. E non s'è fatto insino da ora per inpossibilità e a ongni modo la vogliamo fare e siamo sforzati a farlla…"; *Cat.* 662, fol. 910*r*. After just two years of compliance, Niccolò di Francesco Corsi had ceased making an annual donation of *f* 5 to the friars of Santa Croce as stipulated in an ancestor's will, concluding "…no gli pagho per non avere denari"; *Cat.* 664, fol. 553*r*.

limits within which some of the estate's benefits would be forfeited if certain donations had not been made[47].

Such clauses imply at the very least, that the testator was prepared for difficulties and this brings us to the legal remedy: the *donatio inter vivos*. In November 1489, the eighty-two year old Simone di Amerigo Zati presented the chapter of Santa Croce with a workshop opposite the now defunct church of San Bartolomeo in Corso de' Adimari[48]. Zati had only gained the property in 1465 as part of his wife's dowry, and it was therefore not vested with any particular emotional attachment on his part. The donation to Santa Croce was to have immediate legal validity, but was postponed in effect until the donor's death. In reciprocation the friars would say masses for his and his predecessors' souls. In another example from 1473, Girolamo di Matteo Morelli left a house to the same chapter[49]. In return they were to hold a commemorative dinner (*rinovale*) in his honour each year. The donation was irrevocable, even if the friars were deemed to act 'ungratefully or to give Morelli any offence, either large or small'. It would only become void if Girolamo fathered any legitimate sons. Like Simone Zati, Girolamo Morelli had only recently obtained this property, for it does not appear in his most recent *portata*, which had been compiled only three years previously.

This type of donation could easily have been included in a will, but both men chose legally to alienate the properties before their deaths. The obvious inference from the existence of these acts is that both men must have considered that their heirs might have been recalcitrant in executing the bequest, whereas by creating a *donatio inter vivos* the donation was already complete, although postponed until the donor's death. Neither man gained any advantage during his lifetime from the existence of the endowment, except that he would die knowing, rather than hoping that his will would be done. In a world where wills were executed to the letter, such donations would not have been necessary.

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[47] In 1436 Bartolo di Domenico Corsi stipulated that if his estate passed not to his sons, but to his brothers and if they did not fulfil the various obligations of his will within a month of receiving the estate, the consuls of the silk guild could fine them *ƒ* 25 for each unfulfilled bequest and spend the money "ad utilità dell'ospedale delli innocenti, lo quale si edifica per lla detta arte in sulla piaza de' frati de' Servi da Firenze"; *NA* 2976, fol. 184*r*.-184*v*. If the entire Morelli family died out Giovanni di Paolo Morelli stipulated in his will that the Arte della lana should build a chapel in his memory in the cloister of Santa Croce, at a cost of up to *ƒ* 1000. If however the consuls did not do this within ten years of his death, they were to give *ƒ* 500 to the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova which would be distributed in the form of dowries ("in maritando puellas"); *NA* 18000, fol. 45*r*.

[48] *NA* 394, fols. 17*r*.-18*r*.

[49] *NA* 766, fols. 193*r*.-194*r*.

The use of these examples is not intended to discourage the use of legal sources, but rather to enhance it. All the means by which Florentines lost or gained urban property were notarised and acts such as the *locatio*, *emptio*, *praemium emancipationis*, *cessio iurium*, *laudum* and the *diviso* all appear in this study. Notarising acts was common and actively encouraged[50] and, given careful use, these documents can hugely enrich historical writing.

The scope of sources consulted in the research of this thesis is wide and the shades of interpretation to which they could give rise are legion. Those used here have primarily been employed with the aim of characterising the fundamental and reciprocal connection which existed between Florentines and their houses. The findings of this study are however not restricted to the field of architectural history and in the Conclusion I offer some suggestions showing how the implications of this bond spread far beyond the concerns of bricks and mortar, touching upon topics such as such identity and memorialisation. This merely provides further justification to the closer examination of those aspects of this bond which could not be fully developed here and it is hoped that this study might even lead to a more thorough investigation of the various themes of house and household.

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[50] Giovanni di Paolo Morelli's advice was to notarise extensively no matter with whom one was dealing; *Ricordi*, p. 243. The church was also keen that wills should be made and priests were instructed to preach on the matter. Those dying intestate without good reason were even at one point to be denied ecclesiastical burial; Trexler, "Death and Testament", p. 261.

Chapter One

Household Structure and the Patrimony

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Introduction

Recent historical studies of the Florentine family have tended to be restrictively concerned with the issue of the conjugal family and its ascendancy over other types of larger household in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This preoccupation has rather stifled debate as well as being a little misguided. By the fifteenth century monogamous marriage had long been the norm in Italy and thus fertile households were necessarily centred on the conjugal unit of husband and wife. Even households in which several 'vertical' generations or 'horizontal' lines of descent were present were still generally based upon a number of conjugal cells. To limit discussion to the ascendancy of the 'nuclear family' is to misinterpret the universal nature of the conjugal unit in the first place. This period did not create the 'nuclear family', for it had long been present, however latently, in existing households. It is true that by this era the conjugal unit often emerged as a separate household form in its own right. Yet, the view that this was part of some teleological process leading inexorably towards the modern family is fundamentally unfounded[1]. Important work by David Herlihy on early medieval Italian households has shown that the collectivisation of families, which was so common in the period prior to that under study here, did not in fact have ante-diluvial roots, but was an innovation which had occurred gradually since the tenth century[2]. As Italian families had thus been intentionally collectivised in recent centuries, the flux between collectivisation and nuclearisation was not new, nor were the changes it brought merely contributory to the inevitable triumph of the 'nuclear family'. It also demonstrates that the need for flexibility in the household form had been established well prior to the fifteenth century. By removing

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[1] Richard Goldthwaite's *Private Wealth in Renaissance Florence* demonstrated the fundamental significance of the conjugal family in Florence during this period. His ideas were challenged, but not entirely refuted by F. W. Kent's *Household and Lineage*, which established how families still maintained close links with kin living beyond the house. As Kent was primarily concerned with inter-familial bonds, he added little on the nature of the individual families themselves. However, a wide spectrum of issues concerning family life in this period appear in the articles cited here by Christiane Klapisch-Zuber and David Herlihy.

[2] Herlihy, "Family Solidarity in Medieval Italian History", p. 176. Richard Ring also found that the conjugal family accounted for 72% of a sample of 244 households in a census from ninth-century Lazio; "Early Medieval Peasant Households in Central Italy", p. 11. Likewise, Georges Duby found that the property of knights in the Mâcon increasingly became vested in smaller patrilineal households during the course of the tenth century; "Lineage, Nobility and Chivalry", p. 28.

this determinist view of household evolution from centre stage, other elements can be introduced to explain the nature of household structure over time. Amongst them is the role played by the house itself.

The significance of a house to its occupants in this period was the result of a number of factors. It did not rest solely on its residential aspect, for a house was also the public face of a family's patrimony and this heightened the imperative to preserve and manage it carefully. This relationship ran deep; it was almost symbiotic. For just as its domicile enabled a family to exist as a perceivable household, so a particular family bestowed significance upon the building in which it lived, making it the visible embodiment and focus for that family.

The interdependence of *casata* and patrimony had long been recognised in Florence. It had even been exploited in the laws to break up the powerful *consorterie* of magnates in the late thirteenth century. By 1295 communal law stipulated that if any magnate failed to post a bond, then his close male relatives would become liable for its payment. If a magnate without a bond committed a capital crime and still resisted paying his surety, his relatives would be fined 3000 *lire*[3]. These provisions were re-iterated in the communal statutes of the 1320s and were probably the most effective of all those used against the magnates[4]. The laws aimed simply to curb their power, but their effectiveness lay in the fact that they caused magnates to separate themselves legally from one another and to divide their patrimonies in order to restrict their exposure to these penalties. By atomising their estates the magnates abandoned their collectivity, the feature from which they had previously derived so much of their strength. Even though the move was made under duress, it is significant that they prized property over unity. Of the clans studied here only the Castellani had ever achieved the degree of unity of the magnates against whom this legislation was directed. Nonetheless the magnates' reactions highlight a feature of property management that remained valid into the fifteenth century; namely, the need to adopt whatever means were necessary to ensure the retention of the patrimony, even if, as in this case, it entailed changing the nature of its ownership. Property itself was such a contributory factor to a clan's identity that such a transformation was preferable to running the risk of gradually losing it altogether. For while a clan without unified property ownership might become somewhat weaker, one without property could hardly be said to exist at all.

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[3] Salvemini, *Magnati e popolani in Firenze dal 1280 al 1295*, p. 227. The text of the Ordinances appears in the 1899 edition of the same book; Appendix XII, entries nos. XVII and XIX on pages 406 and 408 respectively.

As a result, while the fourteenth century saw changes by which the head of a household became the exclusive owner of the property in which his family lived, in the *quattrocento*, this pragmatism also led the very make-up of these families to be influenced by the requirements of patrimonial retention. To be effective, property management needed to be flexible and consequently the bond between family and house was never allowed to atrophy; it continually evolved, adapting to the prevailing circumstances. This pragmatism meant that households were not merely the product of their progenitor's fertility, but were also constantly being shaped by the economic and social pressures around them. Thus, charting the changes of household structure shows the influence, the aims and the methods used by fifteenth-century Florentines to safeguard their patrimony, and especially their domicile.

The historical tools I shall employ here are largely taken from the discipline of Family History, a subject which has enjoyed a sustained growth in interest and technique over recent decades. Some ground rules for the study of families in the past have been established by The Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure and I have adopted some of these and adapted others[5]. Because of the relatively sparse material concerning bygone families, the term 'household' has often been substituted for 'family' in historical studies. This has inevitably blurred the distinction between the two entities, which though often close, are not necessarily interchangeable. In accordance with the focus of this study, the basic comparable group will be the household, which I define as a co-residential unit of closely-related kin. The household is a more apposite institution than the family with which to illustrate the fundamental depth of the relationship between residents and residence; to establish a fixed definition for the 'family unit' in this period would be both too difficult and its compass too vague. It can be changed at whim to include or exclude people according to any number of circumstances. For example, families could overlap one another, which raises the problem of whether belonging to one precluded membership of another. The extent of this problem can be exacerbated by the fact that the importance of agnatic and cognatic bonds between family units were not uniform, but tended to depend upon relative familial wealth; poorer conjugal families were often quite close to the wife's kin, whereas richer families' bonds were usually exclusively agnatic. A third hindrance to using the family as the commensurable unit of comparison is that they could be widely dispersed, as in several of the cases used here. Reasons of trade or exile could see their

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[4] Stern, *Criminal Law System of Medieval and Renaissance Florence*, p. 135.

[5] Peter Laslett's model for presenting the data of co-resident domestic groups appears in his "Introduction".

members scattered over a number of countries. Lastly, it should be clarified that I am only concerned here with the co-residence of kin, and not with the servants, slaves or lodgers that might also have lived with them. This is because these people are not integral to the familial core and are therefore not consistently recorded in the sources[6].

These difficulties have prevented historians from constructing a rigid framework for the comparison of families in the past and in the case of Florentine historiography, has led to greater reliance on less commensurable sources. Much of our existing knowledge of the nature of Florentine kinship comes from work based on documentation produced by (and often for) the very kin groups being studied; such as their *ricordanze* and letters. This is understandable, given both the quantity of these sources and the frequency with which their authors wrote about personal and familial situations. However, despite their seductive richness, these records are all primarily vehicles in which family members formulated their own memorialisation[7]. It might appear odd to question relying on opinions presented by the very objects of an historical study, but the mere fact that these records were created shows a prevailing concern for posterity and even an idealism, which would also have influenced the way in which they were written[8]. To rely too heavily on these sources also presupposes that the interactions which they describe between people linked by blood, marriage, or a shared surname are not only a fitting, but also a sufficient basis by which to analyse these relationships. These documents can indeed show the extent of kinship relations, but as they cannot tell us much about their limitations, they can foster an under-developed sense of the strength of other social units of interaction[9]. Thus, my intention here is to step back from the somewhat amorphous term 'family' and to analyse residential groups in the light of systematically definable and uniform social units: the household and the patrimony around

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[6] A few households had live-in servants, even fewer had lodgers. However, even in the largest of palaces these non-kin members of the household were accommodated wherever there was space. In the Medici Palace for example, the servants lived next to the room in which bread was made and the wet nurse was adjacent to that in which the fruit was kept; Bulst, "Die ursprüngliche innere Aufteilung des Palazzo Medici", p. 380, footnote 58.

[7] Didacticism is central to most of the *ricordanze* of this period. In writing his *Ricordi*, which was stared in 1412, Buonaccorso Pitti insisted that "...voi, figliuoli e discendenti nostri, e qualunche altro che leggerà o leggere udirà quello che qui appresso scrivo, veggia e prenda esempro...", p. 448. Likewise Gregorio Dati intended his diary to be "a chiarezza di me e di chi fosse dopo me"; *Il libro segreto di Gregorio Dati*, p. 12. This element is yet more pronounced in the work of Giovanni di Paolo Morelli, *passim*. See also footnote 56 on page 43 below.

[8] Jack Goody found that in African tribes the desire to convey an impression of close kin interaction is often greater than the actual strength of that cohesion in practice; "The Evolution of the Family", p. 110.

[9] By largely basing his study *Household and Lineage* on such documentation and by presenting it in an anecdotal fashion, F. W. Kent somewhat pre-determines his findings of close interaction within Florentine lineages. Such a method leaves little scope for the lineage to be examined beyond its own self-referential terms and it thus becomes separated from its wider social context. This inevitably restricts insight into its structural limitations.

which it was built, in the hope of eventually characterising the family unit more precisely[10]. Not only are the sources for such an approach more plentiful, they are also readily commensurable and because they reflect familial practice and not just intentions and aspirations, they are also likely to give a more accurate picture of Florentine households in the past. This in turn can illuminate the relationship between the household and the object which normally constituted the most conspicuous single element of its physical patrimony; the domicile. The fortunate survival of both documentation and buildings in Florence facilitates detailed examination of how fifteenth-century Florentines used and viewed their homes. The household unit is thus both in close accord with the general domestic concerns of this study and has the added advantage that it can be accurately defined, since its membership was frequently recorded in this period.

During this period the household unit was a practical necessity and not merely a mechanical function of family. The domicile in which it was housed provided shelter, was a refuge from the streets, and a source of security to its residents[11]. It contained the common pot from which family members ate and the hearth around which they gathered. In some cases it was also an economic unit of production. If, as in the majority of cases dealt with here, the residence was owned by its occupants, it could also provide a public focal point for their presence in the area[12]. Thus, when the management of the property was in the hands of those living there, the household composition could be better orientated to fulfil the goals of patrimonial preservation. Consequently, households not only had a less equivocal membership than families, but also one (in the case of its adult members at least) which was based on the desire for physical proximity, and therefore an individual's participation in it, or separation from it was deeply significant. For these reasons the household, or rather the patrimony around which it was usually built, was made the basis of the *portate* on which

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[10] The distinction between family and household can also be justified by their definitions. In classical Latin, *familia* is not synonymous with residence, which was conveyed by the word *domus*. In referring to a household, Thomas Aquinas used the terms *familia domestica* or *domus vel familia*, showing that as recently as the thirteenth century the concept was still the product of consciously combining family and house; Herlihy, "Family", pp. 4-5.

[11] The house is repeatedly presented in this light in Paolo da Certaldo's fourteenth-century *Libro di buoni costumi*, entries nos. 86, 138, 300 and 360. In 1427, one Luigi di Agostino literally used his house as a hide-away to avoid his creditors; D. V. and F. W. Kent, *Neighbours and Neighbourhood*, p. 56.

[12] The various aspects raised by the settlement of clans will be dealt with in Chapters Two, Four and Five.

fifteenth-century Florentine taxes were calculated[13]. The collation of tax reports by this method easily enabled the fifteenth-century tax officers to compare a large number of households on fixed and equal terms and this material offers the historian the same chance. This chapter uses the data collated from the *portate* to give an overview of households during this period. However, because of the statistical nature in which the evidence was collected and presented in the *portate*, this chapter will contain few individual examples. More detailed analyses of various aspects of family and residence will instead be presented in those which follow.

As the *portate* were based on patrimonies and not households, it was possible for the members of a household not to be living from the same patrimony. For whatever the degree to which patrimony and residence had been synonymous in previous centuries, it was no longer the case by the *quattrocento* and there are several cases of houses containing individuals living from different patrimonies[14]. As this chapter focuses on the relationship between the household and the patrimony of its inhabitants, the figures used here come only from those tax returns in which the entirety of the household wealth remained united. That it was possible to divide household wealth but remain co-resident does not undermine the depth of the bonds uniting patrimony and residence, for the fact that 95.8% of the sample did keep the two together shows that familial co-residence held such an important place in the minds of Florentines that it was maintained even after the financial imperative behind it had been loosened.

The Data of Household Structure

Having established the parameters of the basic unit to be used in this chapter, I shall now turn to the method by which the data was collated. The information used here has been taken from the tax returns of the patrimonies of the twelve clans living in the Quarter of Santa Croce from 1427-1480[15]. As was mentioned in the Introduction, the household(s) declared in each *portate* need not actually have been resident in the quarter in which their

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[13] Fiscal evaluation based on residence was not new to Florence in the fifteenth century. The taxes of 1342 had been levied on the hearth; Canestrini, *La scienza e l'arte di stato*, p. 64. The first such example of this method known to me dates from 1221, when the Florentine Podestà raised, "...viginti sollidos denariorum pisanorum per quodlibet foculare militis et decem sollidos per quodlibet foculare peditis..."; Levi (ed.), *Registri dei cardinali Ugolino d'Ostia*, p. 12, document 9. Establishing the hearth as the focus of the fiscal unit linked patrimony and residence together.

[14] Equally possible, but yet more infrequent was for a patrimony to be shared between the inhabitants of different houses. See the example of Bernardo and Giovanni di Filippo Giugni on page 115 below.

[15] The names of these twelve clans are listed in the Introduction.

tax papers were presented. Seven percent of all the household samples were noted as living in the countryside and another twenty percent fail to mention any residence at all[16]. However, this fact did not lead them to adopt the rustic way of life of *contadini* and for the purposes of this study, those who were *in villa* when the *portate* were compiled will be considered as temporarily-displaced urbanites.

Over the period of this study eight separate *Catasti* were compiled, which include thorough information on Florentine patrimonies and households[17]. From 1447 to 1480 reliable registers were created every eleven years. For the earlier years the interval was irregular. The first was created over a two-year period from 1427, after which the records were updated in 1430, 1433 and again in 1442. They provide data on a total of 159 distinct physical households constituting the twelve clans. However, after 1427 the ledgers, for the most part, provide information on people who had already been registered in previous redactions. Therefore, the total headcount of 3163 includes many individuals recorded repeatedly over a number of years. This naturally reduces the breadth of the sample, but it does increase the depth of information on those it covers. This approach is largely in contrast to the method used in *Les Toscans*, which is limited to a demographic 'snap-shot' of Tuscany in 1427. The current chapter, however, is concerned with the interdependence of patrimony and household and for this a diachronic approach is more valuable as it enables particular patrimonies to be followed over time. Unlike the rather inflexible censuses with which it is usually measured, the household is not a static institution, for it constantly evolves and its appearance in the flash of a census might fail to show either its usual form or even the direction of this evolution[18]. Distinct household types have differing 'life cycles' and develop at varying speeds and the best method to observe them is by increasing the frequency of the 'snap-shots' until the individual pictures imitate the effect of a zoetrope.

After defining the household, it is important to distinguish its various guises one from another in a manner which is comprehensible, but not simplistic. The sample of 159 distinct households over a fifty-three-year period provides sufficient examples of each category to

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[16] Among them are the 4.2% of the sample that shared a house with their kin, but lived from a different patrimony. Their separate *portate* had the effect of creating phantom households which occupied phantom houses.

[17] In later chapters the range of data used will be modified as befits the subject matter. However, for the purpose of compiling reliable information on the make-up of families, the *portate* of both the 1451 *Estimo* and the 1495 *Decima repubblicana* have been omitted. In neither tax were the living expenses of *bocche* eligible as a deduction from the patrimony's assets and household membership was therefore very inconsistently reported.

[18] Berkner, "The Stem Family and the Development Cycle of the Peasant Household", p. 405.

render them mutually illustrative. In creating the categories I did not follow all aspects of Peter Laslett's archetype, as the issues raised by patrimonial management differ slightly from his view of the criteria for studying family structure. The five main types which I have identified are as follows and they are illustrated in Figure One[19]:

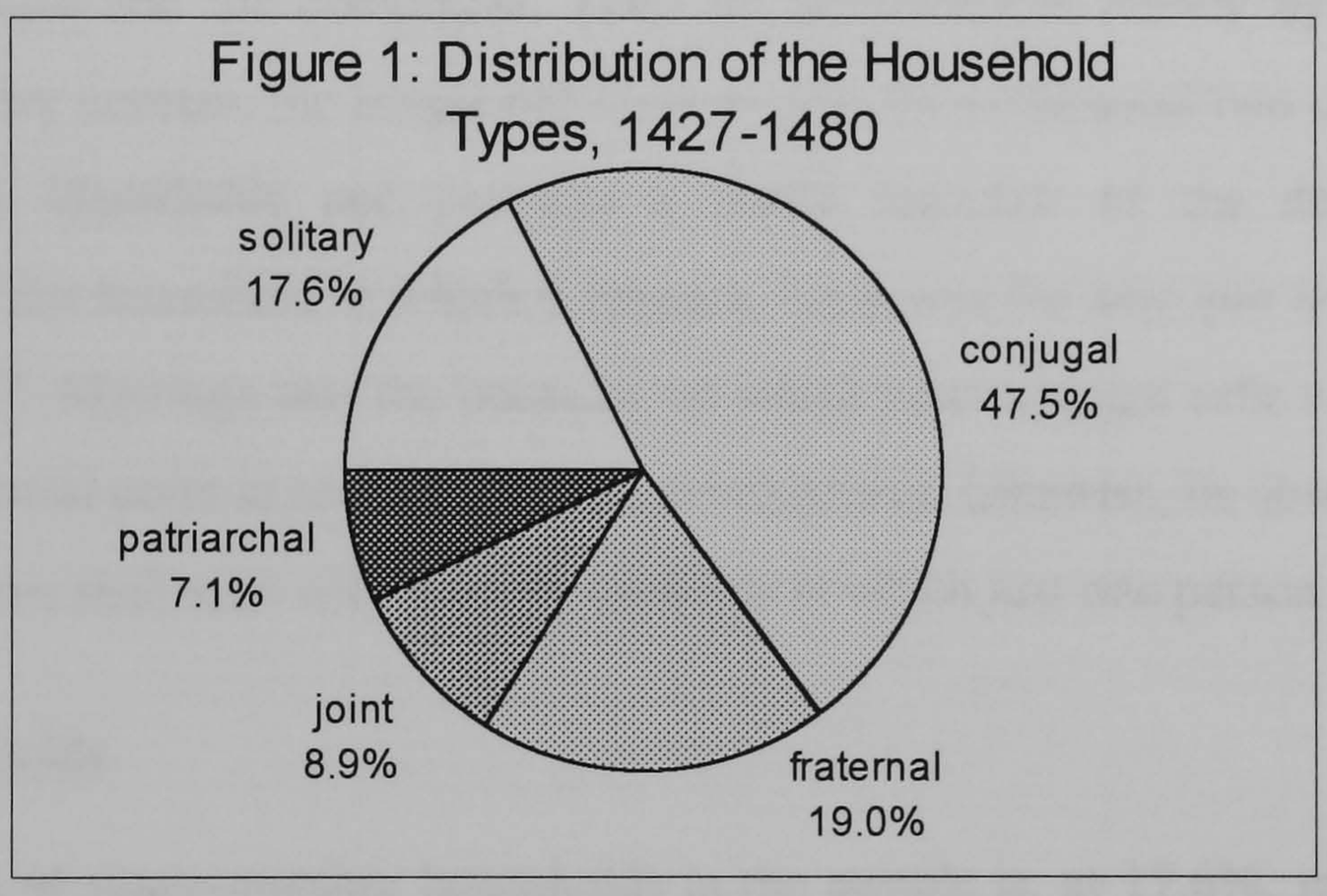
I. *Solitary*: A person who lives alone.

II. *Conjugal*: A household based on one married pair.

III. *Fraternal*: A sibling household in which no more than one brother is married.

IV. *Joint*: A household containing more than one married brother and/or one in which nephews/nieces or cousins live.

V. *Patriarchal*: A household containing a father living with any number of his married sons.



The data in Figure One displays the incidence of these households types, but not the number of individuals which each contains. Thus, the actual number of people residing in large families is somewhat under-represented, and that of people living alone proportionately over-represented. For example, there were 101 solitary householders, yet altogether 344 people lived in the 41 patriarchal households[20]. This imbalance is corrected in Figure Two, which shows the total numbers in each household type over the same period.

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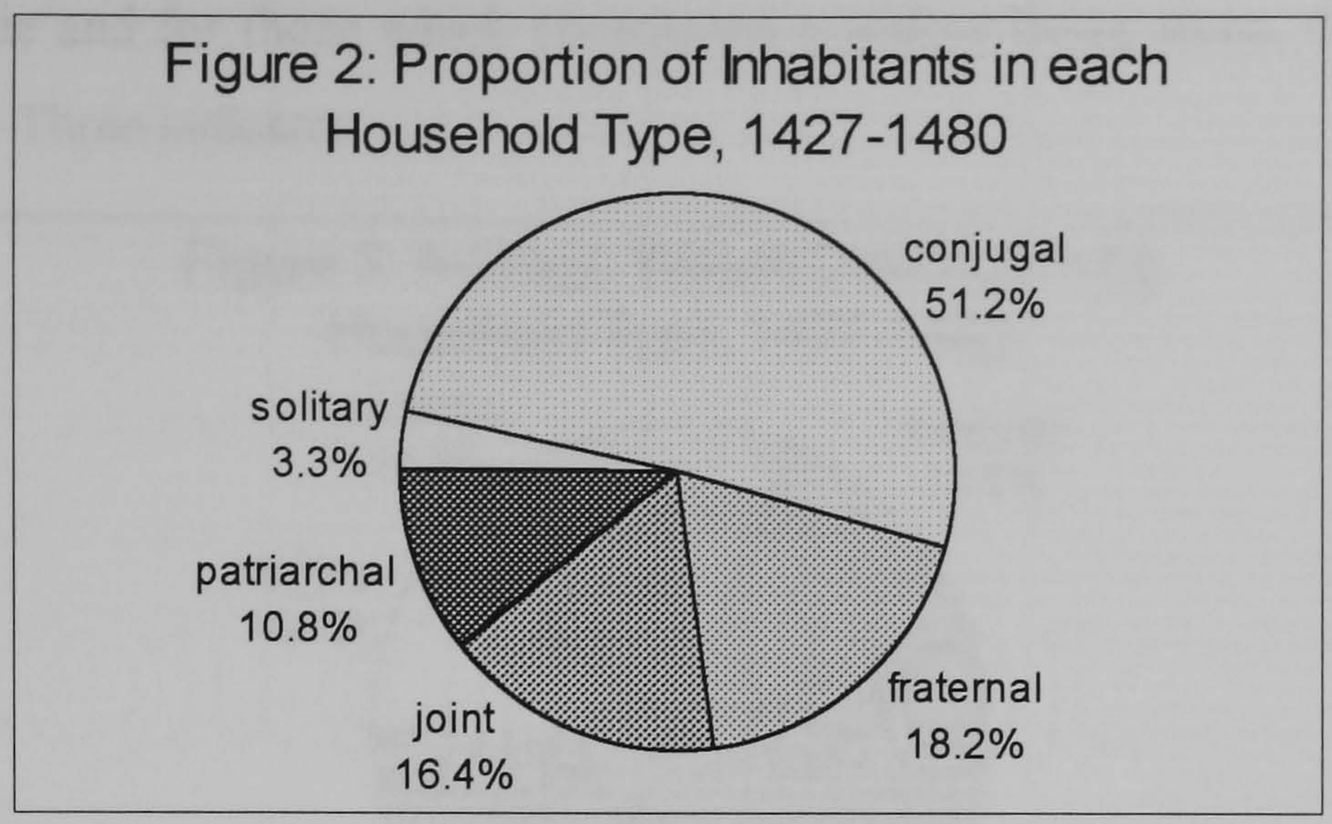
[19] Understandably, distilling over 3000 examples created situations in which some generalisations were necessary, if only to maintain clarity. The process used is explained and expanded upon in Appendix One.

[20] If illegitimate relatives are included, the total of people living in the 101 solitary households rises to 110. However, as they were illegible to inherit, they will be excluded from all subsequent information and charts. Again, more information on this theme is presented in Appendix One.



The Simple Households Types

The five household types which I shall analyse here can also easily be divided into two groups; the simple and the compound. They are differentiated merely by the number of conjugal cells they contain: the simple has none or one, the compound two or more. Marital status is easily identifiable and provides a useful indicator of the development and expectations of the household in which it appears, for it was the *sine qua non* of producing legitimate heirs[21]. Marriage was the occasion on which new conjugal cells were formed and it was thus a crucial point in any household's development. Likewise, its absence was just as significant and we shall start with those households in which just one person lived.

Solitary Households

The proportion of single-member households in the sample is, at 17.6%, marginally above that of the whole of Tuscany given in *Les Toscans* (15.9%)[22]. This is because rural households generally formed an economic unit of production requiring several workers, whereas in the city it was quite possible to have an income entirely unconnected with either residence or family, for example, the earnings of a manual day labourer or the income of the *scioperati*. However, this in itself was unlikely to popularise the solitary residence, as the declarations of their assets indicate most of them to have been poor. The average total capital assets of those considered here is 43.6% below the *f* 2082 per household average of

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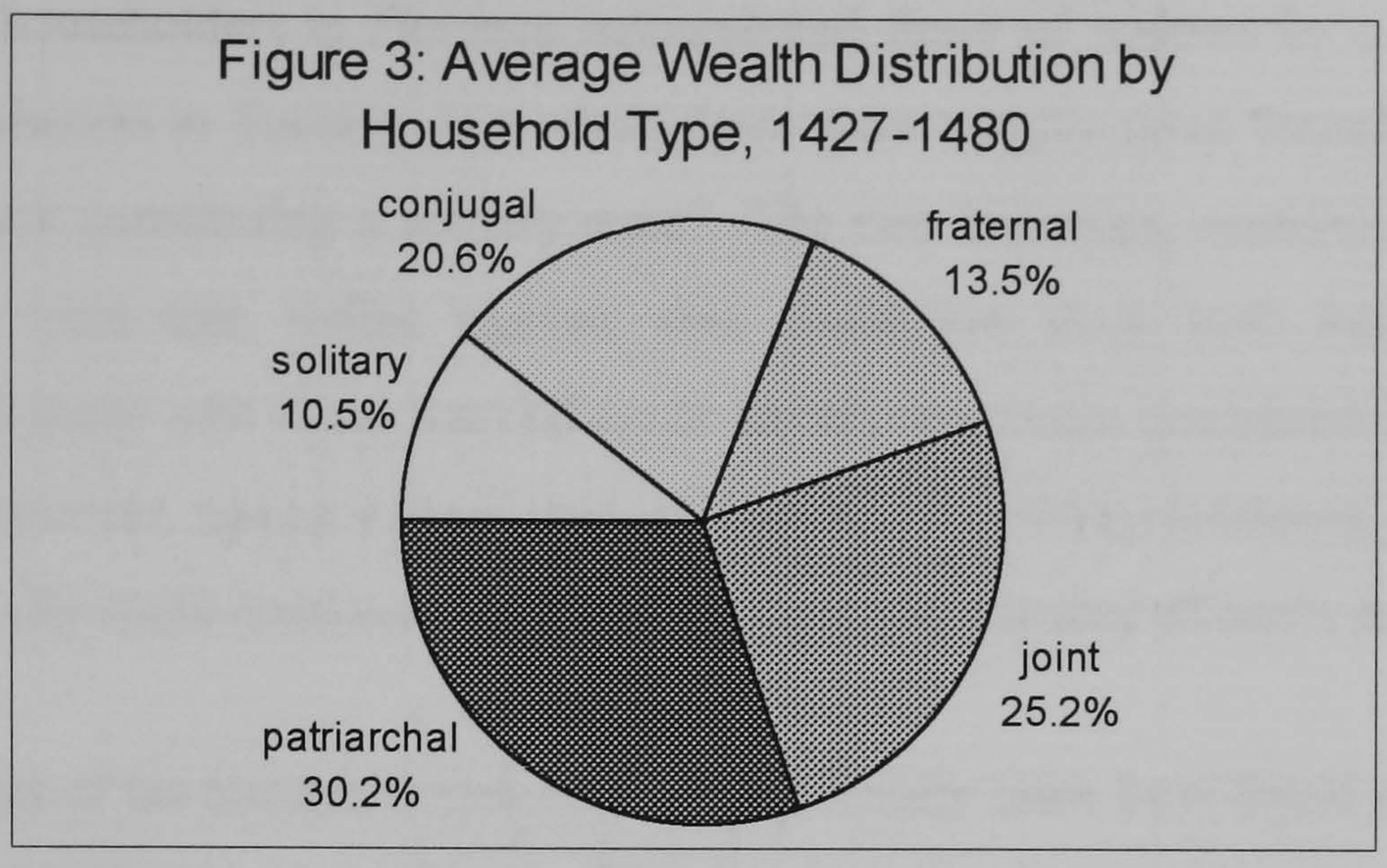
[21] It was also thought that propagation was the only valid basis of any marriage: "…sarebe disiuncto et scemo ogni amore di matrimonio, né in alcuno modo riputato utile, quando in esso non fussi l'honestà della perpetua salute"; Matteo Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, book IV, sentence no. 53 on page 160.

[22] Only 90.56% of the data in Table 77 on page 482 of *Les Toscans* is directly comparable with the data used here for defining household groups. This is because the authors followed Laslett's methodology which considers household membership from a demographic, rather than a patrimonial viewpoint. I have integrated the missing 9.44% of the households of *Les Toscans* into the categories of conjugal, patriarchal and joint households by distributing it according to the proportions in which they occur in my samples for these three categories.

the entire sample and for those which constituted a widow living alone, 68.9% below the mean, as Figure Three indicates.



This background of relative poverty gives an impression of isolation and even impotence rather than one of deliberate withdrawal and it suggests that solitary households were generally less the product of choice than necessity[23]. The themes of solitude, poverty and widowhood have been linked in Tuscan thought since at least the time of San Bernardino[24] and current notions about the households of solitary widows also tend to stress them being the outcome of impoverishment and alienation; both from the family of their birth and those into which they had married[25]. Indeed, the brevity of most widows' *portate* demonstrates this; nearly half show no residence and few declare more than the income of a farm or the expectation of interest payments on *Monte* shares[26].

In comparison with widows, the social and economic status of solitary men is more varied. Their average wealth too was below the mean, by 31%, and many of them were also near to destitution[27]. However, the varied sources of urban wealth mentioned above meant that those with their own liquid capital to invest in trade or the *Monte* could easily have had

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[23] Such poverty might have contributed to estrangement from the clan; Paolo da Certaldo's recommendation not to slight one's poor relations was probably a remonstrance to the many that did; "Se tu ài parenti poveri, no gli schifare né scacciare, ché quando schifi loro, te accusi per crudele: dunque amali e mantiegli quanto puoi, acciò che chi l'udisse non diventi verso te crudele se' di loro"; *Libro di buoni costumi*, entry no. 293.

[24] See the comments of Herlihy in "Age, Property, and Career in Medieval Society", p. 144.

[25] Chabot, "Widowhood and poverty in late medieval Florence", p. 297. Widows did however have the right to return to the family of their birth after their husband's death; Klapisch-Zuber, "The *Cruel Mother*", p. 122.

[26] Caterina, widow of Antonio di Cocco Donati wrote of the provisions left her by husband: "non stimo nulla queste chose, ch'io sono povera vedova e sono abadonata e non ò persona che per me sia"; *Cat.* 491 *bis*, fol. 122*v*. Niccola, widow of Andrea di Giovanni di Belano highlighted the problem of relying on income from *Monte* shares; "Debo avere la pagha sostenuta di detti denari, ché mai non avuto nulla"; *Cat.* 491, fol. 259*v*.

[27] One of them, Francesco di Giovanni Castellani declared in his *portata* of 1458: "Eccho ciò che io ò in questo mondo è io"; *Cat.* 658, fol. 298*r*.

incomes which were largely independent of traditional land and clan-based patrimonies. This severing of the bond between capital and residence was such that the sample numbers of solitary male householders in Florence outnumbered those of widows by a proportion of two to one, whereas in Tuscany as a whole there were roughly three households of single women for each constituting a solitary male[28]. The two important contributory factors to this situation were that, unlike women, men could live alone both before and after marriage[29] and those who never married could remain in a single household for their entire adult life[30]. Moreover, ageing in itself was no hindrance to solitary residence, for mercantile activity in the city could continue to provide income up to the time of one's death[31].

The greater part of the income of these households usually came from liquid capital and this in itself highlights the most conspicuous difference between them and the larger households. Since at least the fourteenth century, trade requirements had expanded businesses beyond the confines of the family home to such a degree that, in all the *portate* from 1427 to 1498 analysed here, there is not one example of a large-scale business whose main investors resided together. Yet, in the same period urban real estate – which constituted the most conspicuous aspect of each clan's property – remained firmly within the patrimonies of large households. Thus, whilst wealth creation could become detached from its familial base, patrimonial ownership could not. Large mercantile interests were not in themselves antithetical to the holding of propertied wealth, but solitary residence was. Solitary households were infertile and their existence just too precarious for them ever to become a vessel for the preservation of the physical patrimony. As can be seen in Figure Four below, solitary households lasted on average for only 10.3 years, the shortest duration of all the five groups and this lack of stability also explains why the majority of them remained poor.

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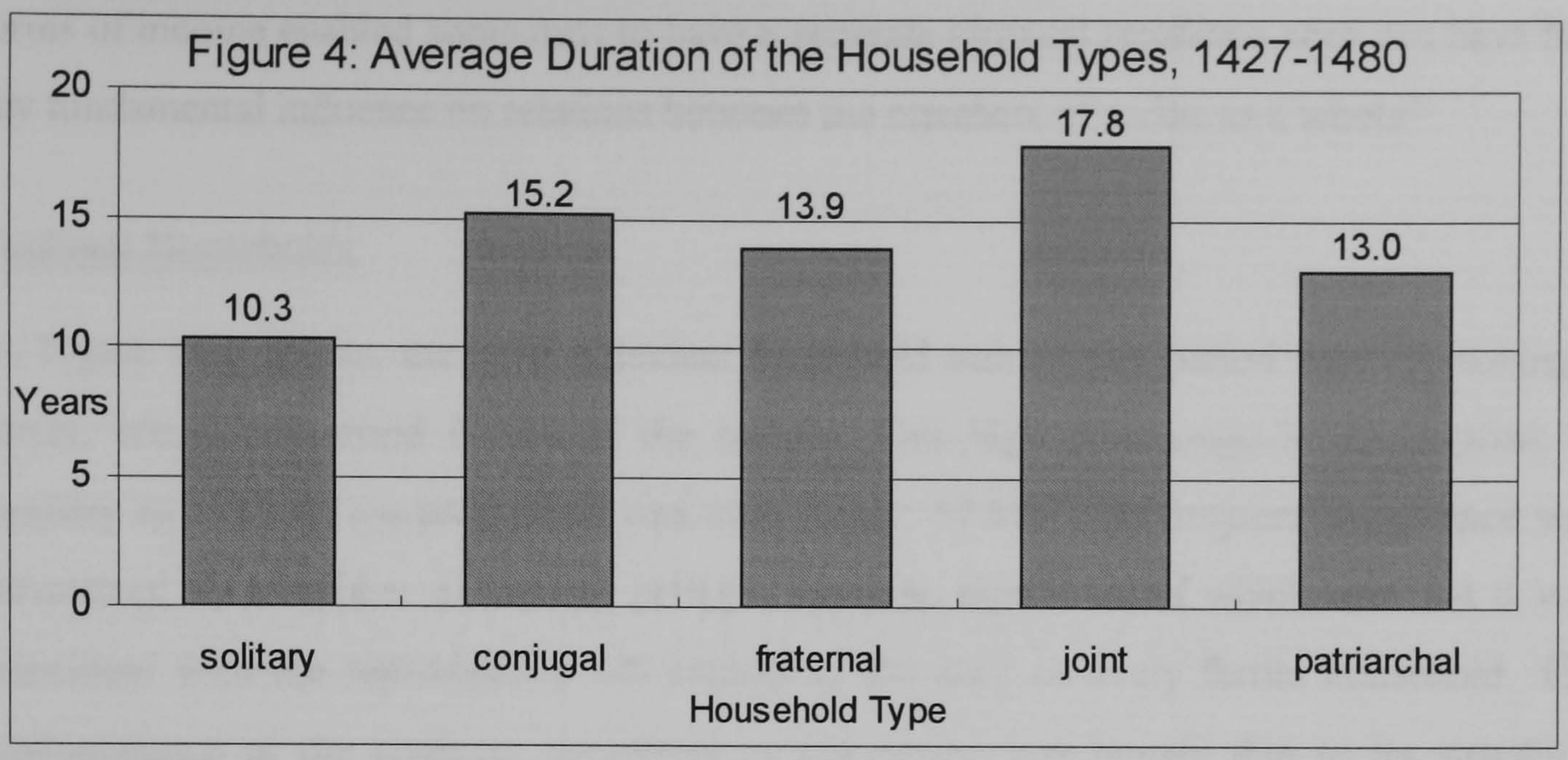
[28] Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Tuscans and their Families* (New Haven, 1985), Table 10.4 on page 301. (Table 80 on page 489 of *Les Toscans* contains a printing error). I have only used the information in this table for those households which were identified as containing just one resident.

[29] Messer Palla di Nofri Strozzi felt that even to leave a young spinster alone overnight, "è cosa da dar materia di far male"; Gregory, "Daughters, Dowries and Family in Fifteenth-Century Florence", p. 233, footnote 71.

[30] Solitary residence created no insoluble problems in practice as the chores of housekeeping could be undertaken by servants and, following its legalisation in 1363, by female slaves; Origo, "The Domestic Enemy", p. 324.

[31] Andrea de' Banchi was still active as a *setaiuolo* when he was pressing ninety; Florence Edler de Roover, "Andrea Banchi, Florentine Silk Manufacturer and Merchant of the Fifteenth Century", p. 284.



Real estate was seldom left to childless men[32] and this created a situation in which solitary householders looked to non-propertied sources of income. One notable example of this is the case of Francesco di Cino Rinuccini, who was the ninth richest man in the Quarter of Santa Croce in the first *Catasto*[33]. His 1427 *portata* shows that he had recently received *f* 648 from shares in the *Monte* which totalled *f* 10693[34]. Yet, he owned no house and from 1427 to 1433 lived in rented property. A solitary male householder could become wealthy, but property needed a lineage to which it could be passed, and he could offer none.

Thus, although the single-member urban household became increasingly possible, it is important not to present it as an innovation which greatly affected the nature of patrimonial ownership. For, while the most conspicuous aspect of familial wealth remained its patrimonial holdings, it is clear that they would not be entrusted to the solitary householder. However, it would be equally wrong to conclude that solitary householders were necessarily either detached or even alienated from their wider clan as a result[35]. Patrimonial management may have had an important influence on a household's consistency, but it did not constitute a clan's entire emotional orbit. This relationship, however, cannot be illustrated from the sources consulted here. Likewise, the fact that reliance on independent

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[32] This theme will be explored in the Conclusion.

[33] Martines, *The World of the Florentine Humanists*, Appendix II, Table V on page 365. It should be noted however that Martines' figures are given net, i.e. with deductions for the *bocche* already subtracted. This naturally underestimates the wealth of men who were both fecund and rich, and conversely exaggerates that of men like Francesco di Cino, who lived alone.

[34] His *campione* entry for 1427 starts on *Cat.* 69, fol. 65*v*. and the *portate* for 1430 and 1433 commence in *Cat.* 399, fol. 25*r*. and *Cat.* 448, fol. 360*r*. respectively.

[35] In 1442 Niccola, the widow of Giovanni di Michele Castellani found herself in penury, adding that "se non fusse il figliuolo, che le dà le spese, sarebbe male e peggio"; *Cat.* 614, fol. 467*r*.

forms of income enabled some men to have a separate physical residence need not have had any fundamental influence on relations between the members of a clan as a whole[36].

Conjugal Households

As Figure One shows, the most abundant household unit in this period was the conjugal family, which comprised 47.5% of the sample. This high percentage is no surprise; in Tuscany as a whole the proportion was even larger: 57.8%[37]. Its frequent occurrence was determined by a number of factors, perhaps the most significant of which was that it was coincident with the reproductive cell present at the core of every fertile household. The predominance of the conjugal household in this period was largely due to its structural benefits, chief among which were its fertility and longevity. Richard Goldthwaite sees the rise of the nuclear family from the fourteenth century as a corollary of the need of Florentine companies to reach beyond the capital of their own household patrimony in order to expand. This development led to the fragmentation of collective patrimonies as constituent families went their own way in the world of commerce[38]. As we have seen in the examples of solitary residences, the separation of capital and residence was indeed responsible for some changes in the typology of wealthier households. However, only a few of the families studied here were in a position to enter capital-based trade and yet they were still able to form a viable conjugal household. A more inclusive explanation for their predominance would simply be that the nature of urban economic life in *quattrocento* Florence facilitated the rise of the conjugal household and its position was then further enhanced by the type's ability for longevity and self-replication. These latter qualities also lent it stability, which can be seen as the type's most important structural advantage. 73% of all the examples of conjugal households found here were preceded by the same type in the previous tax record and 63% of them likewise continued as conjugal households in the subsequent one. Those in the sample lasted on average for 15.2 years. Indeed, this figure may even be an underestimate, for many conjugal cells were initially created within larger compound households before being able to become an entity in their own right. Yet, the conjugal household was not just a by-product of the intermittent fragmentation of more complex types, for given the infrequency of such divisions and the number of conjugal households, this method simply could not have accounted for the sheer quantity of the latter.

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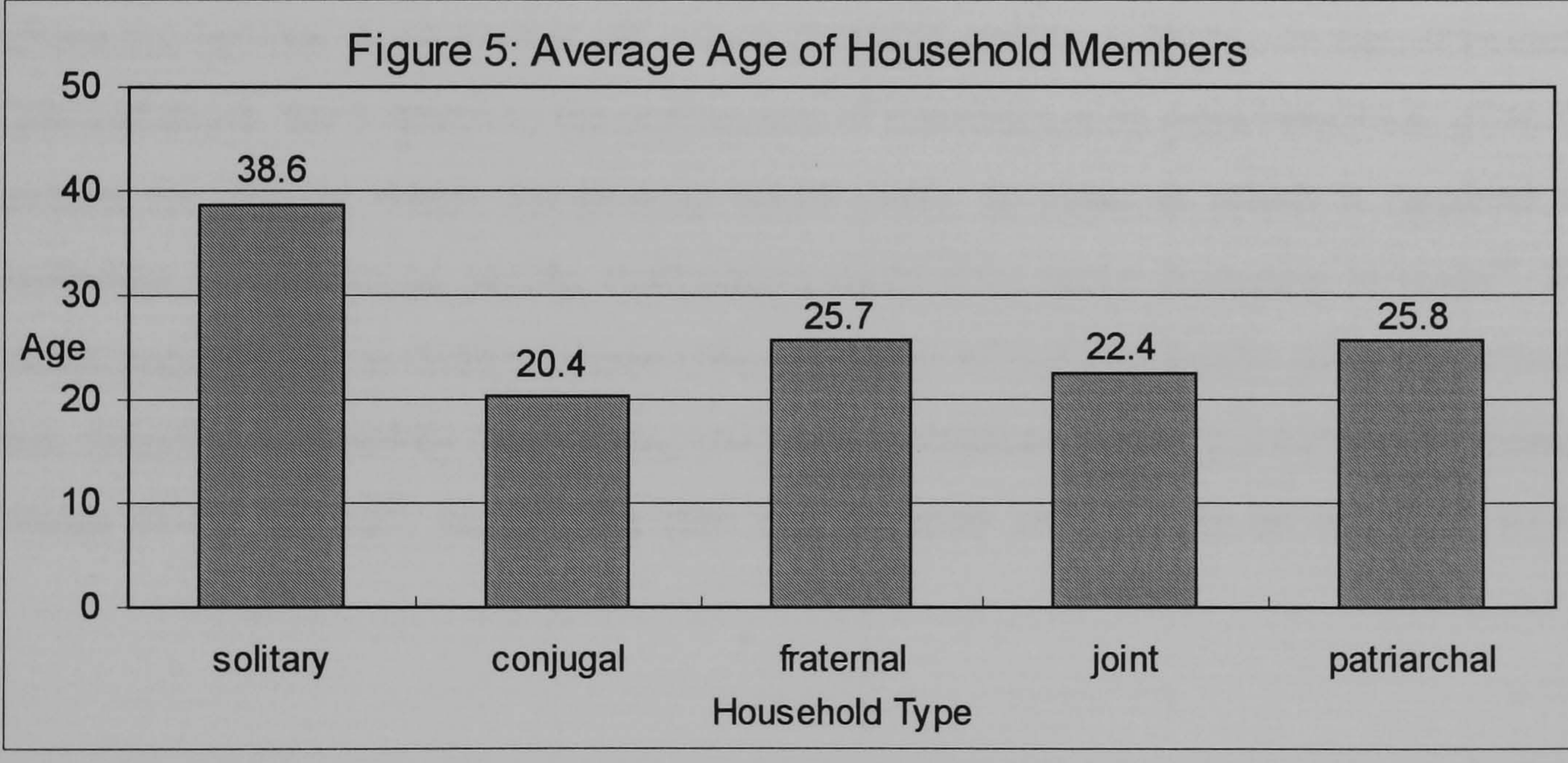
[36] F. W. Kent's views on the interaction of kin leads inevitably to the assumption that separation from one's kin could only be the result of ostracism and not choice; *Household and Lineage*, pp. 162-163 and 246-247.

[37] Figure extrapolated from Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans*, Table 77 on page 482.

Their stability derived not so much from the longevity of the head of the household as from the resilience of the model to the events around it. Because the men on whom this study concentrates married late[39], the average age of the *paterfamilias* of these households was already quite high: 47.9 years old. Despite this, when viewed as a vessel for the retention of the familial patrimony, the conjugal model prevailed because it could continue unchanged even after the death of the father (or the mother), since the estate remained undivided until all the sons had reached the age of twenty-five[40].

Another feature lending the conjugal household stability was the high proportion of people it contained who were subject to the authority of the *paterfamilias*: on average 5.9 per household[41]. This was advantageous because authority was more easily exercised (and was therefore greater) over those who were united by residency. The youth of the children in conjugal households kept the average age of this type down to 20.4 years, the lowest of all the five groups. Thus aside from the validity which the production of heirs conferred on a *paterfamilias* and, by association, his household, the very presence of this young progeny requiring succour and support also created a further imperative for household stability.

Figure 5: Average Age of Household Members



The ability of the conjugal household to resist break-up was the result of the practical advantages of its own innate structure. It accommodated a group of closely-related people within a house which was owned by the head of the family, thus achieving a co-incidence of residence, patrimonial management and fertility. This last aspect is important, for it

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[38] Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 253-254 and p. 261.

[39] For the patterns of urban marriage see Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber *Les Toscans*, chapter fourteen.

[40] At which point a conjugal household often became a frérèche, a household type which will be dealt with below.

[41] Only the patriarchal household type had a larger number under the authority of the *paterfamilias*, for they contained on average 8.4 people in each house. With an average of 10.2 people each, joint households tended to be the largest (see page 47), but their members were not all subject to the authority of a single individual.

differentiated the conjugal from the solitary household. The conjugal unit was not a twig broken from the genealogical tree, but one of its main branches and this was thanks to its fertility. This continuity would have conferred legitimacy on the unit and further favoured it as a valid form in which to conserve the patrimony[42]. This acceptance is also reflected in its average wealth, which shows that Florentines of the *quattrocento* were also willing to invest in this household type as one which had a good chance of success, which of course only bolstered it further. The average wealth of those studied here was *f* 2307, which was 10.8% above the mean. Thus, despite the type's frequent origin as a sub-cell of a compound household, the conjugal unit came to be the predominant household type in this period as a result of its relative ease of formation, ability for self-replication and overall steadfastness.

It is important to see why stability was considered advantageous to the smooth administration of the familial patrimony. As we have seen, the continuation of the solitary household is based on the survival of just one, often ageing individual, whose property would need reallocating on his death. In the conjugal household, its larger size and the relative youth of the generation which would eventually inherit its assets meant that this reallocation lay that much further off, which provided greater resilience to the vicissitudes of life and death. Such delays to the reallocation of material goods were beneficial, given the potential for discord which the process could cause. In cases in which it required the distribution of commercial profits, reallocation could even prove damaging to trade[43]. The process regularly led to disagreements when members of just one family were concerned[44]. Thus, delaying dispersal by maintaining unity was a common theme in a number of didactic writings of the period[45], as was the idea that property should only be entrusted to the

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[42] It should be noted that the frequent use of the fideicommissum in this period meant that any patrimony covered by this legal device was entrusted rather than just abandoned to the testator's heirs. One of the fundamental aims of this practice was to guarantee that an estate would only be passed to fertile heirs.

[43] If the dispersal of company profits could be delayed, they could be reinvested in trade. The deaths of Lorenzo di Giovanni in 1440 and of Giuliano di Piero Medici in 1478 enabled the Medici Bank to avoid liquidating assets to pay out their shares in the company and thus the money was able to remain continuously active in commerce.

[44] Giovanni di Paolo Morelli was dismissive of entrusting the administration of an estate to relatives, for he thought that the love of a father for his children was infinite compared "a quella degli istrani, o parenti o amici. Istrani gli chiamo, perchè dove giuoca pecunia o alcuno bene proprio, né parente né amico si truova che voglia meglio a te che a sé"; *Ricordi*, p. 219. Morelli's comments were occasioned by a particular case of maladministration by his own relatives, but his comments echo other examples found in Chapter Three.

[45] See footnote 56 below.

household head; the *paterfamilias*[46]. Consequently, the father's authority was not solely derived from his position as the household's senior member; his control of the property was also central to maintaining this pre-eminence. As the example of King Lear shows, once power and property are dispensed with, it is difficult to retain authority. The strength of the conjugal unit lay in maintaining the unity of residence of those united by a patrimony under the authority of the head of the household's only conjugal cell, the *paterfamilias*.

Fraternities

The reason why the figure for the prevalence of urban conjugal households is a full ten percent lower than the nearest corresponding category given in *Les Toscans* is because a much larger proportion of the households analysed here contained bachelors and married brothers living together. They account for 27.9% of this sample, yet only a fraction of that (7.8%) in Tuscany as a whole[47]. This is perhaps the most crucial difference between the predominantly rural Tuscan model and the richer urban clans studied here and it is a reflection of the different requirements of both labour and patrimonial management in town and country. For this analysis I shall split this household type into two. Firstly, I shall look at the fraternal households consisting of fewer than two conjugal cells and, secondly, the joint households which contained any other combination of brothers, nephews and cousins. This latter model will be dealt with below in the section on compound households.

Strictly speaking, a classical frérèche consists only of unmarried siblings and thus I have called my generic category a fraternity[48]. However, from the point-of-view of patrimonial administration, the presence of one conjugal pair caused no great changes to the household; it threatened neither the legality of the brothers' shared property ownership nor the continuation of their co-habitation. Fifteenth-century Florentines practised fully partible inheritance among legitimate sons, so theoretically no one brother's chances of inheritance or marriage were disadvantaged by another brother already having wed. A brother might

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[46] "...il figliuolo sta al padre soggetto e sottomesso e umile infino a tanto che 'l padre tiene la signoria de la casa e de l'avere suo; e quando il padre à data la signoria al figliuolo di governare il suo avere, egli soprastà al padre e àllo [in odio] e pargli mille anni il dì che si muoia per non vederlosi innanzi: e d'amico ch'era prima, è diventato tuo nimico per la fidanza ch' ài presa di lui..."; Paolo da Certaldo, *Libro di buoni costumi*, entry no. 375. The early fifteenth-century Florentine friar Giovanni Dominici similarly held that "with respect to temporal goods, all that they [the children] have and possess should of course be under the authority of the father and mother..."; *On the Education of Children*, p. 51.

[47] Figure extrapolated from Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans*, Table 77 on page 482.

[48] As specified in Laslett's "Introduction", p. 31. Where the term 'frérèche' is used below, it is intended only for households of co-residential siblings, none of whom are married. 'Fraternity' will however also be used as the generic term for a sibling household, whatever the marital status of its members.

earn a position of *primus inter pares* in the social order of the household by marrying, but as the likeliest candidate for marriage was also the oldest brother, it was probable that he already enjoyed a pre-eminent position in the home.

The expression of self-interest within a household unified by common property ownership could give rise to tension. This potential for strain was grounded in the fact that, unlike the conjugal household, the fraternity was not created through the explicit volition of its members, but was rather the result of circumstances in the household from which it developed. A fraternity could only be created incidentally by the death of both parents or the attainment of majority by the sons in a household in which the father was no longer present[49]. This determined its forerunners chiefly to be conjugal households and 87% of them did indeed evolve from such a household[50]. This also meant that the timing of its formation could not be chosen to suit its members. Its primary purpose was to allow the continued co-residence of the inheriting generation of the conjugal household from which it had emerged. Its fraternal bonds would eventually be loosened, but this could seldom occur immediately on the death of the father. The practice of equitable inheritance meant that disbursement would have to be postponed at least until the youngest son reached the age of legal responsibility; thus the estate usually first went into trust. This created 'leaderless' households which could be construed as being impotent and thus their strength was all the more reliant on the unity derived from co-habitation and common patrimonial management. The varying status of the brothers could have led to problems within the household, but they should all have acted in the best interests of the collective patrimony, for that would also have served their best individual interests when the estate was eventually divided. Therefore, the successful continuation of this household type was necessarily a careful balance between individual views and collective action, for it was built on a basic contradiction: its members shared property and residency rights, but the only way their joint household could continue was if they did not actually claim these rights[51]. As there was no feasible half measure between collectivity and separation, the eventual fission of the

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[49] I have found only one example of brothers forming a fraternity after having divided their goods and lived in different households, see page 73 below. In this case however, the decision by Bardo and Bernardo di Bartolo Corsi was probably occasioned by the high purchase cost of the palace in which they intended to live.

[50] The growth in the proportion of households constituting frérèches between 1427 and 1458 can be see in Figures One and Two in Appendix One. This underlines both the evolutionary nature of households and the fact that the frérèche was a natural product of the conjugal household, for its increase in this period was entirely at the expense of the conjugal model.

[51] Berkner and Shaffer, "The Joint Family in the Nivernais", p. 161.

household was inevitable. Such circumstances meant that the fraternity could never become a favoured household model, but, given the late marriage of urban men, their continued fertility[52] and the constant threat of an early death, it was at least guaranteed a permanent place within the Florentine society of this period.

The circumstances surrounding the creation of the fraternity accompanied it throughout its existence. The immaturity of some of its members gave the unit an imperative for stability, at least until the brothers began to marry. This is reflected in the longevity of the type, which at 13.9 years is below that of the fertile conjugal and joint households, but which is still surprising long for what was really just a transitional household type. Given the passivity present in the unit's formation and the fact that at its outset it also included minors, it might be thought that the cohesion of its membership was maintained through some degree of compulsion. However, no family type, whatever its origin and make-up, can be viable in the long-run if built on repression and coercion. The strength of the fraternity was derived from the initial collective administration of its inherited patrimony and the long-term prospect that the estate would eventually be divided.

Unity could also be underwritten by emotional bonds and this aspect of co-residence should not be ignored, for it is certain that many brothers also actively chose to live together. Bartolomeo and Andrea di Bonsignore Spinelli were still co-habiting and living from a common patrimony when they were 72 and 69 respectively and F. W. Kent notes that fraternal households were often "so convenient and so congenial" as to last into middle-age[53]. However, conviviality must be seen as a pleasant bonus, as the reason for such domestic arrangements often lay elsewhere. In the case of the Spinelli brothers, their personal compatibility doubtless provided mutual support over the years, but their continued co-habitation pivoted on the fact that Andrea never married and their household therefore only ever contained one conjugal unit. Bartolomeo raised a family to which Andrea remained a vestigial adjunct; his celibacy put him on the sideline, lowered his authority and it was this which enabled the fraternity to continue[54].

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[52] In 1427 Alamanno di Francesco Castellani, who was sixty-eight, reported his son Spinello as being just 2½; *Cat.* 73, fol. 10*r*. Similar examples are fairly common.

[53] F. W. Kent, *Household and Lineage*, p. 31.

[54] In the Basque country, the siblings of an heir have the right to remain in the home of their birth "as long as they are celibate and willing to subordinate themselves to the authority of the active married couple"; Douglass, "The Basque Stem Family Household: Myth or Reality ?", p. 81.

The majority of fraternal alliances eventually splintered and given the restrictions they placed on their members it was necessary that they should. However, it was important that such a division should not happen too early. A large estate when divided equitably would give each male heir the means to marry. Yet as the brothers began to wed and procreate, the household could eventually expand beyond the physical capacity of their house. Given the close parallel of residence and patrimony, it became less easy to control a united patrimony once it was in the hands of individuals living in more than one house. Thus, the dissolution of the physical fraternal household was usually accompanied by the division of the patrimony between the heirs along the fissures produced by the creation of the new conjugal cells. This created fresh households whose leaders controlled their own patrimony and were resident in property which they owned outright. More than twice as many fraternities dissolved to form new conjugal households as evolved further into joint households in which at least two married brothers co-habited. However, there was usually a delay before this happened, as all the members of fraternities tended to postpone their marriages.

In the examples of classical frérèches (consisting only of bachelors) the average age of all the brothers present is 28.8 years; for the fraternity with one conjugal unit it is 38.1 years. This shows that the bachelor stage of the average frérèche lasted about a decade. The mean age of brothers in joint households (consisting of more than one conjugal unit), however, is only marginally above this, at 39.2 years. This shows that the first brother's marriage was usually rapidly followed by that of another. The average age at which all Florentine men married in this period was 34.4[55], which suggests that marriage by the members of a frérèche was initially delayed, perhaps because it started a process which hastened the end of the household type and its members were cautious of change. However, once a frérèche did break open, its tendency to splinter into conjugal rather than solitary households suggests that its remaining bachelor members all married fairly soon after the initial break.

The link between the break-up of the household and the division of the patrimony was commonly recognised in the fifteenth-century and, to avoid it, Gino di Neri Capponi advised his sons to remain united for as long as possible[56]. Alberti also urged those "gathered under

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[55] Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans*, Table 58 on page 399. The average age at which Florentine men married for the first time was in the fifteenth century was about 30; *ibid.*, Table 23 on page 205.

[56] "Da soffrire è lo stare insieme un pezzo, tanto che abbiate il modo a dividervi con unità, e che abbiate megliorato condizione..."; Gino Capponi, *Ricordi*, column 1150. Francesco Sassetti also enjoined his two sons to "seguite interamente et unitamente come giusti e buoni figliuoli et frategli"; Warburg, "Francesco Sassettis letztwillige Verfügung", p. 142.

a single roof" to "repose in the shadow of a single will"[57], for he knew that attempts to extend authority over those who were neither linked by common residence nor patrimonial ownership would probably fail. The various *portate* show this advice to have been heeded. In the whole sample there are thirteen cases of brothers who had already divided their estate and yet were still living together, whereas there are only three exceptional cases of brothers living apart who still held their goods in common.

The joint and patriarchal families studied in the next section show that there were examples in which numbers of married brothers would co-habit and keep their patrimony unified, but for this to happen certain circumstances were required to overcome the latent pressure for households containing multiple conjugal cells to dissolve. To judge from the fiscal source used here, the reason why fraternities tended to break up on the marriage of the second brother might be linked to the fact that their average wealth (*f* 1513) was 27.3% below the average of the whole sample. It may seem inconsistent to argue that wealth helped to keep conjugal households together, whilst its absence could delay the dissolution of a fraternity. Yet, it should be recalled that fraternities were united by a legal provision which temporarily restricted their members from striking out on their own. They were stable only as long as the centripetal pull of the expectation of inheritance was stronger than the centrifugal push created by the incorporation of increased numbers of conjugal cells. If an estate was not large, the fraternity would probably dissolve as soon as was legally feasible.

The change brought to a fraternity by the incorporation of conjugal cells threatened its continuation, but this was desirable, as it was only ever conceived as a temporary, sterile stop-gap. Procreation was central to the bequest of a patrimony and, when the members of a frérèche finally felt able to marry, their household needed to be able to change. Household types needed to be flexible to enhance the transmission and retention of the patrimony and if this caused the demise of a particular type, it was only proper, as they served the patrimony and not *vice versa*. Thus, in contrast to the conjugal household, which was formed by the creation of a conjugal cell, the introduction of conjugal cells to a fraternity often heralded its end. This further emphasises the fact that different household types were not random occurrences in Florentine society but that they fulfilled contrasting roles. Transformation between the various types was thus less an unfortunate hazard than a necessary strategy.

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[57] Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, p. 186. Here Alberti is referring to the individual family unit and not to the clan as a whole.

The Compound Household Types

The second part of this analysis deals with those household types containing more than one conjugal cell, for which reason they have been called compound households. They comprise two fundamental groups; the 'horizontal', in which kin of different branches of a lineage resided together from a common patrimony, and the 'vertical', in which any number of married sons lived with their father. The first of the groups to be dealt with here is the 'horizontal', which I call the 'joint category'. Given the potential breadth of its membership, some justification is perhaps required for its inclusion of such comparatively disparate relatives. It is primarily based on samples of households in which at least two married brothers were co-residents with any of their other siblings. To this has been added a second, smaller group consisting of households in which nephews/nieces or cousins lived together. The households in the latter group usually contained the descendants of erstwhile fraternities which had never divided and thus they can legitimately be categorised with the other joint households, for they all shared a common genesis, which had merely been extended over time to different degrees.

Joint Households

Two-thirds of the joint households considered here were founded on the first sub-type, consisting of at least two married brothers. We have seen that the appearance of a conjugal group in a frérèche often marked the beginning of its decline, but those fraternities which survived the incorporation of a second conjugal cell, were transformed into households based on an entirely different rationale. Because it was a poly-conjugal unit, the joint type was necessarily formed later in the life cycle of its constituents than the frérèche and, given the age and status of its members, the period of compulsory pooling of the patrimony common to the frérèche was generally finished. This meant that their members' co-residence was also primarily the result of preference. The existence of these households thus shows that there were circumstances in which the integrative pull of life *a comune* was stronger than the tendency for poly-conjugal households to disperse.

The benefits offered to a collective household by maintaining the consolidation of its patrimony are all the more evident in the households of the second sub-type in which nephews, nieces, first and second cousins all settled together and thus it is on this group that I shall concentrate. Their diverse kin membership was the result of the productivity of a

number of co-residential conjugal cells over the span of at least two generations. In time the different rate at which these cells produced children created households in which there were no clear distinctions between the various lines of descent. This gave many of those accommodating nephews and cousins the appearance of being no more than a random collection of youths. However, their background shows that they were not recent creations in which stray kin haphazardly came together, but that they were the product of steadfast co-residence since the time of the fraternity from which their different branches were descended[58]. The maintenance of both co-residence and a common patrimony over a span of at least two generations, despite the inevitable increased diversity of kin present in the household, implies that the unity which this household type offered was highly beneficial to its members and this is reflected in the extent of their prosperity, which was on average *f* 3395, 63.1% above the value of the samples as a whole. This suggests that their wealth provided a greater unificatory force than the pressure for division resulting from the heterogeneity of their membership. It could be argued that this cohesion was merely a continuation of the custom of owning property collectively. However, the imperatives of patrimonial conservation allowed for no such nostalgia. Family strategies needed to evolve to be successful and in the *quattrocento* if a patrimonial unit consisted of the pooled resources of several conjugal units, it was because it was perceived as being advantageous.

The small sub-group of joint households which had stayed together long enough to contain co-residential nephews or even cousins, derived an even greater financial advantage from their cohesion, for their mean wealth was *f* 4288, 106% above the average. In the light of their extraordinary prosperity, I would suggest that their continued unity was largely produced by the desire to avoid the break-up of their patrimonies. Quite simply, as the value of the patrimony rose, so did its ability to unify residence across familial boundaries and this is demonstrated by the disproportionately large share of the total wealth of the households containing cousins shown in Figure Five in Appendix One.

The link between household size and wealth in this period has long been known. Twenty years ago F. W. Kent stated that "it was not the nuclear but the extended families which

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[58] It takes two generations for a fraternity to evolve into a household of second cousins which means that some stages of this development inevitably lay beyond the scope of the fifty-three year period under examination here. However, enough cases demonstrate the various mechanisms of this process to enable its understanding. Details concerning the three household types which constitute this group are given in Appendix One.

were the richest of the three lineages' households"[59]. This is true of the samples dealt with here, for the joint households were also the largest type, containing on average 10.2 people per house. However, given the non-diachronic nature of previous research, it has not been possible to ascertain if large households were the product or the cause of their wealth. In the countryside it is clear that a large family was required to work the land and landlords tended to favour them when awarding share-cropping leases[60]. However, in the city the answer to whether wealth preceded or resulted from having large families can perhaps be found in the nature of these households of disparate relatives under investigation here.

The presence of so many youths of varied descent in households constituted of nephews and cousins necessarily diminished the homogeneity of the group and it also lowered the degree to which they could easily be governed by a "single will" because there was no standard *paterfamilias* present. This suggests that there was no long-term reproductive strategy governing them and that they had mainly arisen from the imperatives of patrimonial consolidation. This is reiterated by their general lack of conjugal cells, which is unusual given that they were disproportionately full of eligible young people. Not one of the households of cousins and nephews contained more than one conjugal couple and several had none at all. Naturally, many of their members did marry, but having done so, they did not return to the household with their spouse. This made the joint model a "subtractive" household type, since the marriage of its inhabitants led to their secession. Thus, their substantial patrimonial wealth was unlikely to be subsequently bequeathed within the household, being instead disbursed to new families. This suggests that these disparate households were not merely a short-term solution, but actually the dead end of a lineage, held together merely by the desire to avoid their accumulated wealth dissipating through division. This implies that they were more the product of existing wealth than a medium permitting its accumulation and retention. Once again this underlines the importance of households based on conjugal cells as necessarily being the core and driving force of successful patrimonial management, for only they both produced and retained those who would eventually inherit the household's wealth.

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[59] F. W. Kent, *Household and Lineage*, p. 69.

[60] Herlihy, "The Tuscan Town in the Quattrocento", p. 93. See also Matteo Palmieri's comments in *Vita Civile*, book IV, sentences nos. 142 and 144 on pages 179 and 180.

Patriarchal Households

The final household type to be analysed here is the patriarchal, in which at least one married son resided with his father. This model, although infrequent, is the best candidate for being the ideal household of fifteenth-century Florence. The reason for its rarity[61] is that its duration was wholly dependent on the longevity of the *paterfamilias*, who was the household's defining, but also eldest member. Given that Florentine men were on average 34.4 at the time of their marriage[62], by the time their sons were also married – which signalled the creation of a patriarchal household – they would have been approaching seventy; truly elderly by contemporary standards[63]. The structure of the patriarchal family type can be considered ideal because the effective authority of its *paterfamilias* engendered a stability which bound the household and its patrimony together. While the *paterfamilias* lived, the household would remain "additive", *i.e.* one to which members would always add their offspring, rather than seceding from it at the time of their marriage. It has already been stressed that co-residence was crucial to household stability and of all the models considered here, the patriarchal best manifested the capacity for maintaining it members' co-residence. They naturally had a tendency to be larger than the average household[64], yet despite this, there are only a couple of cases in the whole sample in which any son of a patriarchal *paterfamilias* moved out of his father's house[65].

The progenitive status of the *paterfamilias* in these families meant that, even as his sons created new conjugal sub-cells within the household, he retained his authority over them by virtue of his paternity, which was enshrined in the legal institution of *patria potestas*[66]. This

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[61] It should be remembered that although patriarchal households were relatively uncommon, Figure Two shows that three times the number of people lived in them as in the more prevalent solitary households.

[62] See footnote 55 on page 43 above.

[63] On average Florentine men died at 35.6; Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans*, Table 70 on page 444.

[64] In some cases the physical unity of the family could only be retained by accommodating the 'overflow' in a neighbouring property. By 1480, Bernardo di Giovanni Galilei had purchased a neighbouring house from his nephew in which to accommodate some of his family of eighteen; *Cat.* 1003, fol. 162*r*. Likewise, in 1430 Domenico di Francesco Spinelli's household, which contained two married sons, also incorporated the adjacent house, which he rented from his nephews; *Cat.* 354, fol. 389*r*.

[65] In the 1460s Girolamo di Matteo Morelli moved his family of seven into a large house (no. 17 on Map no. 4 on page 99) which he had just bought for the substantial sum of *f* 1100; *Cat.* 914, fol. 468*r*. However, as his father, mother and brother were only living next door (in no. 18), the move was perhaps occasioned more by reasons of comfort than any irreconcilable family differences. For the other example, see page 115 below.

[66] *Patria potestas* was not however a panacea for solving all difficulties, for even in the Roman household where its power had been greater, tensions remained; Saller, "*Patria Potestas* and the stereotype of the Roman family", pp. 17-20. Nonetheless, in the households examined here it ensured a framework of authority which gave the *paterfamilias* precedence. A father's word was always legally accepted over that of his son, regardless of whether or not he had already emancipated him; Kuehn, *Emancipation in Late Medieval Florence*, p. 45.

differentiated the type from other models incorporating married men, for both fraternal and joint households lacked a central figure who had exercised authority over their membership since childhood. As a result, these latter types, bound together only by 'horizontal' ties of kinship and their co-residence, had to be braced by legal obligation and the financial advantages gained through patrimonial cohesion. The patriarchal model simply did not need to be contractual, for the institution of *patria potestas* made it inherently resistant to fraction. This is not to say that it was necessarily long-lasting, for the patriarch's early death meant that these households lasted on average for only thirteen years. However, such was his authority that they only ever broke up because of his death. In contrast, the predicament of the fraternal households was generally 'when' rather than 'if' to dissolve. The emotional bonds uniting patriarchal households also left them less dependent on the unificatory effect of prosperity. They were generally rich, with an average wealth of *f* 2822, 35.5% above the average, but given the number of people they accommodated, such a level was probably more a necessity than a luxury[67]. The patriarchal household was created by the natural evolution of a conjugal family, but the economies of scale it offered might at least have aided its survival[68]. As the marriage of a son led to neither legal nor residential separation from his father[69], the timing of his matrimony need not have been determined by prior capital accumulation. This could explain why the average age of married sons in patriarchal households was lower than those of men living in fraternities[70]. By avoiding the expenditure of dividing a household for the benefit of newly-weds, these families avoided the disbursement of their patrimonies. The lower ages of grooms (and brides[71]) in patriarchal households also enabled them to reproduce more quickly, thus reducing the gap between successive generations and this in turn boosted their numbers and stability.

The similar nature of patriarchal and conjugal households helps explain the overall predominance of the latter in the fifteenth century. Both types were basically defined by a

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[67] Patriarchal households contained on average 8.4 inhabitants and those in which more than one married son was resident had on average 13.2 people per household.

[68] This economic reasoning also motivated Alberti's plea for maintaining unified residences; *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 185-186.

[69] Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber maintain (with no further qualification) that "beaucoup des nouveaux maris dirigeaient leur propre ménage"; *Les Toscans*, p. 419. Such a situation was only likely for a groom without father or brothers.

[70] The average age of *all* the married sons in patriarchal households is 33, whereas that of just the first married brother in a frérèche is 38.1.

[71] Domenico di Giovanni Giugni's wife Margarita was twelve when first mentioned in his father's *portata* of 1433; *Cat.* 493, fol. 416*r*. The declarations of her age in 1447, 1451 and 1458 consistently indicate a birth date of around 1421.

vertical bond of kinship between father and son(s) and their irrevocable co-residence. The difference between them lay merely in the fact that in the patriarchal model this bond had progressed further. Conjugal households were thus not merely complementary to the patriarchal model, they were its prototype, from which 87% of all patriarchal households evolved. The marriage of a son in a conjugal household was not a prelude to his secession from the house, but merely the bridge to the establishment of a patriarchal household. This development required no patrimonial realignment, nor did it disrupt the residence. However, in practice it was more common for the death of the *paterfamilias* to disrupt this process and for the conjugal household to become a frérèche.

Given the dominance of the conjugal cell as the determining feature and building block of previous household models, it appears therefore that the institution of the *paterfamilias* within the patriarchal household created a family type which was resistant to the autonomous streak of the conjugal cell. Nevertheless, this was not entirely advantageous. For while a patrimony remained united in the hands of the *paterfamilias*, it could not legally be used independently by any of his sons. Thus, in practice the authority by which the cohesion of the household was enabled also had the unfortunate effect of hampering all autonomy by the household's younger generation. This could have hindered enterprise and the productive use of the family's capital and may even have damaged the household's long-term viability. As a result, following the tradition of flexibility and evolution in Florentine household management, the leaders of these households increasingly resorted to a procedure for freeing-up their patrimonies to allow its use by the younger male generation.

It was legally possible to free individuals from the *patria potestas* of their living father by an act of emancipation. This granted the beneficiary, the *emancipato*, a distinct and separate legal identity and gave him the potential for independent financial activity[72]. Indeed, the act of emancipation was often accompanied by a *praemium emancipationis*, in which the father endowed his son with property. It could be thought therefore that emancipation was the point at which a father severed the bonds with his son, as was suggested by the symbolic release of the son's hand as the notarial act was drawn up. However, both the timing of its

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[72] Prior to emancipation no property could be legally transferred between father and son; Kuehn, *Emancipation*, p. 18. For example, in 1438 Giovanni di Domenico Giugni emancipated his son Domenico; *Archivio della Repubblica*, *Atti di Emancipazione* (hereafter *Emancipazione*) 3, fol. 43*v*. In the next surviving *Catasto*, father and son still share a *portata*, but Domenico has a separate heading for his own goods; *Cat*. 666, fol. 124*v*. (pencil pagination).

use and the nature of the household in which it was most frequently employed[73] suggest that, rather than leading to the detachment of father and son, emancipation was actually a mechanism for realigning this relationship and, more importantly, a device to enhance their co-residence within the patriarchal household[74].

Of exactly four hundred samples of sons living in conjugal families who were over the age of seven (the minimum for emancipation), only 6% were emancipated. In the patriarchal families, the number of emancipated bachelors was 19.5%, which I would estimate to be substantially above the average level of emancipation in the city as a whole[75]. Most striking of all is the fact that 44% of married sons in patriarchal families were registered as being emancipated. It could be thought that emancipation was more frequent in patriarchal households primarily because their emancipatable progeny were older (on average 26.7 years), but as the average age for the emancipated in the whole sample was 18.5 and the average age of emancipatable sons in conjugal households was 15.2 years, one would expect more than just twenty-four from a sample of four hundred sons in conjugal households to have already been emancipated by the age of 15.2. There is simply less correlation between emancipation and age than between emancipation and the household types in which the *emancipati* lived[76]. In the patriarchal households it is likely that the marriage of a son and the introduction of a new dowry into the patrimony provided the most apposite moment for emancipation. The fact that it would therefore often come after the son's thirtieth birthday does not mean that it was granted reluctantly, nor that it was a device to prevent the imminent dissolution of the household, for many sons living in patriarchal households were only emancipated on their fathers' deaths. Emancipation was used in specific cases because it was perceived as being beneficial, to the father, to his son and the household – if it were not, it is unlikely that it would have been employed at all.

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[73] Emancipation was a stratagem increasingly used by rich Florentines; indeed, none of the three poorer clans (the Bartoli, Guidi and Salterelli) registered an emancipation in this period. Of the other nine clans, those resident in the Quarter of Santa Croce registered a total of 36 emancipations of sons and 4 of daughters between 1422 and 1480; *Emancipazione* 1 to 10. I have also found several emancipations in the notarial cartularies which were not subsequently registered with the *Comune* and thus not publicly proclaimed with an "alta et intelligibili voce". These acts would have been considered legally invalid; Kuehn, *Emancipation*, p. 37.

[74] It should be stressed that emancipation had no immediate influence on a son's natural right to reside with his father, nor did it affect a father's right to stay in a property which he had presented to an emancipated son, if such had been agreed; Kuehn, *Emancipation*, pp. 21 and 103.

[75] Thomas Kuehn conceded that "it is not possible to tell exactly what portion of the Tuscan population was emancipated at any one time"; *Emancipation*, p. 81.

[76] Age at emancipation differed enormously. Andrea di Filippo Rinuccini was eight; *Emancipazione* 3, fol. 84*v*. (August 1440) and Ranieri di Niccolò Giugni thirty-nine; *Emancipazione* 10, fol. 152*r*. (December 1480).

Over the fifteenth century the age of *emancipati* rose[77]. As rich, compound households accounted for the bulk of emancipations, it is likely that they would also have been responsible for a large proportion of this increase. In the same period, the frequency with which a *praemium emancipationis* accompanied emancipation fell[78]. Indeed the value of these gifts became so low as make them purely symbolic and some were even revocable[79]. This suggests that the degree to which the desire to endow a son contributed to his emancipation had declined and that the motivation for emancipation was changing. When viewed in terms of the imperatives of household solidarity, emancipation can be seen to provide a useful stratagem to devolve both wealth and power while retaining a unified household. After emancipation a son could manage his wife's dowry in his own name, which meant that he and not his father was responsible for its restitution[80]. The father would no longer be responsible for an emancipated son's taxes or financial obligations. The son would also be able to trade, testate and litigate for himself. Moreover, by having different financial identities within the same household, prestigious property could be registered to the father if the son became engaged in more hazardous enterprises (and *vice versa*). The benefit to the household overall is that it would accommodate both the existing patrimony and embrace the potential for new income, whilst avoiding the dispersal of conjugal cells which was so often a feature of patrimonial reapportionment in other household types. For although the patrimony was strictly speaking no longer united after filial emancipation, the continuation of co-residence still bound the household and its patrimonies under a "single will" more effectively than the management of a single patrimony which was in the hands of individuals living in different houses. Consequently, despite the apparent liberty and potential for independence which emancipation created within a household, it did not lead to the wide scale secession of the *emancipati*. This is because emancipation, much like the various household types, was not an end in itself, but merely a technique to enable the best possible management of the patrimony in the hands of a co-residential familial unit.

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[77] Kuehn, *Emancipation*, pp. 87 and 159-160.

[78] Kuehn, *Emancipation*, p. 91.

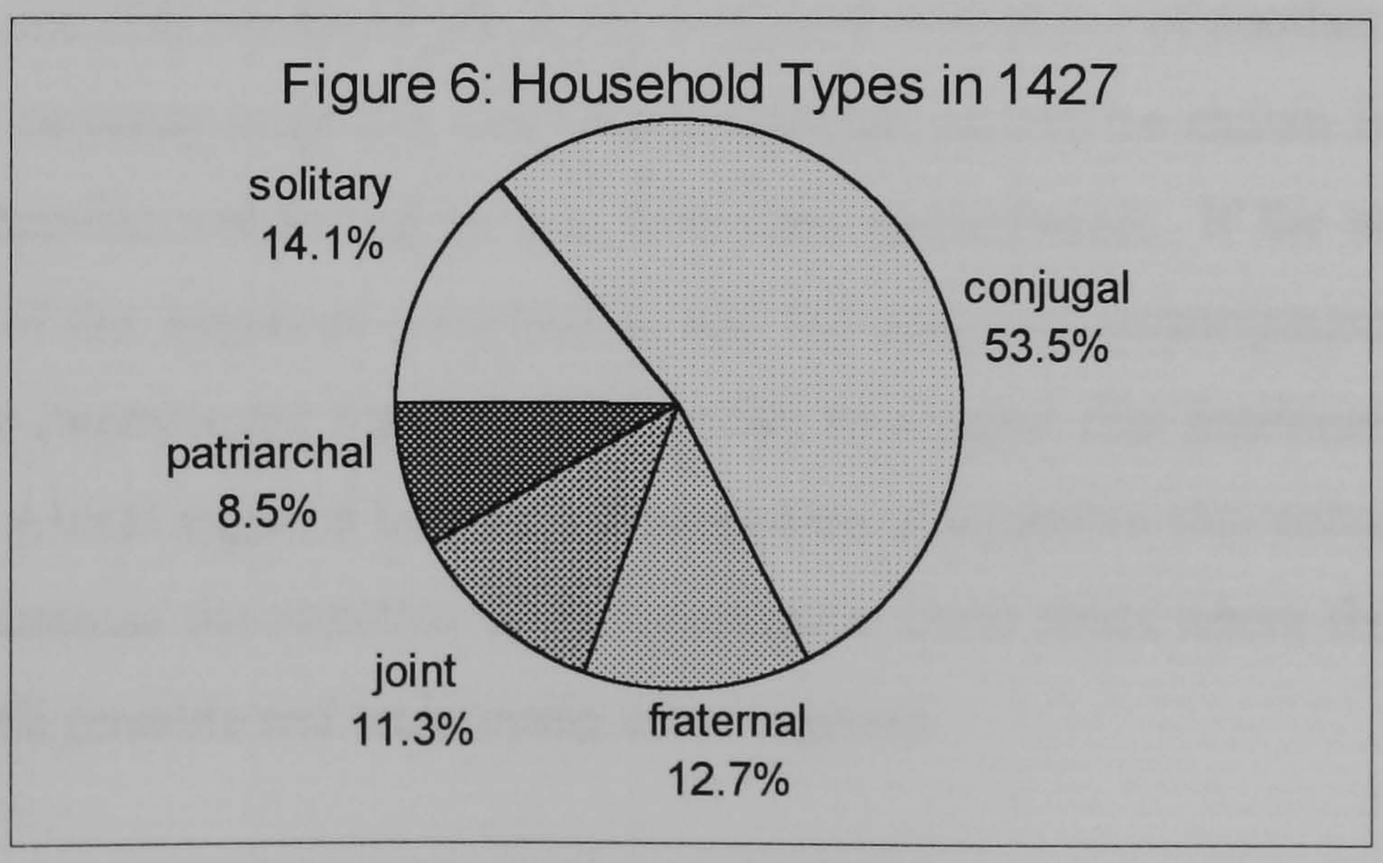
[79] In 1442 Filippo di Cino Rinuccini presented some land to his emancipated sons; *Cat.* 615, fol. 407*v*. However, in his later wills it was recalled in order to be redistributed equally among all his living sons at the time of his death. He threatened total disinheritance to whomever refused to return his share; *NA* 10450, fol. 112*r*. and fol. 175*r*. (pencil pagination). Thomas Kuehn cites the example of Matteo di Niccolò Corsini who sold a farm which he had previously presented to one of his sons upon emancipation; *Emancipation*, p. 73.

[80] In 1465 Paolo Niccolini acknowledged receipt of a dowry from the family of his daughter-in-law for his son Lodovico, but added that Lodovico himself "...must take it and administer it, because I intend that neither I nor my other sons nor any relation of mine shall ever be obliged to render an account of it to the said Lodovico, or to others for him"; Camugliano, *The Chronicles of a Florentine Family*, p. 153.

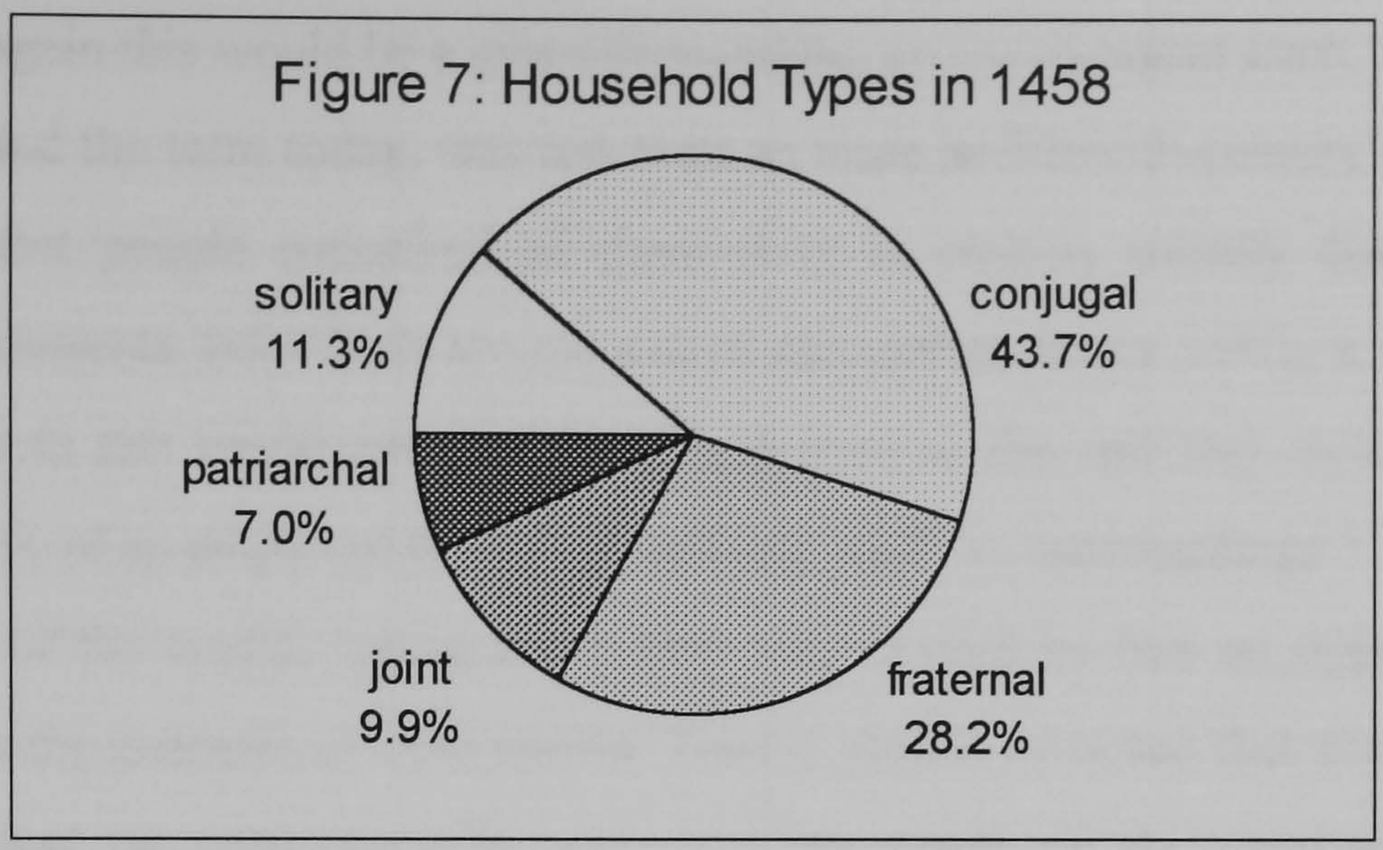
Emancipation devolved enough autonomy to keep the household together by avoiding the confrontation which could have arisen between a *paterfamilias* and his disendowed sons. Thus, even splitting a patrimony was conceivable if it were in the overriding interests of the residential unity of the family.

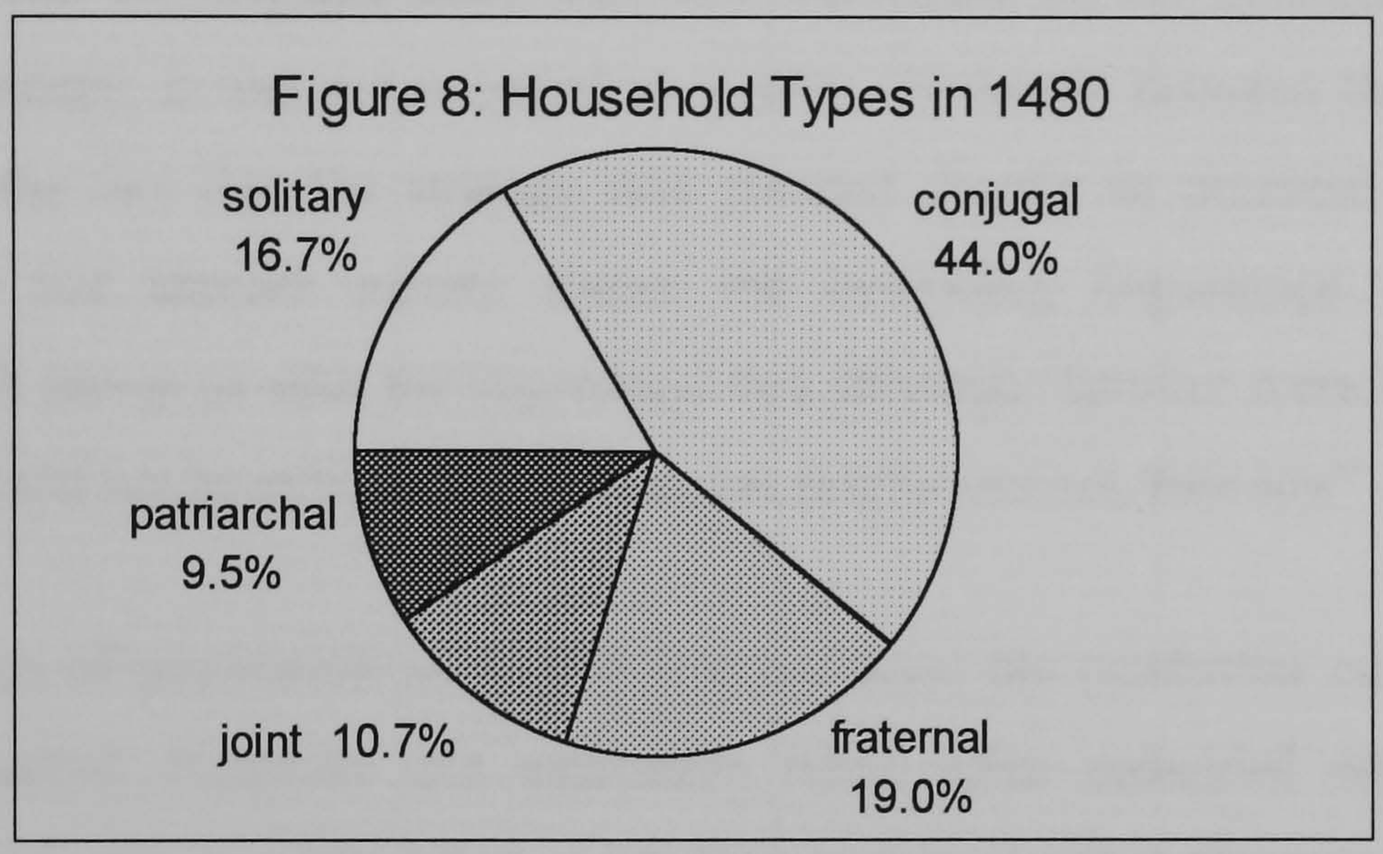
Conclusion

Each household type illustrated above shows how the goal of patrimonial retention influenced its formation and subsequent development. This is not to say that family life was primarily driven by financial considerations, but merely that no strategy would be successful in the long run if it remained inflexible to changing social circumstances. The net effect of this made households dynamic processes rather than static entities and this chapter has charted the stages through which they passed. However, despite the constant flexibility of household typology seen here, there is no evidence to suggest that the overall balance between the various types changed in this period. Indeed, rather than moving towards nuclearisation, by 1480 there were more compound households than in either 1427 or 1458[81]. This is illustrated in Figures Six to Eight, which show the distribution of the various households types in each of these three years. The most notable change to the households examined here concerns the marked decline in the number of conjugal households in 1458 in comparison with 1427. However, this can be almost entirely accounted for by their evolution into fraternal households, for the proportion of these two types together remained consistently within a nine percent tolerance band throughout the entire period.



[81] Klapisch-Zuber found the same to be true in Prato; "Demographic Decline and Household Structure", p. 30.





The overall residential concerns of this chapter should not be seen as an implicit rejection of the various aspects of broader clan interaction in this period; they resulted rather from the fact that by this period the household had become the predominant, if not the exclusive unit of patrimonial conservation. Besides, I know of no method by which the bonds between the households of one clan can be satisfactorily compared with those of another. Other aspects of familial life certainly remained much more clannish, as will be shown in the following chapters, but familial wealth had by this time been particularised. If the examples of the disintegration of the magnates' *consorterie* and the usage of emancipation in patriarchal families can be re-employed here, it might be fair to suggest that patrimonial atomisation was not in fact a total negation of the previous system of extensive clan cohesion, but rather a reform to guarantee the retention of its successes in other fields where the interaction of kin was both still possible and reciprocally advantageous.

A corollary of the centrality of the household unit was the recurring importance of the conjugal cell on which it was so frequently based. This could give an impression of a growing divergence between the constituent units of a clan as they became more

independent. Again this would be a misunderstanding, an anachronism even. 'Independence' as we understand the term today, was not even an issue in fifteenth-century Florence, for it was unlikely that people conceived of themselves as entities entirely distinct from one another. In documents individuals always placed themselves firmly within a matrix of other people from both this world and the next. Reference to the self was never abstract, but always the result of an empirical process of relating 'self' to 'surroundings'[82]. Given such an understanding of the world, 'going one's own way' would be less an opportunity than a punishment, as the example of exile shows. Thus it should be noted that the appearance of households based on conjugal cells was only the result of the emergence of a new patrimonial strategy; it was not intended to weaken the bonds between the families of a clan. Indeed, the fact that the strategy was pursued despite its potential for distancing families from one another merely shows the overriding importance of patrimonial management. It leaves us with the impression that although 'families were linked at fewer points, they would not be independent', since that simply was not their aim[83].

The imperatives of patrimonial preservation encouraged the residential coherence of the people they united. Naturally this unificatory effect often coincided with an existing emotional need for the members of a household to remain together; this was particularly the case for conjugal units. However, even transitory households like the frérèches could not divide their patrimonies until all their members were of an age to manage their shares responsibly. It can, of course, be argued that there is only a very fine line separating the interests of the patrimony from those of its inheritors and that to distinguish between the two is somewhat artificial. Yet, this again underlines the degree to which the members of a patrimonial unit could define themselves through their share in it and their co-habitation in the patrimonial residence.

My final point concerns the nature of this patrimonial domicile. To its residents, it was their starting point in this life and their intended point of departure for the next. It was the shell of their familial co-residentiality as well as being the object of their patrimonial conservation. Given that 95.8% of Florentines in the sample shared both a patrimony and a

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[82] For Jacob Burckhardt however, it was in the Middle Ages that "man was conscious of himself only as a member of a race, people, party, family, or corporation - only through some general category"; *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy*, p. 81.

[83] Here I differ slightly from Randolph Starn's perceptive analysis of the early-sixteenth-century Guicciardini brothers. He wrote that although "they *were* linked at many points; they *could be* independent"; "Francesco Guicciardini and his brothers", p. 421.

home, the *quattrocento* domicile can even be seen as a visual manifestation of that patrimony. Thus, even though co-residentiality was primarily a result of holding a united patrimony, when those it united divided their estate, they were often loathe to relinquish their co-habitation and it was generally the last aspect of their kinship communality to be abandoned. However, when the co-residentiality of a patrimonial unit ceased, the division of the estate tended to follow more or less immediately[84]. Co-residence was *the* defining feature of successful patrimonial management and the overriding imperative to keep the members of each patrimony living together in a single domicile even caused the physical boundaries of a number of buildings to ebb and flow according to their household's requirements; several such cases are cited in Chapter Two. As we shall see in subsequent chapters however, it is important not to infer that efforts to guarantee the constancy of the patrimony also created immutable households. 'Household' remained a fluid process, which would often adapt to suit the needs of the patrimony. Thus, the co-residence of particular individuals would never in itself be the basis on which to build a new house, as the household it would accommodate was likely to have already evolved to another form by the time the building was ready for occupation. This does not affect the central importance of the residence as the central feature of each patrimony, but it does mean that it is crucial to differentiate between those influences which the imperatives of patrimonial retention would have on a building and those which must be accounted for by other factors. In the following chapters we shall investigate these other features of household management by seeing just how Florentines used, leased, rented, entailed, rebuilt and even moved houses.

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[84] See the figures and examples cited on pages 30 and 44 above.

Chapter Two

House Ownership and Family Settlement in Leon Nero

The Layout of the *Gonfalone*

At the time of the first *Catasto* in 1427, the Quarter of Santa Croce was the least heavily populated area in Florence and the *gonfalone* of Leon Nero within it was the third smallest of the city's sixteen divisions[1]. This is not surprising as the *gonfalone* consisted largely of land which had lain outside the city until the commencement of the last set of walls in 1299[2]. The completion of these walls towards 1333 necessitated a re-allotment of the city's administrative districts and this was duly undertaken a decade later. At this time the *sesto* of San Piero Scheraggio was abolished in favour of a new *quartiere* of Santa Croce, of which the *gonfalone* of Leon Nero was one of four sub-divisions[3]. The *gonfalone* itself lay to the south of Piazza Santa Croce and Borgo de' Greci. Its western confine ran along Via del Canto Rivolto. To the south it was enclosed by Corso dei Tintori and to the east by the new walls themselves[4].

Aside from the secular *gonfaloni*, the city was also covered by a spiritual network of parishes. Their importance in the daily life of Florentines is still debatable[5], but it does appear that when the secular administrative boundaries were redrawn in 1343, the borders of the parish of San Jacopo tra le Fosse exercised a strong influence on those given to the *gonfalone* of Leon Nero[6], for there was almost a total coincidence of the residents and therefore of the boundaries of Leon Nero and San Jacopo.

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[1] Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *Les Toscans*, Table 7 on page 123. The quarter had 1731 hearths (17.7 % of the city's total), of which 413 were in Leon Nero.

[2] The construction of new walls had been decided upon by 1284, but they were only begun in earnest fifteen years later and even then, progress was slow; Spilner, "*Ut Civitas Amplietur*", chapter three. The various stages of the city walls are illustrated in Fanelli, *Firenze: architettura e città*, vol. 2 *Atlante*, p. 232, illustration no. 1070.

[3] The new quarter also included some land which had previously been in the *sesto* of San Piero Maggiore, which lay to the north; Fanelli, *Firenze: architettura e città*, vol. 2, *Atlante*, p. 24, illustrations nos. 114 and 115.

[4] See Map no. 1 on page 96. It is difficult to establish precise boundaries for the *gonfaloni*, as they appear to have been moot even to contemporaries. Weissman gives a rough outline of all sixteen in *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*, p. 8. A more detailed set of drawings by Umberto Dorini is in *Acquisti e Doni* 326.

[5] Strocchia showed that in this period three-quarters of the parishioners of San Piero Maggiore chose to be buried in that church; *Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence*, p. 97. Trexler however maintains that parishes were neither "community centers", nor the recipients of much patronage; *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, p. 13.

[6] For correlations between the city's spiritual and secular divisions see Cohn, *The Laboring Classes*, pp. 25-32.

San Jacopo was not amongst the oldest of the Florentine parishes. The church itself is documented from August 1175[7], but its parochial boundaries were only established in 1221 following litigation with the neighbouring priory of San Remigio[8]. They predominantly extended east from the city walls of 1173-75, bounded to the north by the incipient Via di San Giuseppe/de' Malcontenti and to the south by Corso dei Tintori[9]. The fact that the parish incorporated very little land to the west of the 1175 walls suggests that it was created to administer the burgeoning population living outside the walls. Indeed, the on-going expansion of the area is implied by the fact that the 1221 agreement cited in footnote 9 stresses the future as much as the current parishioners of San Jacopo. The church itself was built up against the 1175 city walls and faced the narrow Chiasso di San Jacopo (now Via delle Brache), where elements of its façade can still be seen {1}. However, some time after the clearance of these walls it was re-orientated to face the majority of its parishioners[10].

In the late twelfth century the church of San Simone was erected some two hundred metres north of San Jacopo[11]. The appearance of another parish in the area was probably a further stimulus to the 1221 agreement, for already by 1209 the parish boundary of San Simone had needed clarification[12] and San Simone and San Jacopo were subsequently given a common

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[7] Robert Davidsohn however considered it as having been founded during the late eleventh or early twelfth century; *Geschichte von Florenz*, vol. 1, p. 864. There were a number of natural ditches and islets in this low-lying area of the city and thus Giovanni Villani's suggestion that it was so named, "perchè era in su' fossi" seems feasible; *Nuova Cronica*, vol. 1, book five, chapter eight, p. 176.

[8] San Remigio was first mentioned in November 1040; Davidsohn, *Geschichte von Florenz*, vol. 1, p. 863, but was probably founded in the late eighth or early ninth century.

[9] "...totium spatium cum domibus et habitatoribus presentibus et futuris quod continetur inter viam que exit per portam Perilasii et decurrit usque ad flumen Arnum, et viam que exit per portam Sancti Iacobi et decurrit iuxta flumen"; Sznura, *L'espansione urbana di Firenze nel dugento*, p. 48. The position and path of these roads would have been determined by the gates in the city wall through which they passed; their subsequent history is charted in footnote 15 below. The boggy nature of the land south of Corso dei Tintori meant that the current road running alongside the river, Lungarno delle Grazie, was not laid out until 1287; Pampaloni, *Firenze al tempo di Dante*, document 61. It was built following the construction of an embankment the previous year, which was undertaken after the friars of Santa Croce had petitioned the Priors to build a wall there "pro...evitatione dampni et periculi"; Spilner, "*Ut Civitas Amplietur*", p. 265, footnote 50.

[10] After 1286, this stretch of the 1175 city walls was sold to the Peruzzi, who built themselves a palace there; Del Badia, "Palazzo Cocchi", p. 2. Via de' Benci follows the route of the ditch which lay immediately beyond the walls and was thus only first drained and paved in the 1290s; Frey, *Die Loggia dei Lanzi*, document 48, pp. 171-172. Following this, Piazza di San Jacopo, which is set to the west of Via de' Benci, was created on land cleared by the demolition of the walls and the filling-in of this ditch {2}. The church was probably re-orientated around 1387, when Benedetto Alberti presented *f* 200 for the rebuilding of its façade; Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz*, vol. 2, p. 421, footnote 9. Messer Benedetto's palace {3} (house no. 30 in the map on page 98) lies just across the piazza from the church.

[11] San Simone is documented from February 1192; Davidsohn, *Geschichte von Florenz*, vol. 1, p. 864. It was positioned in the garden of the Badia which ran east from the abbey as far as the 1175 city walls; *ibid.*, Stadtplan. In 1253 the Badia sold more of its land in the very area around the church of San Simone for the explicit reason that "quidam laici...inhabitare desiderent"; Sznura, *L'espansione urbana*, p. 47.

[12] *Diplomatico* 1209 Maggio 23 (Normale), Badia Fiorentina.

border[13]. The growth in population which had presaged the appearance of two new parishes in a little over fifty years was especially strong in the area to the east of the city. Even before the last circuit of city walls was finished, not only arterial roads, but numerous residential streets incorporating serially-aligned building plots had already been created beyond the reaches of the old city walls[14]. However, despite the size of the open swathe of land stretching eastwards to the 1333 walls, this settlement progressed no further than the present Via delle Conce in the *gonfalone* of Bue. Indeed the area between this street and the 1333 walls was still sparsely populated when Stefano Bonsignori made his map of the city in 1584 and it probably marked the extent of the city's expansion at the outbreak of the plague in 1348[15]. Thus the core of the residential expansion in Leon Nero reached from the modern Via de' Benci to the complex of buildings that constituted the friary of Santa Croce and it is this area which forms the focus of this chapter. The zone now consists of two right-angled triangles of land, separated by the street of Borgo Santa Croce.

The first mention of a street leading to the church of Santa Croce comes from 1244 and concerns the sale of a building plot of about 54 square metres by Alberto di Rustico[16]. The

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[13] The parish of San Jacopo included the section of Borgo de' Greci which lay within the Roman amphitheatre; *Cat.* 72, fols. 55*r*. and 342*r*. From there its boundary ran down Via de' Rustici; for a Peruzzi house next to their family *loggia* at the northern end of the street was in the parish of San Jacopo; *Cat.* 72, fol. 56*v*., whereas another "dirimpeto ala logia" was in San Remigio; *Cat.* 72, fol. 214*v*. Brenda Preyer suggests that from here the perimeter ran along Via del Canto Rivolto which passed through Alberto di Zanobi's palace on Via de' Neri, before returning to the modern Via de' Benci; "The 'chasa overo palagio' of Alberto di Zanobi", p. 389, footnote 10. It should however be added that parish boundaries, like those of the *gonfaloni*, were not inflexible. For example, in the early 1440s Bartolo di Domenico Corsi bought two "mezza chase" opposite one another, "l'una ½ nel popolo di Sa' Jachopo tra le fosse, l'altra nel popolo di Sa' Romeo"; *Cat.* 664, fol. 495*v*. However in 1458, when his son came to record them as sold, he placed them both in the parish of San Remigio, even though one was next to "il palagio che fu di Alberto di Zanobi" in the "Chiasso di Santo Jachopo" and thus virtually adjacent to that church; *Cat.* 806, fol. 155*r*. This may merely have been an oversight, but even so, it shows that even if parish boundaries were known, they were not rigorously observed.

[14] Spilner, "*Ut Civitas Amplietur*", Plans 2 and 3. Illustration 4 on page 221 is a map of such a block of property.

[15] Despite the desire of the Priors to develop the south-eastern corner of the city, the eastern extension of Corso dei Tintori (modern Via Tripoli) remained in such poor shape that in 1321 it was described as being, "quasi continue lacus palustris et unceus, ita quod per ipsum transiri nequitur tempore hyemis vel pluvie"; Pampaloni, *Firenze al tempo di Dante*, document 92. In 1283 Via di San Giuseppe/de' Malcontenti, which led out of the city from the gate of San Simone (the 'portam Perilasii' of footnote 9) was still only described as "via nova qua itur ad Sanctam Crucem"; Sznura, *L'espansione urbana*, p. 48, footnote 26. From 1317 it was promoted in favour of Via Ghibellina as the area's main arterial route, both through its further extension into the countryside and the commencement of a bridge at the point where it reached the Arno, the present Piazza Piave. The scheme however failed and by the 1340s the bridge had been abandoned and the *Porta della Giustizia*, which had been created in the last set of city walls to cater for the traffic passing along the route had been walled-up; Spilner, "*Ut Civitas Amplietur*", p. 239.

[16] "Albertus filius quondam Rustici iudicis de Sancta Cecilia...vendidit, dedit et concessit Compagno Magistro filio quondam Guerruczi...terram, seu casolare et aream, positam in loco qui dicitur Tempio prope civitatem Florentie, infra parochiam Sancti Jacobi inter foveas...A primo latere via qua itur ad ecclesiam Sancte Crucis fratrum minorum...totam per amplitudinem cuiusque teste novem brachiorum, et per longitudinem decem et octo brachiorum..."; Passerini, *Gli Alberti di Firenze*, vol. 2, p. 10.

first record in which it is named comes from 1266[17]. Borgo Santa Croce thus predates the plan for the expansion of the city walls by some forty years and was probably one of the first extra-mural residential streets of its period[18]. One aspect in which it is somewhat exceptional is that it runs diagonally to those around it. It is unusual for medieval Florentine streets to be at an oblique angle and when they are, it is more often than not a result of the superimposition of the medieval street system onto the Roman one[19]. However, the layout of Borgo Santa Croce cannot be explained in a Roman context as none of the streets in the vicinity is pre-medieval. Thus the reason for its direction is more likely to be found in the early origin and durability of the street's name itself.

The fact that Borgo Santa Croce leads to the church of Santa Croce is not surprising, for at the time it was laid out the friary was the most important urban site east of the city walls. The Franciscans had a chapel on the site of their present church as early as the 1220s[20] and as the popularity of the order grew, this street would have facilitated access to the chapel before Piazza Santa Croce was properly laid out[21]. The main exit from the south-eastern corner of the city was the *Porta de' Buoi*[22], which was positioned virtually opposite the west end of Borgo Santa Croce and this probably determined the position of the street's opening. Already in 1260 the Alberti had a palace and two neighbouring houses which were likely to have been on the site of the present tower {5}, and once established, they would have fixed the position of the street's mouth[23]. The construction of Ponte Rubaconte (now

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[17] Sznura, *L'espansione urbana*, p. 48, footnote no. 26.

[18] Paula Spilner, "*Ut Civitas Amplietur*", Plan 1.

[19] The Roman *castrum* was orientated according to the cardinal points of the compass, whereas the medieval expansion of the city was dictated by the position of the river Arno. Obtuse angles appear where the two grids meet. For further discussion see Hardie, "The origin and plan of Roman Florence", pp. 132 *ff.* An example of this can be seen at the northern end of Via Por Santa Maria, for as it leaves the area of the original Roman fort, its path bears west to meet Ponte Vecchio.

[20] "...possiamo assicurare che Santa Croce esisteva già da qualche tempo nel 1228"; Moisè, *Illustrazione storico-artistica di Santa Croce di Firenze*, p. 32. The church as it appears today is the third on the site, for it follows one built there in 1252; *ibid.*, p. 42. The foundation of the present structure is reported by Giovanni Villani: "Negli anni di Cristo MCCLXXXXIIII, il dì di santa Croce di maggio, si fondò la grande chiesa nuova de' frati minori di Firenze detta Santa Croce...E cominciarsi i fondamenti prima de la parte di dietro ove sono le cappelle, però che prima v'era la chiesa vecchia"; *Nuova Cronica*, vol. 2, book nine, chapter seven, p. 21.

[21] Giovanni Villani wrote that in 1266 the piazza still lacked houses; *Nuova Cronica*, vol. 1, book eight, chapter fourteen, p. 436. The first documented record of its habitation is from 1275; Sznura, *L'espansione urbana*, p. 48, footnote 27. However, it is more likely that these houses constituted a linear settlement along what was then still the "via nova qua itur ad Sanctam Crucem" (see footnote 15 above), than they created a regular piazza.

[22] This is the same as the *Portam Sancti Iacobi* mentioned in footnote 9 above.

[23] "f:orum Alberti del Iudice: § unum palatiam cum domo et curia et cum duabus aliis domibus dicto pop. in Burgo S:e Crucis Cenni et Batis et Rustici et Doffi f:orum Alberti del Iudice, j via ij et iij ipsorum fratrum iiij domus Altoviere et Martini l. 600"; Brattö (ed.), *Liber Extimationum*, p. 39.

Ponte alle Grazie) from 1237 was also instrumental in the growth of Borgo Santa Croce, for it would have increased the volume of traffic towards the church and to this corner of the city in general[24]. It would not have been suitable for Borgo Santa Croce to have run in parallel with Corso dei Tintori for any distance because the land between the church and the river was owned by the friary. It is far from clear when the friars first gained possession of this area. In 1286 they had petitioned the Priors to build a wall running upstream from Ponte Rubaconte to protect them from flooding[25] and if the area was not already theirs then, the text of a later *Provvisione* shows that it certainly was by November 1321[26]. This would have effectively impeded a public road from running north of the Corso and the low lie of the land would naturally have provided another impediment to the development of any housing there[27].

Little is known about the original ownership or the allocation of building land south of Piazza Santa Croce[28], but the physical evidence suggests that the first building plots there differed little from those found elsewhere around the outskirts of the city. From at least 1259 Florentine streets were laid out along a line of stretched cord[29] and, given the date in which the area was settled, it is probable that the present directness and even the width of Borgo Santa Croce is contemporary with its origin[30]. Roman Law stipulated that there should be spaces between properties and this had led to the creation of numerous alleyways (*chiassi*) between housing blocks (*insulae*). However, by medieval times these gaps were being eliminated in a move to stop *chiassi* being used for the disposal of sewage[31]. A few *chiassi* were incorporated into Borgo Santa Croce because of the abnormally large distance between it and its neighbouring streets; they were needed to give access to properties which

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[24] "Negli anni di Cristo MCCXXXVII, essendo podestà di Firenze messer Rubaconte da Mandello da Milano, si fece in Firenze il ponte nuovo"; Giovanni Villani *Nuova Cronica*, vol. 1, book seven, chapter twenty-six, p. 310.

[25] See footnote 9 above. The embankment was extended as far as the site of the fifth bridge across the Arno; Giovanni Villani, *Nuova Cronica*, vol. 2, book ten, chapter eighty-three, p. 291. See also footnote 15 above.

[26] The document refers to a gate in the friary wall leading from their garden to Corso dei Tintori; Pampaloni, *Firenze al tempo di Dante*, document 92.

[27] The ability of religious houses to prevent public works had been demonstrated in 1301, when the Badia successfully petitioned the *Signoria* to return expropriated land being used in the construction of a street leading from Or San Michele to the Bargello; *ibid.*, documents 66 and 67.

[28] Most building plots of the period were on church land and could not be alienated outright. Therefore sites tended to be allocated using long-term inheritable leases called *livelli*, which usually also included clauses binding their holder, the *livellario*, to build himself a house there; Spilner, "*Ut Civitas Amplietur*", p. 552. Dr. Spilner was kind enough to inform me that she had not found any records of *livelli* for this area of the city.

[29] Spilner, "*Ut Civitas Amplietur*", pp. 80-81 and 84.

[30] The street broadens from ten to nearly eleven *braccia* as it approaches Piazza Santa Croce. However, both measurements accord with the specifications of the period; Braunfels, *Mittelalterliche Stadtbaukunst*, p. 103.

[31] Bocchi, "Regulation of the Urban Environment by the Italian Communes", p. 64.

had no street façade. However, when compared with many of the streets within the 1075 walls, Borgo Santa Croce and many other streets to the east of the 1175 walls still constitute fairly continuous rows of buildings.

Since at least the eleventh century the basic template for the construction of Florentine houses accommodated a narrow, one-bay property with space for a garden or courtyard to the rear. From the twelfth century these plots were generally known as *casolaria*[32] and although their actual dimensions could vary, their form was always an elongated rectangle[33]. The fact that the *livellario* was responsible for paving the street in front of the property may also help explain why the *casolaria* remained much deeper than they were wide[34]. Thus, the directness of Borgo Santa Croce, the juxtaposition of its *casolaria* and its few *chiassi* suggest not only the influence of construction regulations at the time of its inception, but also that the street has changed very little in the intervening centuries[35].

Borgo Santa Croce in the Fifteenth Century

The area around Borgo Santa Croce demonstrates many of the imperatives of medieval urban housing. It was first settled when the population of Florence was expanding rapidly and in the fifteenth century the zone was still almost exclusively residential. Apart from the mention of two *botteghe* for woodworkers under some of Francesco di Altobianco degli Alberti's property (house no. 13/13a) and of a barber on the ground floor of the building generally known as 'Il palagio che fu di messer Benedetto degli Alberti' (house no. 30), no

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[32] Sznura, *L'espanzione urbana*, pp. 30-31. Confusingly the word *casolare* came to refer less to the plot of land than the property upon it and by the fifteenth century it was generally used to describe a dilapidated building. For example in 1433 Niccolò di Francesco Corsi declared ownership of "due alberghi, i quali sono oggi chasolari" adding that they were "sanza usci e sanza finestre e in parte rovinati e avessi ne mai s'è ne tratto alchuno chosa da 3 anni in qua"; *Cat.* 492, fol. 378*v*. and *Cat.* 451, fol. 217*r*. See also footnote 70 on page 141.

[33] "...measurements of Florentine *casolaria* in the late 13th and 14th centuries varied over only a very narrow range, generally from eight to twelve *braccia* (4.66 to 7 meters) in width with lengths from three to five times the width in most cases. The lots were aligned serially with their short sides, without exception, fronting on the street"; Spilner, "*Ut Civitas Amplietur*", p. 325. This shape endured as the standard building plot throughout the *quattrocento*, for in 1495 Bernardo di Piero Masi bought a plot "per fare una casa" from Filippino Lippi which measured ten by thirty-eight *braccia* (6 x 22m); *Ricordanze di Bartolomeo Masi*, p. 31. The plot was in the modern Via Laura, an area which was at that time still "highly undeveloped" (despite the recent building intentions of Lorenzo de' Medici); Elam, "Lorenzo de' Medici and the Urban Development of Renaissance Florence", p. 46. A week later Bernardo bought a similar neighbouring plot measuring twelve by thirty-eight *braccia* (7 x 22 metres); *Ricordanze di Bartolomeo Masi*, *loc. cit.*

[34] "Item quod quilibet de civitate Florentie, burgis et suburgis teneatur facere lastricari seu mattonari viam publicam que esset coram domo sua vel casolare..."; Caggese (ed.), *Statuto del capitano del popolo, 1322-1325*, book four, rubric VIII, p. 179.

[35] *Casolaria* were often laid out backing onto one another so as to reduce the overall number of streets required to provide access to them. This feature is particularly prominent in the layout of the streets of terraced housing directly to the north of Piazza Santa Croce in the *gonfalone* of Bue, as is shown on illustration 4.

other commercial properties appear throughout the seventy-year span of this survey[36]. Nevertheless, it should be added that Corso dei Tintori was no misnomer. The easy access to large quantities of water in the area was essential to the dyers' trade and the whole area abounded in workshops[37].

There was no policy of developing delineated residential or commercial areas in existing built-up areas of the city during this period. However, while houses were to be found everywhere, shops tended to congregate together. Those serving the area under investigation here were all in Borgo de' Greci, Piazza del Grano and Via de' Neri[38]; which enabled Borgo Santa Croce and the south side of Piazza Santa Croce to remain areas of purely contiguous residences[39] and this was to have an important impact on the nature of clan settlement there. The absence of shops did not mean that the neighbourhood was particularly wealthy. No area of the city during this period was inhabited exclusively by just the rich or the poor, for in both the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the houses of Borgo Santa Croce were of contrasting sizes and quality, as their descriptions and quantity testify and they accommodated a broad variety of families of differing social and financial status[40].

The fact that the area was low-lying hindered its development, for even after construction of the embankment in 1286, it remained prone to flooding. Indeed, the marshy nature of this area was preserved in the name given to a large courtyard of run-down *casette* belonging to the Alberti which was sandwiched between Corso dei Tintori and Borgo Santa Croce – the Funghaia. In 1427 Francesco di Altobianco degli Alberti noted the area as being home to poor people who could afford no rent[41]. In the 1430s however, the area was sold to Antonio

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[36] These properties were in the modern Via de' Benci, the *gonfalone*'s busiest street. The first two are mentioned in Francesco di Altobianco degli Alberti's *portata* of 1427; *Cat.* 34, fol. 608*r*. The third appears in the 1458 *portata* of Bernardo di Antonio Alberti; *Cat.* 806, fol. 322*r*.

[37] The extent of dyeing in the area is shown in a detailed census of the city's inhabitants dating from the first third of the sixteenth century; Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Sala dei Manoscritti, (hereafter BN) *Nuovi Acquisti* 987, fols. 95*r*.-96*v*. See also the 1561 "Ricerca alla Botteghe di Firenze"; *Decima Granducale* 3784, fol. 59*r*.-59*v*.

[38] BN, *Nuovi Acquisti* 987. For Borgo de' Greci see fols. 76*v*.-77*r*., for Piazza del Grano and Via de' Neri in general (which is entered as Via de' Solgiani), see fols. 82*v*.-83*r*.

[39] The aforementioned census also shows the predominance of residential properties in this area; for Borgo Santa Croce see BN, *Nuovi Acquisti* 987, fol. 76*v*. and for the south side of Piazza Santa Croce see fol. 79*r*.

[40] The same was also true for the *gonfaloni* of Leon Rosso; D. V. and F. W. Kent, *Neighbours and Neighbourhood in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 86 *ff*. and Drago Verde; Franchetti Pardo, "Le abitazioni del 'Drago Verde' tra età tardo-comunale e principato mediceo", p. 15.

[41] "vii chaselline triste e disabitate, quasi morte, tutte in una cortigiata, luogo detto la fungha nel popolo di San Jachopo tralle fosse q[a] Santa Croce da p° la via del Corso de' Tintori che s'entra come per 1° androne…stannovi dentro povere gienti che non me pagano danario…sono giente vanno per la linosina"; *Cat.* 34, fol. 608*v*.

di Salvestro Serristori, who used the land to expand his garden and therefore probably demolished many of the buildings within it[42].

Houses with gardens were more common outside the old walls[43] and many properties in the triangle of houses north of Borgo Santa Croce abutted Francesco di Altobianco degli Alberti's large garden, as is shown on Map no. 2 on page 97. The triangular shape of the block promoted the creation of an open internal space and much of the original garden is still there today[44]. The open space to the south of Borgo Santa Croce was even more extensive. All of the Spinelli properties (nos. 35 to 40) had gardens, most of which probably reached much further down towards Corso dei Tintori than is implied by Map no. 3 on page 98[45]. These spaces were described as *orti*, which were usually cultivated with a mixture of fruit, vegetables and flowers. Tommaso Spinelli had orange trees in his garden[46] and the large *orto* on Map no. 2 is documented as having fig trees, a *pergola*, and a *pratello*[47].

Having characterised the neighbourhood itself, we shall now turn to its inhabitants. Of the twelve clans dealt with in Chapter One, three – the Corsi, Morelli and Spinelli – were predominantly resident in Leon Nero. The Spinelli and Morelli families living in the Quarter of Santa Croce in the fifteenth century were based entirely in Leon Nero[48]. The Corsi were largely resident there, except for the heirs of Lapo Corsi who lived on the north side of Piazza Santa Croce, which lay not only in the parish of San Simone, but also in the *gonfalone* of Bue.

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[42] Given the funghaia's 'off-street' position, it is likely that it was incorporated into Serristori's new garden, for he reported in 1447 that from "...le sopradette case ò fatte orti et altri aconcini per mio habitare"; *Cat.* 664, fol. 161*r*. (pencil pagination).

[43] By 1489 there was the opinion in Florence that "le chase senza orti paiono imperfecti"; Elam, "Lorenzo's Architectural and Urban Policies", p. 370. Like Antonio Serristori, Luca Pitti also bought and demolished properties for the purpose of creating a garden for his house in the Oltrarno; Giusti and Bottai; "Documento sulle prime fasi costruttive di Palazzo Pitti", document 11 on page 723.

[44] Aerial photographs show that Florence is in fact a much greener city than could ever be guessed from the unremitting stone and brickwork that constitutes its streets.

[45] Many *confini* given by those resident on the south side of Borgo Santa Croce refer to neighbours living on Corso dei Tintori itself. This is also the case for those at the most eastern extremity of the street and it implies that there were large open expanses between the properties, as is shown on Stefano Bonsignori's map.

[46] See footnote 50 on page 163 and footnote 66 on page 166.

[47] *Gherardi Piccolomini d'Aragona* (hereafter *GPA*) 178, fols. 57*r*. and 89*r*. This *ricordanze* documents the various improvements made to the garden by Paolo di Morello di Paolo Morelli in the 1420s whilst he was the tenant in house no. 28. For the contract of his lease, which ran from March 1419, see *NA* 9039, fol. 176*r*.

[48] From 1442 Forzone Spinelli and his heirs resided in the Quarter of Santa Maria Novella but redacted in Leon Nero. They were however not relatives of the Spinelli examined here. See also footnote 105 on page 78 below.

In the following sections the development of the *gonfalone* over the fifteenth century will be studied in the light of examples drawn from these three clans. Their settlement in the area, the nature of the property they bought and sold and the means by which they did so will all be examined to illustrate the various priorities of their accommodation. Likewise the concept of a clan enclave will be investigated to see how the various families which constituted a clan chose to settle in terms of physical proximity to one another.

The Corsi

The first Corsi to live in Leon Nero was Bardo di Corso, who is documented as owning property close to Piazza Santa Croce in 1349, to which he added a further two houses in Borgo Santa Croce in 1362[49]. In a codicil to his will he stipulated that these houses could pass, within two years of his wife's death, to Domenico and Lapo di Francesco Corsi, as long as they paid *f* 500 in compensation to Santa Maria degli Angeli[50]. Although Bardo thus founded what came to be a Corsi enclave at the east end of Borgo Santa Croce, other clan members remained in the parish of San Ambrogio in the *gonfalone* of Ruota. Furthermore in 1401 Lapo di Francesco moved away from Bardo's properties to live on the north side of Piazza Santa Croce. The clan consequently lacked a focused and a united physical centre. This was to remain a characteristic feature of their settlement throughout the *quattrocento* and it clearly distinguishes it from the other two clans.

The Corsi themselves were silk merchants (*setaiuoli*) in this period. In 1428 Bartolo, Matteo and Francesco di Domenico Corsi formed a company along with Bernardo di Bartolomeo Gherardi into which each put *f* 2450[51]. The company had a total capital of over *f* 10 000 and was one of the largest in Florence[52]. The venture fared well, for after two years Bartolo reported interim profits of *f* 297 s. 10 (six percent a year)[53]. In the years that followed other companies were formed, which, though neither as large nor as successful, qualify the Corsi to be considered as prominent merchants throughout the century.

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[49] The overview of the Corsi during the *trecento* presented here is drawn from Preyer, *Il Palazzo Corsi-Horne*, pp. 32-39. Family trees for this clan and the others dealt with here are presented in Appendix Two below.

[50] A scribe in that monastery made "uno estracto di quello tocca a noi del decto testamento" in which he wrote: "Item ci lasciò dopo la sua morte dela donna sua predecta, una sua casa o vero più chase poste insieme in Firenze in su la piazza di Santa Croce, chon questo, che se fra due anno dopo la morte della decta sua donna, Domenico e Lapo suoi nipoti e loro figliuoli ci dessino *f* 500, le decte casa si fossino loro"; *Corporazioni Religiose Soppresse* (hereafter *CRS*) 86 (Santa Maria degli Angeli) *filza* 96, fol. 128*v*. Domenico and Lapo paid the money in July 1393; *ibid.*

[51] *Guicciardini, Corsi e Salviati* 1, *busta* 1, fol. 1*r*. (1 January 1429).

[52] Florence Edler de Roover, "Andrea Banchi, Florentine Silk Manufacturer and Merchant", p. 227.

[53] *Cat.* 354, fol. 233*r*.

In 1427 eighteen Corsi, all descendants of Domenico di Francesco, were resident in Leon Nero[54]. They owned a block of four contiguous houses at the east end of the piazza and Borgo Santa Croce – numbered 3, 4, 14 and 15 on Map no. 2. However, the division of the properties meant that their occupants were unequally distributed: nine lived in house no. 3 and six in no. 14[55]. Bartolo di Domenico lived with his conjugal family in house no. 3, along with his brother Piero and their nephew Giovanni di Bardo – the latter two living from their own patrimonies. House no. 14 was occupied by Matteo di Domenico and his conjugal family. Lastly Francesco di Domenico Corsi and his two sons were living in rented accommodation (house no. 10) a few doors down from his relations[56].

Over the course of the century the families periodically and pragmatically moved around their four clan houses, ensuring that any uneven distribution of people in them never lasted very long. Over the course of this period other properties were also added to the enclave. It is these reallocations and accretions to the Corsi clan property that will be studied here, for they are central to our understanding of the methods and priorities of property management and its overall significance for the various families of the clan as a whole. However, the Corsi's ability to expand their property depended not only on their will to buy; it was also constrained by the piecemeal manner in which neighbouring landlords chose to dispose of their houses. Fortunately for the Corsi, a notable proportion of the property next to their houses was being rented out, which implied that it was superfluous to the residential needs of its owners. This was advantageous to a clan with plans for expansion, as these houses would not have been invested with the emotional status of long-established clan domiciles and were thus more likely to be dispensable. The rental of this property did bring in revenue and merely because a house was not occupied by its owners did not make its financial value a matter of indifference to them. However, once an adjacent house was offered for sale, communal law and the physical layout of the streets in the area would have greatly benefited the Corsi's plans for expansion.

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[54] Household servants are only irregularly declared in the *portate* and, as in Chapter One, they have not been considered here, as they formed no part of the family. Moreover, when information on their presence is given, it appears that they did not always sleep in the domicile. For example, in 1451 Lorenzo di Antonio Spinelli declared ownership of a small house (no. 21) opposite his own, "dove tengho stalla e biada e lengnie e un letto pel famiglio"; *Cat.* 700, fol. 516*r*.

[55] Houses nos. 4 and 15, jointly owned by Giovanni di Bardo and Piero di Domenico, were then being leased.

[56] The property belonged to the Ridolfi and cost Francesco *f* 20 a year. The contract is in *NA* 17402, fol. 307*r*.

Since at least 1285 immediate neighbours in Florence had the status of *consors a muro comune*[57]. By the fifteenth century this meant that should one neighbour choose to sell his house, the other had not only first refusal to purchase it, but also the right to force the revocation of any sale made without his agreement and up to three years in which to buy it himself, at an 'appropriate' price[58]. The continued implementation of this statute into the fifteenth century signified that communal law effectively defended existing clan enclaves and facilitated their expansion. As a neighbour could block the sale of a house to a third party for up to three years, he could effectively depress its selling price by withholding his consent to any sale. This might lead the vendor to lower the asking price until it became worthwhile for the neighbour to buy it himself. This would have aided the expansion of a clan enclave and although I have no explicit proof that such practices occurred, one case mentioned below concerning Domenico Allegri and the Corsi strongly suggests that they did[59].

Another important and frequently-employed legal term is *per non diviso*, which described property held in joint ownership. The aim behind its usage was to keep property within the broader family by bequeathing it equally among the male heirs. Over time this could lead to there being more shares on paper than would be practicable in reality, as their number increased each time the property was passed on to the next generation. It was common to divide the property physically between the heirs of each generation once they all reached majority. Even then however, the physical divisions may still have been too small to be habitable and thus it also became common for one or more of the heirs to buy the others out. In practice this tended to be done by elder brothers, as they usually had more money and a greater need to accommodate their families. The fact that the term *per non diviso* was seldom observed in perpetuity by the families studied here did not diminish the use of it in their wills, rather it shows that it was only intended as a short-term measure[60]. In this

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[57] The first statutory use of this term was to impede magnates from augmenting their property; "...Et nullus alius debeat emere seu acquirere aliquo titulo aliquam consorteriam rei immobilis, nisi secundum formam traditam in capitulo constituti Communis Florentie quod est sub rubrica «De revendendum domum vel possessionem» sub pena librarum centum f.p.; et intelligatur esse consors quicumque habet murum communem cum alio, et magnas intelligatur emisse in consorteria si emerit domum in qua sit murus communis. Et hoc locum habeat, quod dicitur de muro communi, ab anno domini MCLXXXIIII indictione ottava, die quindecimo mensis ianuarij"; Caggese (ed.), *Statuto del capitano del popolo, 1322-1325*, book two, rubric XII, p. 100. A number of examples demonstrating the workings of this law are given in F. W. Kent, *Household and Lineage*, pp. 124-127. See also footnote 61 on page 139 below.

[58] "pro competenti prætio"; Kluch (ed.), *Statuta Populi et Communis Florentiae*, vol. 1, book two, rubric CIX, p. 201. In the fourteenth century at least, this price would have been established by three arbiters appointed by both parties; *Statuto del podestà dall'anno 1325*, book two, rubric LXVIII, pp. 138-139.

[59] For a self-confessed example of fraud committed to benefit from the terms of this law see page 164 below.

[60] An example of the separation of two such *per non diviso* properties can be seen below on page 81.

respect it is similar to the household typologies examined in Chapter One, which were also temporary measures employed to facilitate the retention of the patrimony.

Returning to the Corsi, we see that from 1427 to 1430 both houses nos. 4 and 15 had been held *per non diviso*. However, by 1430 Giovanni di Bardo had moved into no. 4 and Piero di Domenico had received and then sold no. 15 to his brother Matteo, who lived in no. 14, and now used no. 15 as a wood store. In other cases of such redistribution compensation was paid according to the difference in the property values[61]. As none is recorded here, we might presume that houses nos. 4 and 15 were of a comparable quality. No sooner had these reallocations been finished than Giovanni di Bardo died, which set in motion another round of property redistribution between the various Corsi families.

Piero di Domenico had been left without a house following the sale of no. 15 to Matteo, so he bought nos. 6 and 7 from Domenico di Antonio Allegri[62]. Allegri lived on the other side of the city in the *gonfalone* of Leon Bianco, but owned a block of contiguous houses between Borgo Santa Croce and the Piazza, nos. 5, 6, 7 and 16 – all of which were destined to pass to the Corsi. In 1430 house no. 5 remained in Allegri's possession, thus leaving Piero di Domenico's new property detached from the Corsi enclave. Perhaps for this reason Piero did not immediately move into it, but instead renewed its lease to Giovanni di Rossi, who had been living there since 1427. As Piero was still without a house, it must be presumed that he continued to live with his brother Bartolo in house no. 3.

In 1430 Domenico di Antonio Allegri had 'let' house no. 5, but on terms which were disadvantageous for him to break. It was occupied by monna Mea Allegri, who was entitled to life-long rent-free *tornata* (the right of occupation) there[63]. Domenico di Antonio Allegri

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[61] For examples, see footnote 84 on page 72 and the division of house no. 36 cited on page 88.

[62] Houses nos. 6 and 7 constituted a single architectural entity which had been divided and leased as two distinct dwellings. We saw in Chapter One that a *portata* recorded a patrimony's value and the number of people it united. However, just as it made no account of the distinct familial units comprising each patrimony, it also ignored the fact that those joined by a patrimony could have occupied more than one house. In fiscal terms, the property which these people inhabited was merely a non-taxable part of their patrimony. In Chapter One the definition of a household was a co-residential unit of closely-related kin. Thus, a house will be defined here as the 'shell' accommodating that household. Naturally the plot on which a domicile stood was not always the same as the *casolare* on which each house had been built, for its residential area might extend beyond the confines of a single plot. Conversely, if part of a property were being leased, as was the case with houses nos. 6 and 7, the domiciles they contained would be smaller than the original *casolare*. In this chapter I shall try to relate the space occupied by each household to the architectural unity of its residence, but ultimately, for the sake of consistency, the definition of a house must remain that of the overall space occupied by one household.

[63] The property actually exceeded Mea's requirements, for she was able to lease a *mezzanine* in it; "...in detta chasa n'ò alloghato un palcho a Michele di Filipo de' Pulci, che n'ò l'anno *f* ii di pigione"; *Cat.* 35, fol. 1040*r*.

had the right to sell the property, but in doing so, he would have to compensate monna Mea *f* 10 each year. Thus although her residence there cost him potential income, he would probably have to pay for the privilege of leasing it, for it was unlikely to bring as much as *f* 10 a year[64]. This made the house much less inviting for him to sell and may explain why he first sold house no. 6/7 to the Corsi.

By 1433 the Corsi families had moved around again. Piero di Domenico was living in his new house (no. 6/7) and the ownership of the late Giovanni di Bardo's house (no. 4) had been divided among the four male descendants of Domenico di Francesco Corsi and it was occupied by Niccolò di Francesco[65]. In 1442 no. 4 was still held by these four heirs, but it was then being leased to Piero di Domenico, who accommodated his family of five in this and house no. 6/7. However, Piero di Domenico's new acquisition (house no. 4) still remained separated from his other property (no. 6/7) by monna Mea's house (no. 5). Her 1442 *portata* reports that she had been given notice to leave[66]. The reason for this appears in Domenico di Antonio Allegri's 1447 tax return; he had sold it to Piero Corsi[67].

Piero's comfort in his now united and spacious house was in stark contrast to that of his brother Bartolo, who accommodated his family of nine entirely in house no. 3. Again, this uneven distribution was not to last long. By 1444 Bartolo had bought Matteo and Piero di Domenico's shares in house no. 4[68] and knocked it together with his own (no. 3)[69]. His heirs were not content to stop this westward expansion there, for by 1447 they had also bought house no. 8, in which they accommodated the errant Niccolò di Francesco[70].

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[64] Domenico Allegri explained carefully in his 1427 *portata*; "...ista nella detta chasa Mona Mea, donna che fu di Simone Allegri e non ne pagha niente di pigione e no' ne a paghare mentre che lla vive, e dopo la vita sua ritorna a me, chon patto ch'io la possa vendere trovando a cchui, ma vendendola l'ò ongni anno a dare *f* x per pigione d'una chasa togliesse, chone apare per una scritta di mano di ser Piero d'Angniolo Cioni e soscritta di mia mano per sua chiarezza"; *Cat.* 46, fol. 451*r*.

[65] Francesco di Domenico had also died in 1430; *Ufficiali poi Magistrato della Grascia* 180, fol. 154*r*., and had left his young son, Niccolò in straightened circumstances. By allocating him house no. 4, rent free, his co-heirs saved him the expense of remaining in accommodation rented from the *Magistrato dei Pupilli*, which was costing him *f* 19 a year; *Cat.* 34, fol. 599*v*.

[66] Writing in the third person, she noted that, "...per Ognisanti 1442 debba tornare altrove"; *Cat.* 617, fol. 617*r*.

[67] "...la vende a Piero di Domenicho Corsi a dì 13 di febraio 1441"; *Cat.* 673, fol. 112*r*. (pencil pagination 104*r*.).

[68] Matteo's sale is declared in *Cat.* 664, fol. 203*r*. (pencil pagination) and Piero's in *Cat.* 664, fol. 551*r*. The sale must have taken place shortly after Piero's purchase of house no. 5, as Bartolo died in June 1444; BN, Cirri, *Necrologia Fiorentino*, vol. 6, p. 269.

[69] The heirs wrote, "...vedendosi Bartolo avere cresciuta la famiglia ed eraviamo molto stretti in chasa sul chonto di sopradetti, facciemovi un uscio in mezo per potere habitare e tenie lla per nostra habitare"; *Cat.* 664, fol. 495*r*.

[70] Under an agreement drawn up by Piero di Domenico, Niccolò was to live there rent free for three years from All Saints' 1446 by virtue of money owed him by Bartolo's heirs; *Cat.* 664, fol. 495*v*. A similar agreement to the benefit of a recurrently hapless relative was organised by Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli, see page 91 below.

The examples of the continuous reallocation of houses show a highly pragmatic approach to the problems of household evolution. They also suggest that these clan members lacked a firm attachment to any one particular house. Despite the fact that each property was generally owned by an individual, the style of their management evokes the techniques of a collectively-held patrimony. Moreover, it is unlikely that one family alone could have bought so much property in the space of thirty years, but by acting collectively and staggering their purchases, the Corsi were able to amass a block of adjacent houses. This symbiotic approach to property management was also advantageous to the individual families, each of which could benefit from the frequent reallocation of these properties.

Returning to the examples, we see that this benevolence was however not extended to outsiders. Following the loss of half of house no. 4 to Bartolo Corsi, Piero bought the last of Domenico Allegri's properties in the area, house no. 16. The sale of this *casetta* provides a good example of the limits to co-operation between neighbours concerning access to property which did not front onto the street. The triangular shape of the blocks of property on either side of Borgo Santa Croce may well have resulted in an abnormally large number of houses being set back from the street[71], but this feature was not exclusive to Leon Nero[72].

Since the early 1420s houses nos. 15 and 16 had been leased as one property to Lorenzo di Lorenzo *barbiere*. In 1427 Lorenzo declared that he paid twelve florins rent, a third of which went to Domenico Allegri and the rest to Bartolo Corsi[73]. At this time the ownership of house no. 15 was shared between Piero di Domenico and Giovanni di Bardo and both accordingly declared incomes of four florins. Allegri for his part, maintained that house no. 16 was leased to the Corsi for four florins a year[74]. By 1430 house no. 15 had been sold to Matteo Corsi and Allegri's *casetta* fell vacant. Allegri explained the situation thus:

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[71] There was a *chiasso* connecting the complex of buildings behind no. 35 with the street; *NA* 15956, unfoliated (ca. 5*r*.) and *Cat*. 805, fol. 742*r*. One house there "non à finestra dinanzi che rispondino nella via p<er>ciò à una casa dinanzi"; *Cat*. 355, fol. 93*r*. The Funghaia, which was adjacent to this property, was also only accessible through a covered passageway; *Cat*. 34, fol. 608*v*. It is probably for this reason that notarial contracts concerning house sales and leases usually also specified the transfer of the "accessibus, ingressibus, egressibus exitis et introitis suis usque in via publicam"; *Diplomatico* 1444 Gennaio 15 (Normale), Deposito Gherardi. See also *NA* 766, fol. 193*v*. and *NA* 732, fols. 45*r*., 111*v*. and 112*r*. The example below on page 88 suggests that alleys were generally kept in common ownership once a house had been divided to prevent such problems concerning access from arising. Illustration 6 shows the *androne/chiasso* of property no. 36.

[72] Ester Diana suggests the Oltrarno *gonfalone* of Drago Verde to have been equally labyrinthine; "Il Gonfalone del Drago Verde nel cinquecento", pp. 70-72.

[73] *Cat*. 35, fol. 972*v*.

[74] *Cat*. 46, fol. 451*r*. He also calculated that the Corsi owed him *ƒ* 39 in back rent; *ibid*., fol. 453*r*.

> ...in the past it was leased to the heirs of Domenico Corsi for four florins a year and now it is unrented and it cannot be leased again since it has no access to the street. This is because it used to be let together with one belonging to the said heirs, but they now want to use theirs for themselves and so mine is left with no entrance at all and cannot be leased. Send someone to come and see how it looks before you let me off the tax, as it will be clear to you that I cannot lease it to anybody apart from those Corsi and they say that they do not need it[75].

Stalemate ensued and house no. 16 remained unlet for over ten years, as Allegri lamented in 1442[76]. By 1447 Piero Corsi had purchased it from him, but on unknown terms. However, we can assume that they were not those which Allegri had expected back in 1430[77]. Whether Allegri received the 'appropriate price' guaranteed by communal law is also unclear. Thus, it is probably fair to say that the Corsi exploited both the law and the fact that Allegri was not resident in the *gonfalone* to extract the property from him[78]. Piero added it to his existing clump of houses, which in 1427 had constituted five separate domiciles and now accommodated just his immediate family of seven. The period between 1447 and 1451 saw the peak of the Corsi clan's expansion in this area. They now owned half the buildings on the south side of the piazza (nos. 3 to 8), in which they housed five of the nine households whose homes faced onto the square.

In 1451, Lorenzo, the youngest son of Bartolo di Domenico Corsi had only just turned twenty-five and consequently he and his elder brothers – Bardo and Bernardo – had not yet divided their inheritance[79]. This meant that although they could occupy separate domiciles, their goods, chattels and even their houses were all still held in common and listed in a joint *portata*. However, by this point the brothers' collective household had reached thirteen and as two of their wives were pregnant, their domicile, despite having recently absorbed house no. 4, was again overcrowded. This problem was soon eased by Lorenzo, his wife and

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[75] "Una chasetta posta nel borgho di Santa Croce, la quale era per la drieto apigionata alle rede di Domenicho Corsi per *f* quatro l'anno era mi rimasa ispigionata e non si può apigionare perchè nonn à niuna entrata perchè s'apigionava questa insieme chon una di dette rede ànnosi voluto la loro per loro uso, sicché la mia si rimane sanza alchuna entrata e non si può apigionare. Mandate a vedere nella forma che lla sta prima me lla achatastiate per niente, acciò che vuoi siate chiari chom'io no'lla posso apigionare a niuno se non è a quegli Chorsi, ed eglino dichono non avere bisongnio..."; *Cat.* 369, fol. 399*r*. The *campione* shows that the *ufficiali* indeed levied no tax on the property.

[76] "...e mi rimasa spigionata già ffa degli anni più di dieci"; *Cat.* 621, fol. 106*r*.

[77] Piero merely noted that he had bought the house from Allegri "in 3 pezi più tenpo fa"; *Cat.* 664, fol. 520*r*.

[78] Bartolo Corsi's own next-door neighbour, Giovanni di Paolo Morelli was quite explicit on the potential value of neighbours in his *Ricordi*, see pp. 237, 253-254, 257 and 261-262.

[79] Bartolo's will of May 1436 is to be found in *NA* 2976, fols. 181*r. ff.*

daughter moving out into house no. 8[80], where Niccolò di Francesco had been living[81]. As we saw in Chapter One, fraternities tended not to survive long after the physical division of the household, and sure enough, shortly after Lorenzo had moved out, the brothers divided their inheritance. In so doing Bernardo and Bardo also separated their households along the lines of their respective families, splitting houses nos. 3 and 4 into two residences again, just as they had been at the outset of this period.

The periodic reallocation and physical restructuring of houses were both part of a process of growth and disintegration that characterised household evolution[82]. The constant change of household structures required a similar flexibility of the houses in which they lived and the row of Corsi properties along Piazza Santa Croce was eminently suitable to this type of reallocation. Houses nos. 3 and 4 were joined together as a result of the growth in Bartolo di Domenico's family and likewise had later been separated to let his sons, Bardo and Bernardo establish their own conjugal families in them. These changes must be seen in conjunction with one another, for they were the architectural expression of the process of expansion and fission which accompanied the normal cycle of household evolution[83].

The state of the Corsi households in 1458 is shown on Map no. 4 on page 99. House no. 3 then belonged to Bernardo, no. 4 to Bardo and no. 8 to Lorenzo[84]. Bernardo was living with his wife, their two young children, his mother, a nurse and, according to the stipulations of his father's will, an old serving woman[85]. Bardo's house accommodated just himself and his wife, as all six of his children had died[86]. Lorenzo's household included his wife and four daughters[87]. By this time Niccolò di Francesco had left Lorenzo di Bartolo's house and moved away from the piazza altogether[88]. By 1469 he had settled in Via

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[80] The family membership at that time can be deduced from Lorenzo's 1458 *portata*, which suggests that his wife, Margarita, was one of the two who were pregnant; *Cat.* 806, fol. 416*v*.

[81] "Una chasa posta in detto popolo, la quale abita Lorenzo nostro fratello perchè siamo stretti nella chasa detto di sopra"; *Cat.* 699, fol. 401*r*. The "chasa di sopra" constituted houses nos. 3 and 4. Niccolò himself remained in house no. 8, but by now his rent-free agreement had lapsed and he paid them *ƒ* 20 a year collectively, even though it was ostensibly Lorenzo's family house in which he was staying; *Cat.* 700, fol. 620*v*.

[82] The wider practice of fraternal households is explored from page 40 in Chapter One.

[83] The theme of reconstruction and household cycles is developed in Chapter Four.

[84] Because of the inequality in the value of these houses, Bardo owed "...Lorenzo di Bartolo Chorsi, mio fratelo *ƒ* 340, i quali gli restai a dare nel divisa perchè ad me tocchò il luogho dichiarata e ò lo a rifare di denari"; *Cat.* 806, fol. 294*v*.

[85] Cat 806, fol. 155*r*.

[86] Of his children he wrote; "...è piacuto a dio chiamagli a sè"; *Cat.* 806, fol. 295*r*.

[87] His youngest daughter was however with the wet nurse; *Cat.* 806, fols. 416*v*.-417*r*.

[88] *Cat.* 914, fol. 626*r*.

dell'Anguillara, thereby continuing the itinerancy by members of this clan. By 1458 the sons of Matteo di Domenico Corsi had also divided their property in Borgo Santa Croce, which they had been occupying jointly since at least 1442. Matteo di Matteo took the main family residence (no. 14) and Jacopo the *casetta* (no. 15).

After a decade without evidence of any change in the tenure of the Corsi property facing Piazza Santa Croce, there came a notable alteration in 1461 when Bardo and Bernardo di Bartolo jointly bought house no. 12 on the corner of Piazza Santa Croce and Via de' Benci from Luigi di Giovanni Peruzzi. The brothers paid *f* 2500, which makes it the most expensive property transaction in this study[89]. Their two erstwhile properties were relinquished as family residences. Bernardo let his house (no. 3) to Jacopo di Niccolò Cocchi-Donati for five years[90]. Bardo Corsi, however, sold house no. 4 outright to Morello di Paolo Morelli for *f* 40, a sum so low as to imply that Bardo may already have had a debt with him[91]. Given the ages of the two brothers at the time of the deal and the size of their households, this purchase should not be seen as being necessitated by an expansion in numbers since they had a combined family total of only seven people[92]. In fact the move highlights a different feature of property acquisition which had little to do with the pragmatism which had previously characterised the clan's property management.

The brothers' decision to move away from the old houses of Bardo di Corsi was doubtless not an easy one. Clans showed a marked affinity for the houses in which they and their ancestors had lived and normally would only leave them in one of two circumstances. The first, which does not apply here, was when faced with penury, the second was when the disadvantages of moving could be offset against a rise in both the quality and location of the residence[93]. Given the relative costs of the two properties, it seems clear that this purchase would have reflected very well on the rising status of the Corsi. They did not leave the

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[89] The palace sold in the 1450s by the heirs of Bernardo Giugni to Giuliano di Lionardo Gondi brought *f* 1200; *Cat.* 808, fol. 121*r*. In 1493 Giovanni di Jacopo Corsi paid *f* 1100 for a house in Via dell'Anguillara; *Dec. Rep.* 12, fol. 508*r*. The building on the site of the present *Palazzo* Corsi-Horne was valued at *f* 830 in 1490; *Dec. Rep.* 13, fol. 85*r*. In 1461 Giovanni di Domenico Giugni valued his own house in Florence at *f* 2000; BL, *Acquisti e Doni* 103, fol. 23*r*. (pencil pagination) and the palace of Dietisalvi Neroni was also valued at *f* 2000 in 1466; *Capitani di Parte, numeri rossi* 74, fol. 36*r*. For further valuations of Florentine palaces during this period, see page 83 below, footnote 89 on page 143, footnote 93 on page 144 and footnote 30 on page 158.

[90] The rent was to offset a debt which Bernardo had with Giovanni Borromei and Company; *Cat.* 914, fol. 106*r*.

[91] *Cat.* 914, fol. 123*v*. Bardo was also loaded with debt; "Anchora mi truovo debito con speziali persone buona somma di denari"; *ibid.*, fol. 123*r*. The subsequent history of house no. 4 can be followed below on page 83.

[92] *Cat.* 914, fols. 106*r*. and 123*r*.

[93] This aspect of property management will be examined in Chapter Three.

gonfalone of Leon Nero, nor even Piazza Santa Croce, but rather moved to a more prominent and prestigious site. This would have helped reduce any qualms they might have had concerning the move, as would the fact that they did not totally cut their ties with the properties in which they had grown up, for house no. 3 was retained.

The 1460s also saw changes to the ownership of the other Corsi properties on the piazza. Following Piero di Domenico's accumulation and habitation of five houses in the 1440s, by 1464 his sons, Domenico and Antonio had been forced to *inpegnare*[94] the property (which constituted nos. 5-7 and 16) to provide dowries for their sisters[95]. During the period of this loan the house passed to Giovanni di Simone Orlandini, whose own family house was opposite that of Matteo Corsi on the south side of Borgo Santa Croce. Because the *f* 450 it raised was insufficient Domenico turned to Tommaso Spinelli, whose own palace was being reconstructed a couple of doors down from Orlandini's domicile. Spinelli made up the shortfall for the dowries and took the *f* 450 from the Orlandini[96].

The *Decima repubblicana* of 1495 shows the Corsi's presence in the area to have declined further. The changes are illustrated on Map no. 5 on page 100 and it can be seen that they were mainly to the benefit of the Morelli. The properties amassed by Piero di Domenico had been pledged by his widow to Bernardo di Girolamo Morelli[97]. Matteo di Matteo Corsi had also lost his two houses in Borgo Santa Croce[98]. The larger of the two (no. 14) was the only property on the block in which the Corsi had been permanently resident since 1427. It was awarded to Lorenzo di Matteo Morelli by the Podestà. Unsurprisingly, the reason for its loss concerned money advanced by Lorenzo Morelli to provide a dowry for Matteo Corsi's daughter. The only other property still held by the Corsi since 1427 was house no. 3, which Bernardo di Bartolo was leasing to his brother Lorenzo for *f* 10 a year.

The various branches of the Corsi living to the south of Piazza Santa Croce in this period demonstrated a notable degree of flexibility in the habitation, sale and renovation of their

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[94] This term is perhaps closer to pledging or pawning than mortgaging, because the owner relinquished his residence in the property in return for a sum of money which was paid to him up front.

[95] Dotal provision was a common cause of temporary or even outright loss of property. Indeed, by 1480 Lorenzo di Bartolo Corsi had forfeited a house entirely in providing his daughter Vaggia with a dowry; *Cat.* 1005, fol. 402*r*.

[96] This is all reported in Domenico di Piero Corsi's 1469 *portata*; *Cat.* 914, fol. 254*r*.

[97] Oretta, the widow in question, took the houses and passed them to Morelli to help raise *f* 480 of her dowry, which was outstanding; *Dec. Rep.* 16, fol. 113*r*. The *cessio iurium* contract itself is in *NA* 622, fols. 243*r*.-245*v*.

[98] His brother Jacopo is not mentioned in the 1495 *portate*, but Matteo clearly states that both the *casa* and *casetta* had been passed to Morelli.

clan houses. There is no *Catasto* which did not show at least one of them to have moved house and the *portate* do not always indicate what happened in the intervening years. The 1430s and 1440s was the period of their most rapid territorial expansion. In 1430 the Corsi had four clan residences on the south side of the piazza; nos. 3, 4, 14 and 15. By 1447 however, these same families occupied property which had previously accommodated a total of nine different households. Yet more striking is the fact that this expansion was not driven by the numerical growth of the clan itself, for from 1427 to 1480 there were consistently four Corsi families resident in the *gonfalone* and the number of individuals in them only rose from eighteen to twenty-six. Therefore, although the expansion of their property enabled a constant reallocation of houses between their various families, it was not in itself the result of a fundamental shortage of accommodation. Naturally, a certain degree of mobility around the clan houses can be expected to have resulted from the fluctuations inherent in a normal family life cycle, but it cannot explain the extent of the territorial expansion by the Corsi in the face of such a moderate growth in numbers.

The tactic driving this expansion is best demonstrated not by the quantity of housing acquired during the century, but by the marked improvement in the standard, status and conspicuousness of Corsi residences in 1500. Bernardo and Bardo di Bartolo lived in one of the largest palaces on Piazza Santa Croce, which was both castellated and topped by a tower {7}[99]. Though it might appear that this improvement in the quality of their housing had been made at the expense of their established clan enclave, it should be remembered that the clan had not lived *en masse* in contiguous housing since the 1340s, and perhaps not even then. The properties at the east end of Piazza Santa Croce had originally been purchased to house members of the Corsi clan, but had subsequently been expanded to bolster the conspicuousness of the clan's presence there. However, clan settlement was a dynamic process and just as in the mid-*quattrocento* the Corsi had favoured the physical consolidation offered by an enclave as the preferred means of marking their identity, by 1500 this same goal was achieved by their residence in striking individual buildings. We saw in Chapter One that despite periodic changes in household typology there was no fundamental shift in the nature of Florentine families. Likewise, the physical separation of Corsi housing need not have signified the erosion of their emotional cohesion in 1500 any

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[99] In 1493 their second cousin Giovanni di Jacopo Corsi paid *f* 1100 for a palace nearby, at the west end of Via dell'Anguillara; *Dec. Rep.* 12, fol. 508*r*. In 1490 Giovanni's brothers Simone and Luigi had bought the *palagetto* on the corner of Via de' Benci and Corso dei Tintori which they would eventually rebuild; Preyer, *Il Palazzo Corsi-Horne*, pp. 40-41.

more than it had in 1350. Their settlement in non-contiguous properties would have changed the nature, but not the fact of their civic perception and it would be wrong to conclude that it could only have been the product of a loosening of their emotional bonds.

A notable aspect of the property in which the Corsi were resident by the end of the century was that it was not suited to the incremental expansion by which they had previously extended their territory. These *palazzi* were certainly large, indeed their size was one of their main attractions. However, because they were built on a fundamentally different scale to the houses around them, they were also much more self-contained. This also demonstrates that the reasons for which the Corsi bought them were very different from those which motivated their purchase of the contiguous properties around the east end of the piazza. These later palaces were not primarily *gebrauchshäuser*, they were status symbols with which the Corsi hoped to further raise their prestige. In the case of Bernardo and Bardo di Bartolo the gamble of moving house soon paid off, for their impressive new residence won them a mention in Benedetto Dei's list of pre-eminent families resident on the piazza[100]. Indeed, it also brought them the notability rendered by accommodating distinguished visitors to the city, for in 1487 they hosted the "black messenger sent from the Sultan" who famously brought Lorenzo de' Medici a giraffe[101].

The Morelli

Over the course of the fifteenth century several families of the Morelli were at different times neighbours, landlords, guarantors and finally repossessors of Corsi property between the piazza and Borgo Santa Croce. However, it is not merely their take-over of parts of the Corsi patrimony that render them interesting. The Morelli also demonstrated a contrasting manner to the Corsi in both the acquisition and use of this property, which primarily resulted from their differing housing needs. Unlike the Corsi or the Spinelli, whose numbers were generally stable, the Morelli's head count grew considerably in this period. Between 1427 and 1447 the total of Morelli in Leon Nero only rose from thirty-two to thirty-three and the number of their clan houses from five to six. By 1480 however, there were fifty-five Morelli and by 1495, they owned a total of fourteen houses in the *gonfalone*.

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[100] See footnote 64 on page 139 below. A description of the house can be found in *Magistrato dei Pupilli avanti il Principato* (hereafter *Pupilli*) 180 (1495-1501), fols. 236*r*.-237*r*.

[101] "A dì 11 Nov. 1487 Bardo Corsi ospita in casa sulla piazza di S. Croce il messaggere nero spedito dal Soldano con donatini di animali per Lorenzo di Piero di Cosimo de' Medici..."; BN, *Poligrafo-Guargani* 666, card no. 36.

Between 1393 and 1421 one of them, Giovanni di Paolo, kept a book of *Ricordi*, which has become an oft-cited source for the period. In an attempt to sketch his family history Giovanni embarked on the all-too-familiar search through "alcune carte di notaio già consumate, istracciate e quasi ispente per antichità"[102], in which he found mention of one Morello di Giraldo Morelli. This Morello had moved from the parish of San Simone to the north side of Corso dei Tintori in the mid-thirteenth century, as the area was more suitable to his trade of dyer. This established the Morelli in the area a full century before either the Corsi or the Spinelli.

The four branches of the clan resident in Santa Croce in the fifteenth century were also for the most part still in the cloth industry. They were no longer mere dyers, but were engaged in the more lucrative activity of making and selling cloths of wool and silk. Giovanni di Bartolomeo and his heirs were wool workers (*lanaiuoli*), as were his neighbours, the descendants of Giano Morelli. The heirs of Morello Morelli were for the most part *setaiuoli*[103]. The relative decline of the wool trade and the growth of commerce in silk in this period may well be reflected in the fate of the Morelli clansmen practising these two trades. While the silk workers, who all lived to the north of Borgo Santa Croce, accounted for eighty percent of the increased head count and all of the clan's property acquisitions in the *gonfalone* during this period, the *lanaiuoli* remained immutable in their houses beside the malodorous dyers' *botteghe* in Corso dei Tintori.

The largest Morelli domicile, house no. 1/2, was owned by the diarist Giovanni di Paolo. The only other owner-occupied houses belonging to the Morelli were nos. 31 to 33, positioned at the north-western end of Corso dei Tintori. These properties were somewhat distant from the others, but were probably those in which Giraldo had first settled the Morelli within the area[104]. Giovanni di Bartolomeo lived in house no. 31 and Bartolomeo di Giano in both nos. 32 and 33. The fourth Morelli family in the *gonfalone* constituted the four sons of Morello Morelli who in 1427 were living in accommodation rented from the Alberti (on the site of house no. 28).

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[102] Giovanni di Paolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, p. 105.

[103] BN, *Carte Passerini* 156.

[104] Giovanni di Paolo Morelli mentions that Giraldo lived in the parish of San Jacopo, the boundary of which only covered the north side of Corso dei Tintori; *Ricordi*, pp. 119-120.

Like the Corsi, the Morelli living in the Quarter of Santa Croce were resident in houses spread over two *gonfaloni*[105]. Consequently in 1427 they too lacked a focal centre to their settlement. Indeed, the distances between the various Morelli houses in Leon Nero were much greater than the width of Piazza Santa Croce which separated Lapo from Domenico di Francesco Corsi. This separation has been seen as proof of both the emotional and physical disintegration of *consorterie* in this period[106]. However, before alleging the irrevocable break-up of even small clans like the Corsi and the Morelli, it is important to consider whether the scattered nature of their settlement in 1427 could only have been the product of prior fragmentation. Might it not have been the result of choice, or the availability of housing ?[107]. Neither the Corsi nor the Morelli had the numerical strength of a clan such as the Peruzzi – who lived nearby in a strategically-positioned defensible enclosure – and therefore lacked both a united block of property in which to house themselves and the mentality which such an enclave would engender. It is therefore just as likely that the Morelli and Corsi had in fact never formed clan enclaves than that they had necessarily fragmented at some point prior to 1400. Furthermore, it is worth examining whether the scattering of clan families was indeed irrevocable. The fluid pattern of the Corsi's residential settlement certainly shows that the cohesion of a clan enclave need not be permanent, yet as we shall see below, the adjacency of the properties carefully accumulated by the Morelli in the second half of the fifteenth century demonstrates that other clans were still actively pursuing the principle of a cohesive enclave.

Giovanni di Paolo Morelli lived in the clan's largest house (no. 1/2), which consisted of two adjoining properties[108]. The house was at no point leased, nor did Giovanni or his descendants ever live anywhere else. In 1427 one house accommodated Giovanni di Paolo and his illegitimate son, Fruosino. His elder son Jacopo lived in the other with his family. The *portate* suggest that there was some friction between Jacopo and Giovanni concerning the right to live in the property which had arisen since the division of Giovanni's estate. Jacopo noted that "we are squashed into our house in great discomfort, but from next

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[105] In 1427 a fifth family, that of Benedetto di Bernardo Morelli, was living in the *gonfalone* of Carro. He and his heirs were eventually to settle in the *gonfalone* of Chiavi, yet they continued to file their taxes in Leon Nero. This was no doubt to seek any advantage gained from associating with the wider clan.

[106] Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth in Renaissance Florence*, chapter seven and particularly page 258.

[107] F. W. Kent however believes that only the underprivileged would move away from their clan; *Household and Lineage*, p. 246. See also footnote 36 on page 37. However, in 1404 Giovanni di Paolo Morelli had moved away from his neighbourhood for purely fiscal reasons; *Ricordi*, pp. 338-340.

[108] "1ª casa posta in Firenze posta nel popolo di Santo Jacopo tra lle fosse…e se ne dica 1ª sono inconpera due e in abitazione una a buona rispetto etc. cholle maserizie neciessarie e non ricche né abondanti"; *Cat.* 34, fol. 705*r*.

November Giovanni should live elsewhere, as I will have possession of the whole house"[109]. Giovanni saw the situation differently; he was still there in 1441[110]. Jacopo did not relent, for in that year he wrote that although the house "was for myself, my wife and Giovanni my father. I will claim it back in the future even if it is very difficult, for in the long run it will be for the best"[111]. At no point between 1427 and Giovanni's death in 1444 were there more than five people in the house, which can hardly be considered as excessive, for in 1480 the property accommodated fourteen. It is likely therefore that Jacopo was heeding the advice in his father's *Ricordi* to always exaggerate one's difficulties and hide one's wealth[112].

Giovanni's other house in the area was no. 18, which in 1427 was being let to Paolo di Zanobi da Ghiaceto for *f* 18. Very few of the families studied here owned a second clan house which was not adjoining their residential enclave, but still of a sufficient standard to have served as a supplementary domicile[113]. As ending the co-residency of the patrimonial unit often also precipitated the demise of patrimonial unity, separate residences were generally avoided whenever possible. When households did spill out of their main residence, the proximity of the second residence to the main domicile took precedence over whether or not the supplementary property was an established clan house; better to a rent a house from a neighbour than to risk the dissolution of the physical unity of the family and all it entailed[114]. Consequently, there is only one case in the entire sample in which kin – two brothers – held their goods in common and yet lived in totally detached clan residences[115]. For a father and son to break their co-habitation and live in totally separate houses would have been even more exceptional[116]. In practice, house no. 18 could not be used to relieve the alleged crush in house no. 1/2 and remained leased until 1433.

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[109] "...in detta casa abita ancora Giovanni mio padre beneche divisì, poi ritolse la donna per osservare cierti patti voglia la donna avere perchè vi siamo st<r>etti e brigha bisongnia a novembre Giovanni torni di per sè in altra casa, il perchè a me rimane il tutto e così dovete a mettere..."; *Cat.* 451, fol. 13*r*.

[110] Jacopo had been emancipated in 1426; *Emancipazione* 1, fol. 70*r*., and might have received part of the house as his *praemium emancipationis*. However, this was unlikely to have cost Giovanni his residence there, as the reciprocal right of shelter between father and son was guaranteed by natural law; Kuehn, *Emancipation*, p. 21.

[111] "Una kasa posta sulla piazza di Santa Croce dove abito, è per me proprio, la moglia e a Giovanni mio padre, la richupo per ll'avenire e se ne mi sia duro, tutto è per lo meglio in tenpo"; *Cat.* 617, fol. 462*r*.

[112] *Ricordi*, pp. 248, 251-258. See for example the contrasting descriptions of this house in footnotes 108 and 130.

[113] This aspect of the clan's property management will be investigated from page 103 below.

[114] See footnotes 64 and 65 on page 48 above.

[115] Between 1430 and 1433 Niccolò and Bernardo di Domenico Giugni shared a *portata*, but lived with their respective families in two non-adjacent houses which they had recently inherited from their father.

[116] When Lodovico Niccolini left home after his emancipation and marriage, his father accepted the situation, "...as it is a natural thing that every one should fervently seek to have liberty...though it is not possible that a separation of the kind should not grieve one..."; Camugliano, *The Chronicles of a Florentine Family*, p. 155.

The two Morelli families resident in Corso dei Tintori were pinned down by the confines of their neighbours' properties. To the west of Giovanni di Bartolomeo's house (no. 31)[117] was a substantial building known as 'il palagio di messer Benedetto degli Alberti' (no. 30). On the eastern side of the buildings in which Bartolomeo di Giano's lived (nos. 32 and 33) was the *androne* leading to the Funghaia. Behind them was another house, which by 1430 had already been sold to Antonio di Salvestro Serristori and was later absorbed in the restructuring of his house and the creation of a new garden.

The expansion of the territory of the Corsi clan had largely been to the detriment of neighbouring widows and absentee landlords. The Morelli residents in Corso dei Tintori however experienced more rigid restrictions, for the Alberti were one of the city's most pre-eminent clans. They had been weakened by banishment at the turn of the century and from 1401 to 1433 messer Benedetto's *palagio* had even been confiscated by the Parte Guelfa[118]. Their *portate* show that after returning to Florence in the late 1420s they were continually selling property to raise money to pay their taxes[119]. Nevertheless, this did not force them to bow to the accommodatory difficulties of the likes of the Morelli and it was not until 1459 that Gualberto and Francesco di Giovanni Morelli were able to rent part of messer Benedetto's palace. The contract shows that two rooms, one above the other, were let to Francesco di Giovanni Morelli for five years. They are marked *e* on Map no. 6. The landlord was to close off the door in his house leading into the two rooms and the tenants could then create new doorways into them from their own house[120]. It can be assumed from this example that such alterations were common when sets of rooms were leased to a neighbour.

The neighbouring family of Bartolomeo di Giano Morelli, the poorest of the clan, was resident in houses nos. 32 and 33. The number of inhabitants in these two houses down the century provides a good example of how an impoverished family coped with the problems of restricted living space. The family units evolved and grew in the usual way, yet because the area in which they resided was so inflexible, each subsequent generation had less space in which to live, as they lacked the necessary means to acquire additional accommodation.

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[117] A description of this house from the 1430s is to be found in *Pupilli* 166 (1430-31), fols. 289*r*.-294*v*.

[118] Foster, *The Ties that Bind, Kinship, Association and Marriage in the Alberti Family*, pp. 52-53.

[119] Preyer, *Il Palazzo Corsi-Horne*, pp. 27 *ff*.

[120] All the alterations were to be at the Morelli's expense; *NA* 4821, fol. 140*v*. I am very grateful to Brenda Preyer for supplying me with this reference.

In 1427 houses nos. 32 and 33 accommodated Bartolomeo, his wife and three children, his mother, brother Antonio, sister-in-law and her two children[121]. After Bartolomeo's death in 1436, his brother Antonio and son Francesco held both properties *per non diviso*. The houses were leased and by 1447 they had also been physically divided, no. 32 being allotted to Bartolomeo's children and no. 33 to Antonio[122]. In 1469 Antonio di Giano was still in no. 33 with his wife and eleven children[123]. The property had a courtyard, a cellar and several *camere* and *sale*[124]. The family must have used the space most judiciously to accommodate thirteen in the house. After Antonio's death the property was physically divided between the families of his two wives. The three sons of his first union held a third of it and his widow Maddalena and her two sons had the rest[125]. The two portions were designated *per non diviso*, but the fact that older brothers were paying *f* 4⅔ rent each year for one half of the younger sons' part indicates that there was a delineated division[126]. The total number of inhabitants in no. 33 had fallen to seven, but with another family of six resident in no. 32[127], the whole property accommodated three family groups comprising three separate patrimonies, whereas in 1427 both buildings were the property of a united patrimony and were home to one family of ten people.

This situation contrasts strongly with the normal residency patterns of families from these clans. The predicament was the result of the families' inability to expand their territory and it led to the departure of both men and widows from the enclave, which would have been construed by contemporaries as a manifestation of impotence and poverty. The division and subsequent sub-division of their property was the only option open to them, but as we shall see below in examples from the Spinelli clan, this was normally only ever a temporary solution. In the case of the descendants of Giano Morelli examined here, it meant that by 1495 there were ex-residents of both houses nos. 32 and 33 dispersed all around the city and the *contado*[128].

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[121] *Cat.* 34, fol. 370*r*. His brother Paolo, who was the father of these latter two children, was away in London.

[122] The leasing of these houses is discussed below from page 107.

[123] *Cat.* 914, fol. 84*r*.

[124] Following Antonio's death the property was administered by the *Magistrato dei Pupilli*. Their description of it runs; "1ª casa co' tereno e corte e volta, sale e camere e altri suoi abituri"; *Pupilli* 172 (1467-1475), fol. 328*r*.

[125] One of the older sons, Bernardo, had however moved out to live in Poggibonsi; *Cat.* 1005, fol. 131*v*.

[126] See *Cat.* 1005, fol. 419*r*.-419*v*. for the older sons, *Cat.* 1005, fol. 452*r*. for Maddalena and her four children.

[127] This property was now occupied by Bartolomeo di Bartolomeo Morelli; *Cat.* 1005, fol. 82*r*.

[128] Antonio's widow was in the parish of Ognisanti; *Dec. Rep.* 17, fol. 103*r*., her step-son Otto in the parish of San Frediano; *ibid.*, fol. 193*r*. and an erstwhile resident of house no. 32, Gualberto di Giovanni had settled in Via dell'Anguillara; *ibid.*, fol. 307*r*.

The fortunes of the second Morelli family resident in Borgo Santa Croce in 1427 differed notably from their cousins in Corso dei Tintori, for theirs was a story of measured but unremitting expansion of their property holdings throughout the second half of the century. House no. 1/2 was probably a focal point for the clan, but initially it was isolated, surrounded by an enclave of Corsi houses. Despite this, it gradually came to be a pivot around which various descendants of Morello di Paolo Morelli built a united physical identity, through a combination of purchase, mortgage provision and litigation.

From 1433 Giovanni di Paolo Morelli had been leasing house no. 18 to his nephew Matteo di Morello and in August 1443 he drew up a *donatio inter vivos* in which he presented him the house outright[129]. However, the gift was not executed and Matteo was eventually required to pay Giovanni's son, Jacopo for the property following Giovanni's death in 1444[130]. Nonetheless, this acquisition established Matteo's branch of the family as property owners and after this Matteo – and later his brothers – rapidly began to expand their territory in the core of buildings between Borgo Santa Croce and Piazza Santa Croce.

In November 1450 Matteo di Morello rented part of an adjacent house (no. 17) from Piero di Domenico Gherardino for a period of three years[131]. House no. 17 was a substantial property and tenure of just half of it would have doubled Matteo's living space. By 1458 this lease had lapsed and Matteo's attention turned elsewhere. By the mid-1450s he obtained a *casetta* (no. 23) from Tommaso di Niccolò and the heirs of Buono di Niccolò Busini[132]. The property was not adjacent to Matteo's domicile, but lay in a small enclave of Busini property (nos. 20-24) on the other side of some Spinelli houses. It was neither of a standard nor a location fitting for use as a clan residence, so it became his stable[133].

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[129] *Diplomatico* 1443 Agosto 31 (Lungo), Deposito Gherardi.

[130] In January 1445 an arbiter awarded the property to Matteo after finding "dictum Matheum non habere domum propriam sed quod stetit et habitavit et stat et habitat in domibus alienis et ad pensionem et dictum Iacobum habere domum, bonam et honorabilem et commodissimam positam in dicto populo et super platea Sancte Crucis"; *Diplomatio* 1444 Gennaio 15 (Normale), Deposito Gherardi. The agreement also required Matteo to compensate Jacopo *f* 200 in yearly instalments and thus Matteo wrote in his 1447 *portata*: "...mi truovo una chasa in borgho Santa Croce, chonperai da Jachopo di Giovanni Morelli, della qual' son' signiore l'anno 1448, e non prima"; *Cat.* 664, fol. 253*v*.

[131] *Cat.* 700, fol. 370*r*. The *portata* of Francesco del maestro Francesco di Ridolfo, who lived in house no. 10, suggests that Matteo rented only the rear part of the house; *ibid.*, fol. 542*r*.

[132] Matteo paid no rent for the property and the Busini stated it not to be leased, but merely exchanged for a loan of *f* 30; *Cat.* 805, fol. 610*r*. If this were a ploy to avoid paying the taxation due on rented property, it did not work.

[133] In 1463 Matteo's son Lorenzo noted in an account book that it was being used as a stable; *GPA* 194, fol. 3*r*.

By 1458 Girolamo, Matteo's oldest son, had married, yet remained living with his father, albeit as Girolamo commented, "at my own expense"[134]. In the mid-1460s Girolamo moved next door to no. 17. This time instead of renting part of the house, he bought it outright from Piero di Domenico di Gherardino for the considerable sum of *f* 1100[135]. It remained in Morelli hands for the rest of the century and formed a second anchor around which the Morelli further expanded their territory in the area. No. 17 was also their only property to undergo any major enhancement in this period {8}. The house had previously changed hands with such frequency that it is unlikely that any of its owners would have had the time or the inclination to rebuild it[136]. The style of the *cortile* {9} suggests a construction date shortly after Girolamo's acquisition and its design has been attributed to Giuliano da Maiano[137]. In 1475 Girolamo acquired an area from his neighbours, Domenico and Antonio di Piero Corsi[138]. This enabled him to add an *antecamera* to the first floor. The purchase might also indicate more precisely the period in which the entire house was remodelled[139].

As we saw above on page 73, Matteo di Morello's nephew, Morello di Paolo bought house no. 4 from Bardo di Bartolo Corsi in February 1468. It subsequently became the domicile of Morello, his wife, children and bachelor brother, Tommaso. They had previously been living with their other brothers in rented accommodation[140]. House no. 4 was neither adjacent to an existing Morelli property, nor particularly suitable for accommodating a household of ten[141], yet the acquisition was a further step in the migration of the clan towards the eastern end of the northern triangle of land between Borgo Santa Croce and the piazza.

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[134] "Torno in chasa di Matteo Moregli mio padre chola mia famiglia e al mia spese"; *Cat.* 806, fol. 83*r*.

[135] Girolamo probably purchased the house in 1466 with money received from his brother Lorenzo, who had been awarded the family house in a division made that year by their father, Matteo; *GPA* 194, fols. 121*r*.-122*r*.

[136] In 1427 it was owned by Lodovico di Piero Bonaventura, who sold ⅔ of it to Stefano di Vanni Ricoveri and the other ⅓ to Luca di Giovanni da Cortona in the mid-1430s. They both sold their shares to Antonio di Salvestro Serristori, who, in turn exchanged the entire property for Domenico di Gherardino Rottini's house; *Cat.* 664, fol. 722*r*. (pencil pagination) and fol. 311*r*. Rottini subsequently seldom lived there, but generally leased it. For its lease in 1447, see footnote 2 on page 152, for 1451 footnote 131 above. In 1458 the "larger part" of it was let to Francesco di Tommaso Busini; *Cat.* 805, fol. 764*r*., and in the mid-1460s it was sold in its entirety to Girolamo di Matteo Morelli.

[137] Stegmann and Geymüller, *Die Architektur der Renaissance in Toscana*, vol. 10, *Pälaste, Höfe und Loggien*, part three, p. 7. See also Chapter Four below.

[138] *Cat.* 1005, fol. 699*r*. (pencil pagination).

[139] Girolamo was drawn for the first time as *Gonfaloniere di Giustizia* in 1476; San Luigi, *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, vol. 20, p. 89. This too may have influenced the timing of his decision to rebuild the house.

[140] Since their father's death in 1432 all seven brothers lived in rented properties, without however much change in their circumstances: "...abbiamo debito un mondo, e abbiamo fatiche di vivere...fateci ragione che ssiamo poveri pupilli"; *Cat.* 617, fol. 337*r*. In 1451 they had a salary that "non ipaghano la chalza poverissimi"; *Cat.* 700, fol. 106*v*. By 1458 the four surviving sons were renting a house from the Serristori; *Cat.* 806, fol. 436*r*.

[141] During the previous half century of Corsi ownership it had never housed more than a family of six.

The 1480 *portate* show the extent of the Morelli holdings to be fundamentally the same as in 1469. The *Decima repubblicana portate* of 1495 however indicate subsequent territorial expansion on an extensive scale. Firstly, the block of housing (nos. 5 to 7) which had slowly been accumulated by Piero Corsi in the 1440s and 1450s was now in the hands of Bernardo di Girolamo Morelli and the houses in Borgo Santa Croce which had belonged to the heirs of Matteo di Domenico Corsi (nos. 14 and 15) had also fallen prey to the Morelli. The larger property (no. 14) had been awarded by the Podestà to Lorenzo di Matteo Morelli in lieu of money owed to him by Matteo di Matteo Corsi[142]. At the time of these last *portate* the house was let, but soon after Lorenzo di Matteo rejoicingly moved into it himself[143].

These acquisitions gave the Morelli a broad swathe of virtually contiguous property in the triangle of land between the borgo and the piazza. Map no. 5 shows that excepting house no. 3, all the eastern properties facing the piazza down to no. 7 were theirs. In Borgo Santa Croce Morelli ownership stretched from house no. 1/2 as far as no. 18 and also included nos. 23 and 24[144]. Their enclave thus surpassed the Corsi's holdings of the 1450s[145], yet in contrast to the Corsi, the Morelli's territorial expansion was at least partially necessitated by a growth in their head count. In itself this does little to explain either the means by which the Morelli acquired their new property, the nature of the houses which they procured, nor the reasons for expanding their settlement in this way, and as these are the features which most clearly characterise the clan's expansion, it is worth focusing on them.

The sheer cohesion of Morelli property by 1495 suggests that the creation of their new enclave was not the product of chance, but conscious design. Apart from the cash purchase of house no. 17, all their newly-acquired property had been obtained indirectly; mainly through repossession. Largely thanks to the work of F. W. Kent, the strength of neighbourly interaction is now an established theme in Florentine historical writing and the frequency with which the residents of the *gonfalone* provided one another with secured

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[142] Matteo was appealing against the sentence. His version of events is in *Dec. Rep.* 16, fol. 101*v*., Lorenzo's in *Dec. Rep.* 17, fol. 25*v*. Lorenzo's extensive legal costs are noted in *GPA* 137, fols. 176*v*. *ff*.

[143] "...questo dì xiiii° di giennaio 1495 tra ore due e tre di notte noi siano tornati chol nome di ddio e della Vergine Maria ad abitare nella chasa che s'è chonvinta per piato a Matteo di Matteo Chorsi...Iddio ci dia grazia ce la chonserviamo chon ghaudio e chon salute dell'anima nostre ad laude e onore di dio sempre"; *GPA* 75/4, fol. 40*r*.

[144] Lorenzo di Matteo had bought the *casetta* (no. 24) from Giovanni di Francesco Dini in September 1481; *GPA* 139, fols. 38*v*. and 163*r*. It was adjacent to the stable (no. 23) which his father had acquired from the Busini in the 1450s and which in June 1484 Lorenzo had finally purchased outright; *GPA* 139, fols. 76*v*. and 165*v*.

[145] The lack of shops in the area meant that these enclaves could be complete, without any 'alien' presence at all.

loans is yet further proof of the depth of these bonds. Nevertheless, the fact that the Morelli emerged at the end of the century with an enclave of adjacent property demonstrates that the ties which led to the underwriting of neighbours' debts also created the means by which neighbouring property could be seized and although this black cloud around the silver lining of neighbourliness has been less thoroughly examined[146], it is very evident in the sources. Thus, although Giovanni di Paolo Morelli pressed his descendants to create lasting friendships with their neighbours[147], he added that one should avoid lending money 'like fire'[148]. His own personal experience as an orphan whose estate was frittered away by his relatives meant that he had every reason to know that, "né parente né amico si truova che voglia meglio a te che a sé"[149], and in the latter half of the fifteenth century his clansmen once again proved this maxim to be true.

By coalescing their settlement to form an united enclave, the Morelli demonstrated that far from being redundant, the idea of having clan domiciles concentrated together was still found effective in the late fifteenth century. Once formed, this enclave proved to be more enduring than those of either the Corsi or the Spinelli, for four of these houses were still inhabited by Morelli in 1761[150]. Moreover, the lengths to which the various families went to achieve this coalescence implies that they believed it would bring substantial advantages, chief among which was the enhancement of their presence in the *gonfalone*. Thus, paradoxically, the Morelli created an enclave for the same reason that the Corsi abandoned theirs; to emphasise their conspicuousness on both a local and indeed a city-wide level. Coalescence was the means the Morelli chose to project their corporate image onto the city, just as moving to and building more striking houses had been that of the Corsi. Of course these two techniques were by no means mutually incompatible, for just as the Corsi found themselves prominent properties close to their old clan domiciles, Girolamo Morelli rebuilt and enhanced his home (no. 17). Nevertheless, there still remains a clear distinction between

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[146] It is touched upon by D. V. and F. W. Kent in *Neighbours and Neighbourhood*, p. 55 and made the basis of the 'agonistic' social bond identified by Weissman in *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 27 *ff.*

[147] *Ricordi*, pp. 253-254 and 261-263. This is a common theme in Florentine writing of the period, most succinctly expressed by Gino di Neri Capponi: "Ritentevi co' vostri vicini, e co' vostri parenti innanzi ad ogni cosa"; *Ricordi*, column 1150 and Paolo da Certaldo: "Sta bene sempre co' tuoi vicini..."; *Libro di buoni costumi*, entry no. 267.

[148] "Se se' richiesto di danari...guardatene quante dal fuoco...". If however, it really was unavoidable, "non t'obbrigare mai se non se' prima sicuro e guarda che la sicurtà sia sofficiente..."; *Ricordi*, pp. 238-239.

[149] *Ricordi*, p. 219.

[150] Comune di Firenze Archivio Storico, *Fondo Principale* 9637, fols. 351*v*., 355*r*. and 356*r*. This same census lists no Corsi and just one Spinelli family as living in Borgo Santa Croce and on the piazza.

the two clans' means of establishing their identity, which confirms that neither cultivating a clan enclave nor accumulating imposing individual properties can be seen as the exclusive means of guaranteeing conspicuousness. Indeed, the example of the last of the three clans to be examined here shows that the principles behind creating and maintaining an enclave were by no means at odds with the habitation of 'renaissance' palaces, for the settlement of the Spinelli in this period was characterised both by cohesion and construction.

The Spinelli

This clan must have settled in Leon Nero well before 1351, as tax records from that year indicate the presence of six Spinelli households in the *gonfalone*[151]. It is also likely that they were then already living in Borgo Santa Croce, as in the 1360s all the Spinelli in the Quarter of Santa Croce were resident in that street[152]. By 1427 there were six families living in houses nos. 35 to 39, a seventh directly opposite in no. 19, and an eighth in property rented from the Alberti[153]. Their occupation and ownership of houses was subsequently to change very little. Between 1427 and 1495 no property was added to their enclave, nor any sold. One was acquired through a dowry and another alienated in the same way. The Spinelli did not lease their houses to non-clan members (except during the construction of Tommaso di Lionardo's palace) and only very rarely did they themselves rent accommodation from outsiders. Thus, were it not for the fact that Tommaso di Lionardo created one of the city's most notable *quattrocento* palaces, the clan's property management during this period would have been so unremarkable as to have made the Spinelli superfluous to the history of the district's urban fabric. One reason for this inactivity can be found in the lack of growth in the clan's numbers. Their six clan domiciles were home to forty-two clansmen in 1427, yet by 1480 the total number of Spinelli in the *gonfalone* had actually fallen to forty-one.

The single residence on the north side of Borgo Santa Croce (no. 19) was inhabited by Bartolomeo and Andrea di Bonsignore Spinelli. From 1427 to 1480 it was passed down to Bartolomeo's male descendants. In their 1469 *portata* his sons Cristofano and Niccolò mentioned that the house "had always been ours", which, given the fluid circumstances of those of the Corsi and Morelli which surrounded them, was indeed quite a claim[154].

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[151] *Estimo* 8 (13 March to 14 July 1351), fols. 54*r*., 55*v*., 58*v*., 59*r*. and 62*v*.

[152] *Prestanze* 130 (1368-69), fol. 73*v*.

[153] This house, which was totally surrounded by other properties belonging to Francesco di Altobianco degli Alberti was probably positioned somewhere in the area covered by the site of house no. 29.

[154] "Una chasa con suoi habituri…per nostra habitatione, fu sempre nostra"; *Cat*. 914, fol. 179*r*.

The other clan residences were on the south side of the street, the most westerly of which was no. 35, which belonged to Bonsignore di Niccolò. He occupied it until his death in 1458[155] and then bequeathed it to the *Mercanzia*. However, this did not mean that it was no longer used by the clan, for in that same year Francesco di Fruosino Spinelli rented it back for *f* 16 a year. Fruosino Spinelli and his descendants were the most peripatetic family in the clan as they had no house of their own. Yet apart from the years 1427 to 1433, during which time they rented a house from the Alberti, they were usually provided with space in other Spinelli clan houses. In this respect they were looked after much as Francesco di Domenico Corsi and his son Niccolò were by their kinsmen.

Another aspect of clan settlement in which the Spinelli mirrored the Corsi was by expanding their domiciles into adjacent properties. In November 1466, Antonio di Lorenzo Spinelli rented house no. 35 to augment the insufficient space provided by his half share of no. 36, which was positioned immediately adjacent to no. 35[156]. At the same time his brother Jacopo supplemented his half share of no. 36 with the *casetta* (no. 21) across the street[157], thus giving both brothers '1½' houses. They kept their main house *per non diviso* for the time being and it was not until after Antonio di Lorenzo's death that it became legally and physically divided.

The separation of house no. 36 came in 1477 and its details are noted in the arbiter's contract. Although such partitions were by no means inevitable, they were prudent, even within households of closely-related kin. At first sight it might be thought that the division was occasioned by a crush of people in the house or perhaps some disagreement, as it does contain some rather officious and binding clauses. In 1477 the property was home to just four people; Jacopo di Lorenzo, his wife Lisabetta, and his nephew Lorenzo di Antonio and his new wife Maria, yet it had recently held up to as many as twelve. In fact, the division was most probably an indirect result of young Lorenzo's marriage. As we saw in Chapter One, one married pair in a non-patriarchal household seldom led to its disintegration, but the introduction of a second conjugal pair usually necessitated a re-evaluation of the respective ownership entitlements and this, rather than any personal antipathies probably accounts for the *diviso* contract being drawn up. It runs so:

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[155] He was buried that year in Santa Croce; BN, Cirri, *Necrologia Fiorentino*, vol. 17, p. 332.

[156] "Chomincio la pigione a dì primo di novembre 1466 e detta chaxa tengho perchè la mia metà non m'è abastanza alla mia famiglia. Paghone l'ano di pigione *f* 16"; *Cat.* 914, fol. 3*r*.

[157] This casetta was opposite his own house and not (despite his father's opinion) next to it; *Cat.* 664, fol. 277*r*.

...We award the front part of the house to Jacopo with a *sala*, windows overlooking the street, *camere*, a terrace above and all its fittings. The ground floor is to be divided in such a way that from the street entrance as far as the well shall be held in common. And in the same way the well, the courtyard and the water stoup should be for the common use of both the front and rear portions. Moreover we consign to the said Jacopo 3½ *braccia* of the *loggia* in the direction of the garden from between the second and third column; with the ground floor *camera* that gives onto the street and two cellars empty and ready for use. The area behind the [arbiter's] marking is to remain allotted to the rear section, as will the benches at the street exit so that the owner of the front part cannot impede access. Should Jacopo wish to put in windows there for his convenience, he must undertake all the expenses arising from the work. Whoever does the work on the benches and the exit can refuse to let the other one use it until he has paid his share. Similarly, both the well and the courtyard should be repaired, so that each brother has equal access to the water. If one of them refuses, the other can keep an account of the costs and refuse to let him use the water until he pays his half and he can pursue this debt however he likes.

We award Lorenzo the rear living quarters where Jacopo currently lives. The *loggia* is to remain with the part which we have already awarded to Jacopo, along with the *saletta* facing the garden, the ground floor *camera*, *pratello*, garden, kitchen, stable in the garden, *sale* and *camere* which go with that side of the house. Moreover, the upper *loggia* above which is the kitchen; that is from the *verone* as far as the cellar that leads to the well and from the cellar to the well will remain in common ownership so that both Jacopo and Lorenzo can fetch water.

And so by whatever means possible the roof of the kitchen or the terrace should be raised as far as possible without making a wall, or other structure using timber which would block the light to the *camera* which is called the *camera* of monna Antonia, which is in front of the *sala*.

Since the dwelling to the rear that is awarded to Lorenzo is better than the one to the front, Lorenzo has to give him [Jacopo] by the coming August of 1477 *f* 50 L[a] for which he has to promise him without exception and to promise the money to whomsoever Jacopo may say[158].

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[158] (79*r*.) "1[a] chasa possta nel borgho di Santa Croce, popolo di Sa' Jachopo tralle fosse dove al presente abitono per non dovisa Jachopo di Lorenzo iSpineli e Lorenzo d'Ant° di L<orenz>° iSpineli che da primo via, secondo rede di ser Riccho iSpineli, terzo orto delle rede di Franc° di Tommaso Busini, quarto orto di Mariotto di Bernardo Serisstori, quinto chasa di Franc° Doni, sesto tinta ~~di Lucha~~ di Giovanni di Lucha dell Uccellino.

From 1480 the term *per non diviso* is dropped from their *portate* and Lorenzo and Jacopo subsequently cite each other as neighbours, just as they would have done with people living beyond the walls of their house. That year also saw a new threat to Lorenzo's tenure of his part of the house, as his mother Francesca petitioned for it to be awarded to her in restitution of her dowry[159]. Francesca had left the house on the death of her husband and since then had been living in rented accommodation on the other side of the city. This would usually imply that she had already been returned the dowry. Despite her appeal to the Podestà, she did not gain possession of the property and in 1495 it was still reported as being shared between the same two men.

For much of the century house no. 37 accommodated a number of family branches descended from the occupant of 1427, Domenico di Francesco Spinelli. By 1442 the house had been divided into three. Domenico's youngest son, ser Ricco lived on the ground floor, whilst his brother Francesco and the heirs of a third brother, Rinieri occupied the other two-thirds. These divisions were maintained for a generation until the death of ser Ricco. Three

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Della quale chonsengniano a Jachopo di Lorenzo sopradetto la parte dinanzi chon sala, finestre sopra la via pubricha, chamere, terrazzo di sopra, chon tutte sue apertenete el terreno in quale modo che ll'entrata da via sia a chomune dall usscio da viya adirittura insino al pozzo e chosì el pozo e lla chorte e lla pila del marmo sia a chomune e uso della parte dinanzi e di drieto e ppiù chonsengniamo a detto Jachopo della logia dalla sichonda cholonna alla terza br. 3½ in su andando in verso l'orto cholla chamera terrena che riesscie in sulla via chon due volte libere e ispedite e dal sengnio della misura in su rimanchi alla parte di drieto e cche muricuoli dell usscio da viya sieno a uso chosì della parte di drieto chome quella dinanzi non potendo vietare usscia e finestre volendole farnela detto Jachopo per suo chomodo e chosì debbe chon chonchorere a ongni ispesa achadessi per detti muriccuoli e panche e usscio ciasschuno de' detti per metà e cchi richusassi di nollo fare quello tale possi e a llui sia lesscito di vietare l'uso per insino a tanto nonn a<v>rà sodisfatto le rrata sua.
E chosì si debbe achonciare el pozzo e lla chorte per modo si possi usare l'acchua ciasschuno per metà e sse ciasschuno rischusassi e quello che llo volessi achonc<i>are lo possi fare achonciare e tenere chonto delle ispese e per insino a tanto non pagha le rrata sua possi e a llui sia lesscito di richusalgli l'acchua per insino nollo sodiffa della metà e che llo possi isstringnere al paghamento dove a luii paressi. //
A Lorenzo guidichamo l'abitazione di drieto dove abita al presente Jachopo cholla loggia rimane da quella in su abbiamo chonsengniata a Jachopo e cholla saletta dell orto e chamera terrena, pratello, orto, chucina, isstalla nell orto, sale e chamere apertenente al detto illato chol verone su vvi <è> la chucina coè el verone insino alla issvolta che vva al pozzo e dalla issvolta al pozzo rimanghi a chomune perchè el detto Jachopo e Lorenzo possino andare chomodamente per l'acchua.
E cche per ingniuna via possi ne debbi alzare el tetto della chucina o'l terazzo più che si sia ne fare alchuna muro o altro 'dificio chosì di muro chome di lengniame che achupasi e lume della chamera che ssi chiama di m[a] Ant[a] che in sulla sala dinanzi.
E perchè l'abituro di drieto che ssi chonsengnia a Lorenzo è meglio che quello dinanzi che Lorenzo gli debbi dare per tutto aghossto prossimo che viene 1477 *f* 50 L[a] de' quali gli debbe far gliene promessa di bancho libera sanza veruna acezione a farli promettere a cchi el detto Jachopo diciessi.
Io Jachopo sopradetto sono chont<en>to e'brighoni a quanto di sopra si chontiene e questo dì 2 di luglio 1477 ò ricevuto dal detto Lorenzo d'Ant° iSpineli *f* cinquanta L[a] coè *f* 50 L[a] per raghualcho di detta chasa dove io sto e però mi sono sosscritto di mia propria mano detto dì"; *NA* 14718, fol. 79*r*.-79*v*.

[159] "Una mezza chasa ch'era per nostro abitare…e detto chasa chonsegniossi a Lorenzo d'Ant° Spinelli per la dota della madre sua [*i.e.* herself] e più se gli chonsegno per raghuagilo della detta dota per insino in *f* 1000 e per le spese fatte al Palagio del Podestà di Firenze"; *portata* of Francesca, widow of Antonio di Lorenzo; *Cat.* 1005, fol. 263*r*.

sons survived him, but as it was impractical to divide their single floor any further, it was reapportioned. However, contrary to common practice, it was the younger sons of ser Ricco, Cipriano and Ricco, who bought out the share of their elder brother, Rinieri[160].

In February 1453 the widow of Francesco di Domenico was pressing her sons, Domenico and Lodovico for the return of her dowry. Instead of cash they passed her their third of the house, which constituted the middle floor. Shortly after Francesca sold it for *f* 300 to Lorenzo di Rinieri di Domenico, who had recently inherited his father's share in the upper floor[161]. This reduced to two the number of living quarters in the house and this is how it remained for the rest of the century. Cipriano di Ricco had the ground floor while the upper partition was inhabited by Lorenzo di Rinieri and later, his widow, Lucrezia. The brothers Domenico and Lodovico di Francesco themselves moved to a house at Canto alle Mosche[162] which their mother had received through the dowry of her own mother, Lorenza. Although it appears that the sons lost out because they had to vacate their family house, in reality, their situation was not so bleak. By the early 1450s continuous partitioning of house no. 37 was rendering it inviable as a comfortable residence for all those owning shares in it and it was thus due for the type of re-apportioning which Lorenzo di Rinieri's purchase provided. As such, this process mirrored the same reallocations which were so much more common among the various Corsi families.

Following a case in 1469 to evict Lorenzo di Rinieri's widow Lucrezia from the upper part of house no. 37, it passed to the peripatetic heirs of Francesco di Fruosino Spinelli[163]. Francesco had previously rented house no. 35 from the *Mercanzia*, but had been displaced when Antonio di Lorenzo took the property for himself in 1466[164]. After Francesco's death his young sons went to live with Tommaso Spinelli[165]. Later however, in recompense for an

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[160] Rinieri di ser Ricco reports being paid *f* 100 by his brothers for it; *Cat.* 914, fol. 749*r*.

[161] "...Totam partem domus cum palcis, salis, cameris et aliis hedifitiis et cum anditu in dicta bona videlicet in mediani latere dicte domus, que tangit dicto Francescho Dominici de Spinellis indiviso parte facta cum dicto Raynerio fratre olim dicti Francsci et partem olim dicti Laurentii et ser Ricco Dominici de Spinellis etiam eius fratre..."; *NA* 10446, fol. 231*r*.

[162] Which lies at the corner of Piazza Santa Croce and Via de' Pepi; *Stradario storico e amministrativo della città e del Comune di Firenze*, p. 80, entry 730. The sale is noted in *Cat.* 914, fol. 247*v*.

[163] In his will of March 1463 Lorenzo di Rinieri left half of his share of the house to Cipriano and Ricco di ser Ricco and the other half to Domenico di Francesco, with the explicit instruction that his widow, Lucrezia, be allowed to stay as long as she remained a widow; *NA* 736, (unfoliated) ca. fols. 5*r*.-8*r*., especially fol. 6*v*.

[164] See page 87 above.

[165] "...da ppoi morì nostro padre, ci à 'caccietato Tomaso di Lionardo Spinelli in chasa sua"; *Cat.* 914, fol. 313*v*.

outstanding debt, Cipriano di Ricco gave the heirs *tornata* in house no. 37[166]. The deal had in fact been arranged by Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli, who had acquired an interest of *f* 350 in the house when he lent money to its previous occupant, Lorenzo di Rinieri. By transferring this credit to Francesco di Fruosino, he enabled the boys to move in.

This example shows that despite the evolution of each family group living in house no. 37, the lack of growth in the overall number of individuals there (there were eleven in both 1427 and 1480) meant that each time the house could have been heaving to the rafters with heirs, a pragmatic solution was found to avoid overcrowding. This was achieved without resorting to either extensive property acquisition or annexation of neighbouring property. Consequently, unlike the growing number of Morelli families and individuals who remained crammed into their houses in Corso dei Tintori, the Spinelli were generally able to divide this house to accommodate those entitled to live there both because of the lack of growth in their numbers and because they owned other property which could absorb the displaced. Thus, although the descendants of Domenico di Francesco did acquire another house in the *gonfalone* of Bue during this period, it was let both in 1480 and 1495.

It is striking that on two occasions litigation was initiated to ensure that parts of house no. 37 were not occupied by widows of the Spinelli. In the first case Francesca, the widow of Francesco di Domenico, received the entitlement to a part of the property in lieu of her dowry, but immediately sold it to realise its cash value. This sale was probably motivated by Lorenzo di Rinieri's desire for more space in his old family house, and considering the size of the property, the *f* 300 he paid can be considered a generous price[167]. However, whether Francesca and her five children originally wished to leave the house is not clear. The later case of Lucrezia, widow of Lorenzo di Rinieri, concerns the part of the house which her husband had bought from monna Francesca. Lucrezia had explicitly been bequeathed *tornata* by Lorenzo as long as she remained a widow, which she clearly still was at the time of her eviction. However, it must be presumed that the pressing need for the patriarchal family of Cipriano di ser Ricco to reside in the family house took precedence over testamentary formalities. It is possible that as Lucrezia lived alone in her part of the

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[166] "Una chasa posta nel borgho di Santa Croce...la quale n'abitto partte e resto abita i figliuoli di Franc° di Fruosino iSpineli per certti denari ò a dare loro, chome per lodo datto sotto dì p° d'aprile 1476..."; *Cat.* 1005, fol. 190*r*. The 1476 agreement succeeded another from 1473, which is to be found in *NA* 14716, fol. 82*r*.-82*v*.

[167] In the 1460s Rinieri di ser Ricco had sold his share of a third of the house for *f* 100, see footnote 160. The *f* 300 paid to Francesca might also have included monies for the restitution of her dowry of *f* 1000; see footnote 159 above.

building, her residency there constituted an injudicious apportioning of precious space and this may also have contributed to the clan's desire to re-house her elsewhere.

The reconstruction of houses nos. 38 to 40 as Tommaso Spinelli's palace will be dealt with in Chapter Five, but insofar as it effected changes in the settlement of the clan, it cannot be said to have been of great import. The rear *casetta* (no. 40) was not integral to the clan's housing and although house no. 38 initially belonged to the five sons of Lionardo di Francesco Spinelli, they never all lived there; it was often leased to ease overcrowding in other Spinelli households. After the palace was completed it provided accommodation not only for Tommaso and his family, but also for the sons of Francesco di Fruosino Spinelli, who stayed there until moving next door to house no. 37, as mentioned above.

Conclusion

The Corsi, Morelli and Spinelli families studied here provide examples in which the relative position and usage of domiciles differed sufficiently for it to be concluded that the patterns of clan settlement in this period were by no means uniform and this variety enables comparisons between the various examples. It does not appear that any settlement pattern proscribed the subsequent use of any other, for both the Morelli and Corsi clans shifted between physical cohesion and separation over this period. Yet it should be asked whether this variety indicated differing or even competing aims in any of the clans' settlement. In this conclusion I shall therefore draw together examples from the three clans which demonstrate the ends to which these various techniques were bent. Before doing this, it is worth rehearsing the main strands of the settlement policy pursued by each clan.

Through a policy of incremental purchasing during the 1430s and 1440s the Corsi amassed a block of contiguous housing at the south-eastern end of Piazza Santa Croce around which their constituent families were periodically redistributed. This ensured that each family had a domicile which closely corresponded to its spatial needs. However, this physical cohesion subsequently declined, until by the 1490s the clan was largely settled in non-adjacent houses. Although none of these properties was ever more than a couple of hundred metres from another, when compared with their prior cohesion, as well as the coalesced settlement that the Spinelli maintained throughout this period and which the Morelli achieved by the end of it, the distance between their various domiciles was exceptional. Neither the creation, nor the dissolution of the Corsi enclave was necessitated by a sudden change in the clan's

size nor in their fortunes, for during both phases their families consistently expanded their residential space far beyond that which the low growth in the number of clansmen could justify. Therefore I have chosen to see these moves less as the result of a change in policy, than a modification in the means by which the aims of their settlement were to be achieved.

In the case of the Morelli, the growth in the number of their clansmen in Leon Nero from thirty-three in 1447 to fifty-five in 1480 in itself provided partial justification for the purchase of additional housing. However, the clan never adapted their new houses in the fluid manner of the Corsi or Spinelli. As a result, despite deliberately procuring a considerable enclave of contiguous property by the end of the century, it does not appear that they actively exploited its adjacency, as there is no record of them having knocked any of the properties together. For the Morelli the appeal of creating a clan enclave lay less in the practical advantages of ensuring a close correlation between each family's spatial requirements and the actual amount of space allotted to them than in the simple fact that occupying adjacent residences was a recognised and effective means of demonstrating the presence and strength of their clan. Their domiciles thus became more than just a block of individual houses; their very cohesion created a conspicuous enclave with which the clan would be identified. Although the settlement of the Morelli ultimately contrasted with that of the Corsi, in both cases the adopted method was less determined by the actual usage of the domiciles than by the perception of prestige which their occupation would promote.

The Spinelli started the period in question with a cohesive enclave and as their membership actually fell by 1480, they had no reason to extend it. The size of a number of their individual households did occasionally increase to the point where they became overcrowded. However, they refrained from adopting new housing because their enclave was physically hemmed-in by neighbouring property and any addition to it would necessarily have been divorced from their existing settlement and would have detracted from their long-established physical cohesion. Therefore in the 1460s Tommaso Spinelli chose to enhance his presence in the area, not by acquiring more property, but by embellishing what the Spinelli already owned.

We have seen that in the latter half of the century the Corsi families turned away from their previous physical cohesion, moving to and creating houses of individual note. Did this concession also necessarily constitute the end of the emotional cohesion of their clan ? Did

it also mean that the clan no longer conceived itself in the same terms as the Morelli and Spinelli, who largely remained living in adjoining housing ? Or were the Corsi merely the first to pass through a stage to which the others would also inevitably proceed ? To answer these questions, we need to focus on the broader understanding of 'neighbourhood' in this period.

The work of D. V. and F. W. Kent has done much to illustrate the nature of neighbourhood life during this period. However, in their investigations they found "far more talk...of neighbours than of neighbourhood"[168]. This is because Florentines primarily experienced their neighbourhood through relationships with *vicini* which arose from their mutual ties of business, patronage, god-parenthood and perhaps eventually marriage[169]. The network which these associations established may have been formalised within institutions such as the parish, confraternity or *gonfalone*, but if the advice in the didactic writing of the period was followed, they would all have been initiated through personal contact[170]. This does not mean that Florentines were unaware or indifferent to the physical fabric of their surroundings, far from it. As it was the very buildings of a neighbourhood which defined its structure, they consequently also shaped its residents' contact, experience and conception of one another. The streets and *piazze* in which Florentines met and conducted their business were quite simply created and delineated by their lack of buildings and likewise neighbours were primarily 'created' by the existence (and habitation) of adjacent dwellings. So although relationships may have been expressed in human terms, they were determined by the city's fabric and buildings were consequently the fundamental facilitator of Florentine social interaction. No study of neighbourhood can afford to overlook them.

The nature of clan settlement cannot be explained by reference to just the functional or spatial requirements of housing, nor by its physical cohesion or separation, for the Florentine conception of neighbourhood was the product of a much more complex mixture of determinants. It should therefore be supposed that Bernardo and Bardo di Bartolo Corsi, for example, would have been aware of the fundamental significance of their move to house

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[168] D. V. and F. W. Kent, *Neighbours and Neighbourhood in Renaissance Florence*, p. 3. See also Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*, chapter one.

[169] See Cohn, *The Laboring Classes in Renaissance Florence*, chapters one and two on marriage endogamy.

[170] The advice given was always that one should turn to local peers and superiors for support and guidance: "Tutte le cose ch' ài a fare, fa con consiglio di tuo buono amico"; Paolo di Certaldo, *Libro di buoni costumi*, entry no. 355. Alberti also stressed the importance of neighbourly friendships; *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, book four. See also footnote 147 above.

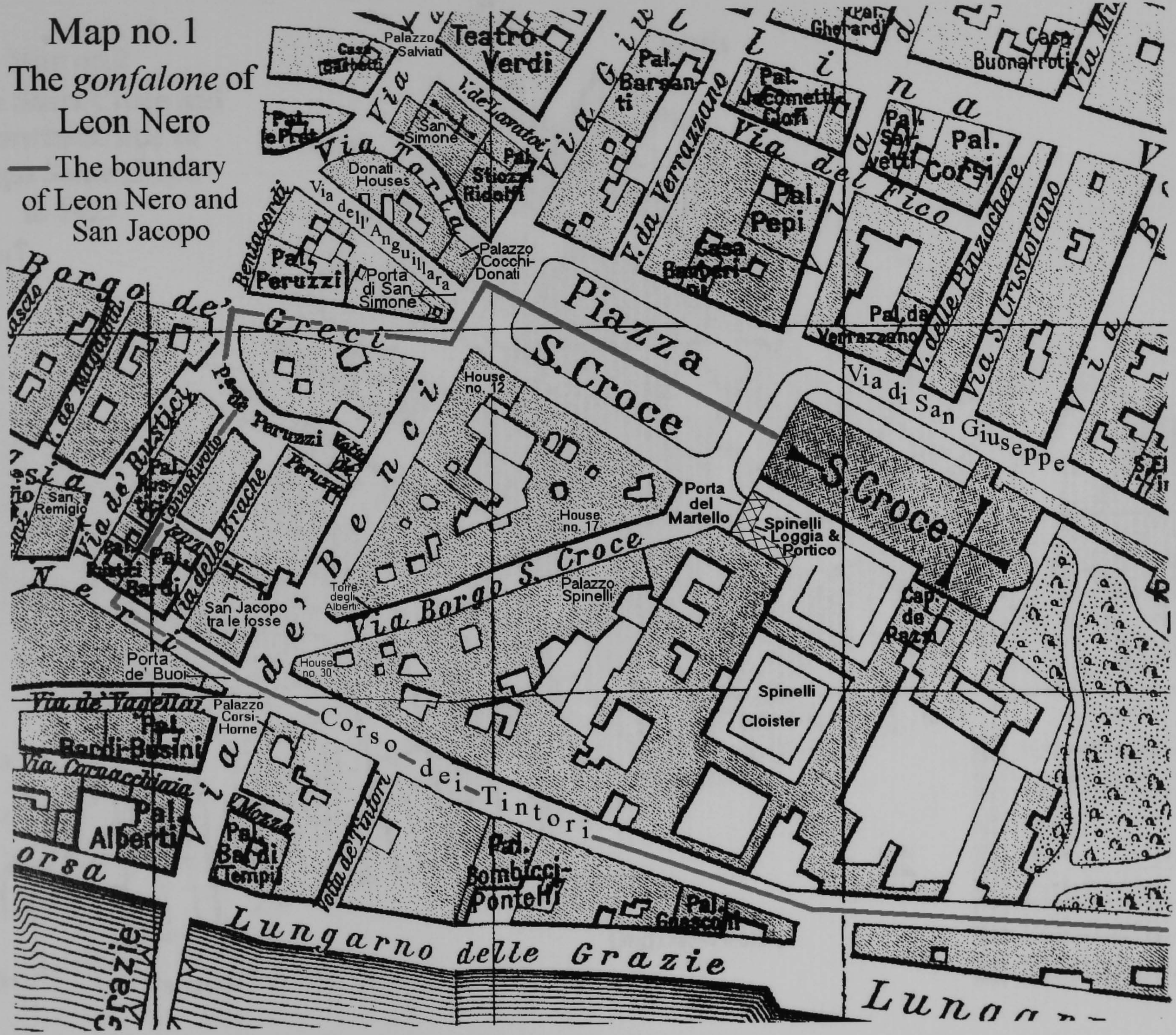
no. 12. As they freely spent a huge amount of money to acquire the property, it can be concluded that they also found it a better and more suitable domicile than their previous houses (nos. 3 and 4). Moreover, given that the difference in status of house no. 12 over nos. 3 and 4 was much more striking than the physical distance which lay between them, it should also be concluded that the brothers' purchase was intended to reflect and further the improvement of their own standing, rather than the dissolution of their clan. This move, and others which scattered Corsi families around the *gonfaloni* of Bue and Leon Nero, was no more the outcome of the prior dissolution of the clan's emotional cohesion than the formation of the enclave in the 1430s and 1440s was the result of a new clan mentality. Given the fundamental significance of housing, the physical separation of the Corsi residences would eventually have had some effect on the clan's emotional bonds, but it would be putting the cart before the horse to insist that these moves around the quarter could only have been the result of a prior change in the state of the clan's affections.

If the loosening of the clans' emotional cohesion was just an eventual outcome of the physical break-up of an enclave, what was the initial spur to moving house ? The answer again lies in the buildings themselves; not in their position, but in their appearance. By the latter part of the fifteenth century a new, refined vocabulary of architecture had been established which could either complement or even substitute the practice whereby clans derived their identity from the physical cohesion of their settlement. The incorporation of this *all'antica* style into domestic architecture offered a novel medium to facilitate the civic perception of a family. It did not in itself render the existing physical cohesion of clans redundant, for *all'antica* elements could just as easily be adopted in the rebuilding of houses within enclaves as those beyond them. Thus, while some of the Corsi abandoned their tight physical cohesion in favour of basing their conspicuousness on individual properties, Tommaso Spinelli and Girolamo Morelli chose to rebuild houses which lay in the heart of their clan enclaves, '*all'antica*'. On the whole this style was employed to much the same ends as were the enclaves – to raise the status of a property's inhabitants by emphasising the visual impact of their domicile. The enclave continued to retain its role to designate a clan area, but it lost its predominance as the *sine qua non* of effective territoriality. It appears from the middle of the century that the potency of cohesion could be willingly traded for the benefit of conspicuousness derived from notable individual properties. This naturally begs the question of how the priorities raised by this novel architecture style could best be incorporated in clan housing and this will be dealt with in detail in Chapters Four and Five.

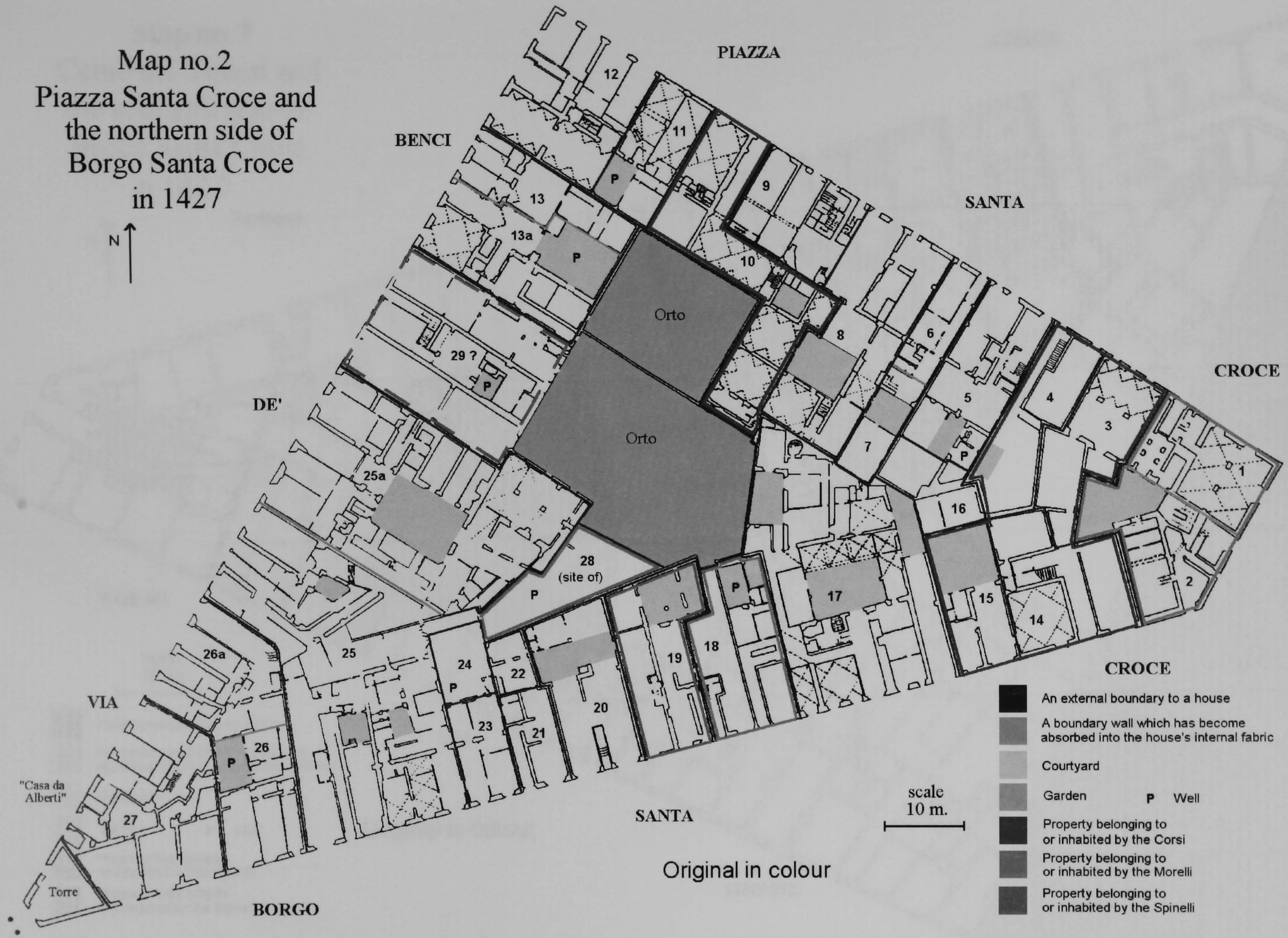
Map no. 1

The *gonfalone* of Leon Nero

— The boundary of Leon Nero and San Jacopo

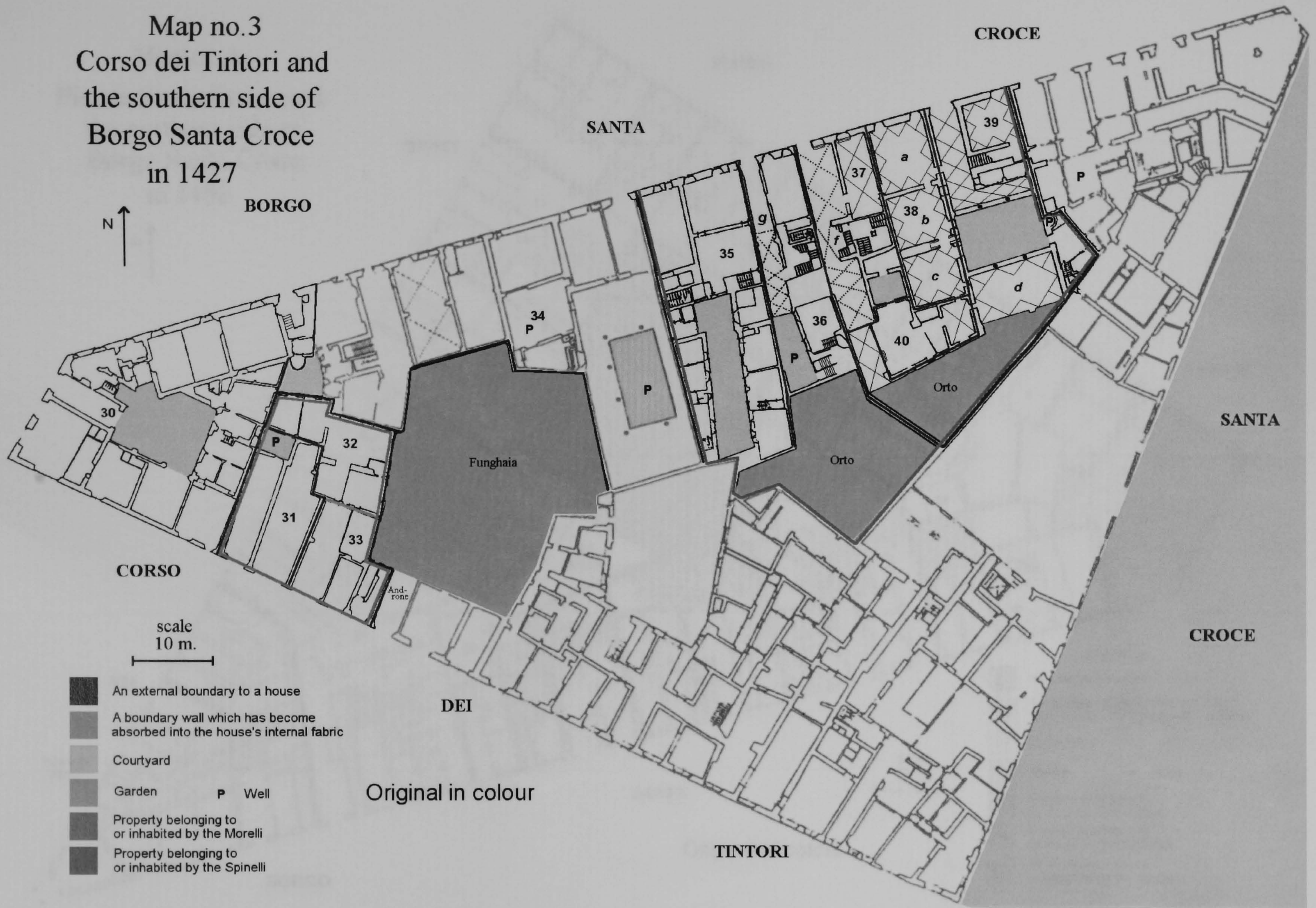


Map no.2
Piazza Santa Croce and
the northern side of
Borgo Santa Croce
in 1427



Original in colour

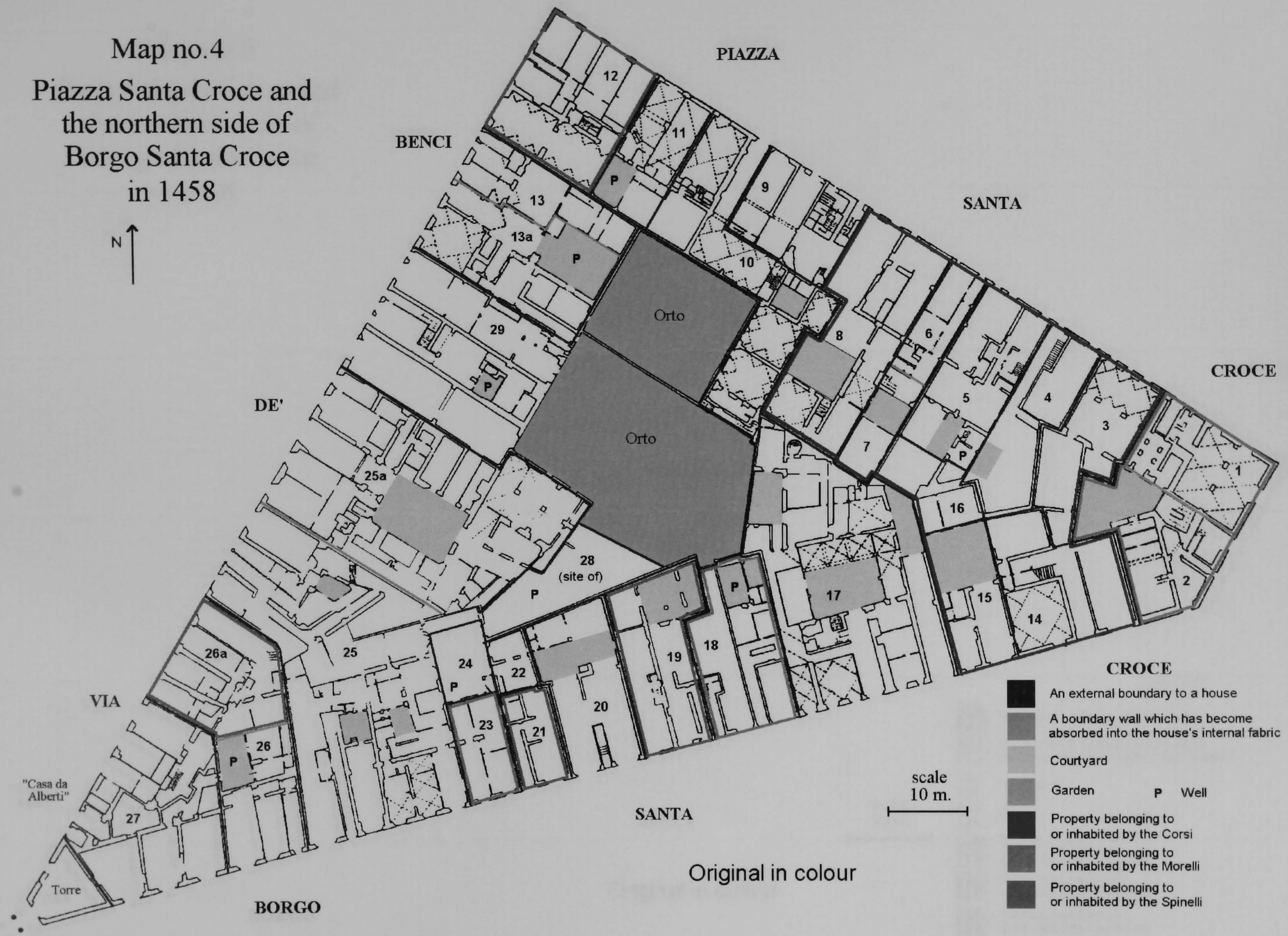
Map no.3
Corso dei Tintori and the southern side of Borgo Santa Croce in 1427



Original in colour

Map no.4

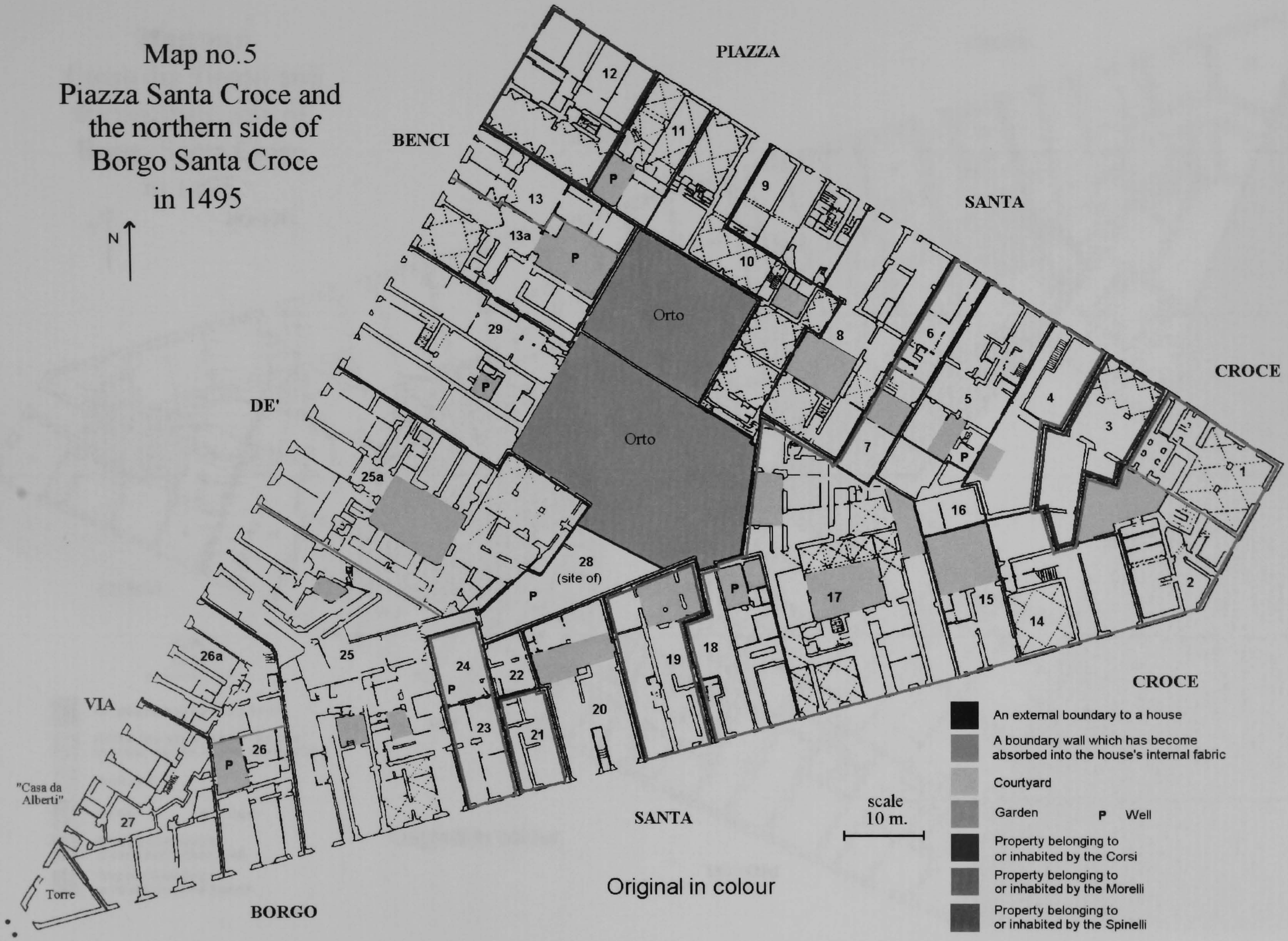
Piazza Santa Croce and the northern side of Borgo Santa Croce in 1458



Original in colour

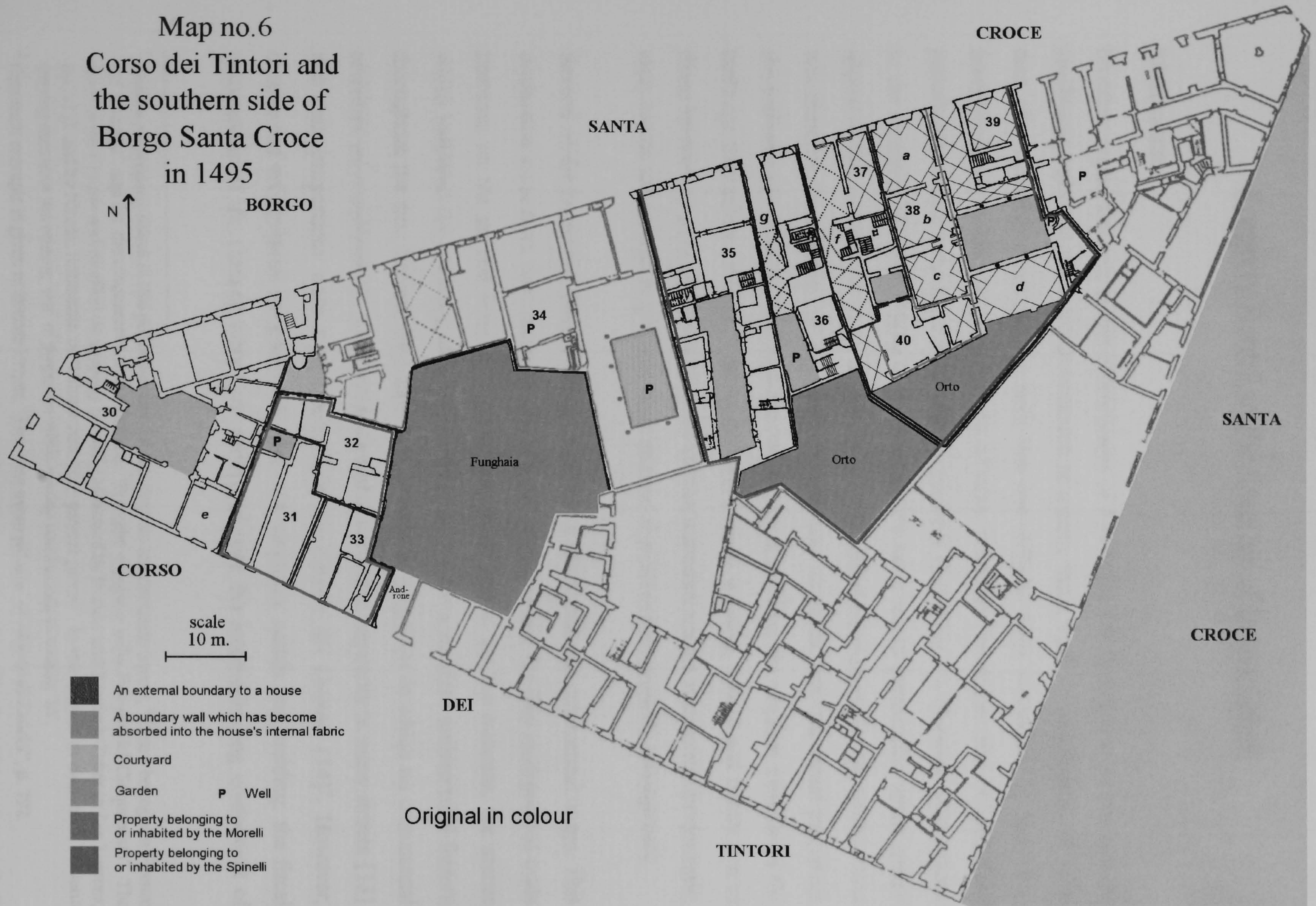
Map no.5

Piazza Santa Croce and the northern side of Borgo Santa Croce in 1495



Original in colour

Map no.6
Corso dei Tintori and the southern side of Borgo Santa Croce in 1495



Original in colour

Chapter Three

Property Rental in the Quarter of Santa Croce

Introduction

Property rental was one of the cornerstones of Florentine life. It left few people entirely unaffected and its scope was indiscriminate of wealth, birth, trade or neighbourhood[1]. The cost of purchasing property was such that the indigent were compelled to rent their accommodation, while the circumstances of many wealthier Florentines also obliged them periodically to rent lodgings. Consequently, hundreds of buildings in Florence were subject to the demands of rental. Many of these properties were leased perennially, whilst others appear in the *portate* only once. In this chapter 676 rental transactions by the twelve clans will illustrate the influence of household development on rental, how the rental properties themselves were managed and how the venture came to effect the physical material of the buildings themselves. Although the variety in the social standing, wealth and family size of those involved in property rental often makes the individual results somewhat idiosyncratic, clear trends still emerge to give a broader picture of *quattrocento* property management.

Several of the properties dealt with here had both a residential and commercial usage. This distinction arose from their structural and internal configuration, for they incorporated trade premises on the ground floor with residential space above. By the *trecento*, the arches which indicated the presence of a ground floor shop were a standard architectural feature throughout the city. Indeed, they were even present in properties in which no commercial activities were undertaken[2]. Their presence added a graceful regularity to many streets {13} and their proportions were even regulated by the *Operai del Duomo* {14}[3]. However, despite the architectural integration of shop and residence within one building, the fiscal calculations of the *Catasto* were only concerned with the income-bearing component of

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[1] Studies on property rental in this period are few; for the *trecento* see Armando Sapori, "Case e botteghe a Firenze nel trecento" and for the *cinquecento*, Piero Battara, "Botteghe e pigioni nella Firenze del Cinquecento". The issue of the *Catasto* and its effect on property is briefly addressed by Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber in *Les Toscans*, pp. 62 *ff.* and by Nicolai Rubinstein in "Palazzi pubblici e palazzi privati". In this chapter as elsewhere, the term *leasing* describes the renting 'out' of properties while *renting* corresponds to renting 'in'.

[2] One such example is given in Brenda Preyer, "The 'casa overo palagio' of Alberto di Zanobi", p. 392.

[3] Precise specifications were given for the height, width, depth, and even texture of twelve pillars and arches built around the north east end of the cathedral in August 1389; Guasti, *Santa Maria del Fiore*, document 388, p. 287.

each property. Thus their physical and fiscal definition need not have been the same. However, my interest here is in the usage of property rather than its assessable value. Naturally, the financial information drawn from the tax sources illustrates important trends in rental during the period, but given the patrimonial and architectural concerns of this study, the main value of the *Catasto* here is to illustrate the workings and the influences of property rental. The focus of this chapter will therefore be the issues raised by the management of clan housing and what they demonstrate concerning the clans' attitudes towards their patrimonial property. Consequently I shall initially concentrate on the houses in which clan families primarily lived, but occasionally leased. This will be followed by a section on the properties which were more or less permanently leased, with a third section dealing with the houses the families rented for their own use. The fourth part of the chapter will investigate the management of commercial property to demonstrate how it was influenced by the introduction of the *Catasto*. Finally, the salient themes of rental will be illustrated in a case study of a house and *bottega* belonging to a family from the Giugni clan.

The Leasing of Family Houses

Most families from the clans studied here had a town house set aside for their habitation[4], yet in the whole sample from 1427 to 1495, there is not one example in which a house owner also reported owning, for an extended period, a further urban property which would also have been suitable as a family domicile. This had the result of fixing a family in a particular property, which naturally reduced its availability for leasing. In time, the permanent residence of several generations of a family in a property came to see its members linked to the building by more than just the fact that it was their only residence; it became their only possible residence and there arose an aversion to even its temporary alienation. Indeed, it was stipulated in a number of wills from this period that such domiciles could not be leased for long periods, or in some cases, at all[5]. Families therefore strove to avoid putting themselves in the position of having to lease their homes, as such an act simply had too many repercussions to become a regular aspect of their management.

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[4] In the interests of consistency between the various chapters, a family will here be defined as a unit of closely-related co-residential kin and a house the physical space which each family inhabited.

[5] In his will of 1494 messer Francesco di Matteo Castellani "prohibuit et vetuit alienationem, venditionem et donationem et ad longum tempus locationem" of his residence, Castello Altafronte; *NA* 81, *busta* 16, fol. 2*r*. Back in 1405 Domenico di Francesco Corsi went further in bequeathing his house, as he "prohibuit dictam domum vendi vel alienari vel modo aliquo et ad longum vel pro aliquo tempore ad pensionem locari"; *NA* 17391, fol. 287*r*. The effectiveness of such clauses was entirely reliant on a third party's determination to enforce them, but nevertheless, they remained common. For similar prohibitory clauses in Riccardo di Niccolò Spinelli's wills, see footnotes 46 and 47 on pages 162 and 163.

The whole enterprise of rental was regulated by the exchange of comprehensive contracts – which may or may not have been notarised – between landlord and tenant[6]. Despite this, a number of leases were not even written out, but merely agreed verbally. It shows how prevalent rental must have been in the city that the normally suspicious Florentines could have entrusted their property to one another with such nonchalance. Surviving rental contracts show that both parties had fairly balanced rights and responsibilities[7]. For example, tenancies could not be terminated at the landlord's whim[8], nor were defaulting tenants extended a limitless period of grace in which to pay their arrears[9]. Such guarantees minimised the risk of the whole venture and thus enabled the lease even of family houses – in theory – with a fair degree of security.

In the rare event that family domiciles were leased, they tended to bring over *f* 15 a year[10], while the smaller houses, which were leased more frequently generally brought less. This difference establishes two distinct categories of residential property held by the families. There was nothing statutory about this difference, but it does appear from the sample of the twelve clans which I have studied that a rental value of *f* 15 was the point at which leasable houses and those intended for family accommodation differentiated themselves: the valuable 'quality' houses being those usually relied on for the accommodation they could offer and

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[6] Commenting on the lease of an inn to Jacopo Fastelli in 1466, Domenico di Giovanni Giugni wrote, "...ciaschuno di noi n'à una copia, l'una e l'altra, apresso di me nel mio scriptoio nella mia schatola"; BL, *Acquisti e Doni* 103, fol. 27*r*. (pencil pagination).

[7] It was standard in all contracts that the owner should not let the property to another party during the course of the lease and that the lessee should not 'recognise' a third party as the property's owner. Such clauses were added in notarial shorthand at the end of a contract. See for example, the lease of the Cocchi-Donati Palace from 1494; *NA* 12279, fol. 381*r*., which incidentally also stipulated, "quod dictus conductor non possit repetere dictis locatoribus dicto nomine aliquid de expensis usque hodie factis per eum in dictis bonis et nil in futurum possit expendere in eis nisi de licentia dictorum locatorum dicto nomine nisi in rebus necesariis et etiam cum pacto etc."; *ibid.*

[8] In 1488 Giulianmaria di Jacopo Rinuccini was renting a stable and noted that if the lessor "no mi vollessi più dare la sopradetta stalla, me la debba notifichare uno mese innazi chominci l'anno e chosì se io no' la volessi tenire, gliela debbo notifichare uno mese innanzi"; *Ginori Conti - Rinuccini* 207, fol. 218*r*. Likewise, in 1451 Francesco di Matteo Castellani let a house on the recommendation of a friend to one Bartolomeo di Antonio, "...e non se n'è facta altra charta, né posto alchuno tempo, che ogni volta mi piacessi lo posso licenziare, e così lui a ogni suo piacere me la può rifiutare, che così restamo insieme d'acordo"; *Ricordanze A*, p. 150.

[9] In a contract from 1472 recording Carlo Salterelli's lease of a *bottega* to Piero di Giuliano Gugeti, it was stipulated that "...si dictus Pierus deficeret in solutione de tribus pagis, tunc et eo casu pro pacto fecerunt, quod dicta locatio non habeat locum et dicte partes remaneant in eo statu quo sunt hac si dicta locatio facta non essit"; *NA* 1796, fol. 51*v*. An example of eviction following the non-payment of rent is cited below in footnote 92 on page 125.

[10] This has been deduced from an analysis of the houses which were generally inhabited by clan families but leased on any one occasion. There are only two examples in the entire sample of such houses being let for over *f* 14 in two consecutive *portate* and in neither of them was the owner forced to leave the property. From 1427 to 1433 Castellano di Pierozzo Castellani leased "la parte di sotto" of his house for *f* 20; *Cat.* 27, fol. 262*r*. From 1427 Giovanni di Niccolò Castellani repeatedly let various parts of his home until 1451, when he was forced to sell the property, "di nicistà"; *Cat.* 614, fol. 217*r*. This latter case is mentioned again on page 116 below.

the lesser ones for the income they could bring. As a result, although family residences were characterised by their potentially high rental value, it was their actual *lack* of leasing which set them apart from other residential properties and which gradually enabled them to be defined as 'family' domiciles. Indeed, in the light of the overall physical similarity of Florentine housing, which will be demonstrated in Chapter Four, the prolonged retention of a house became a central element in establishing it as a family domicile.

As clan families did not own other houses of a comparable standard to their domiciles, those who leased out their home were obliged to rent themselves another. However, once new accommodation had been found and paid for, the financial gain from the transaction was unlikely to be substantial[11]. The difference between the average expenditure and income for each residential lease over the century was only *f* 5 s. 6[12]; not a great deal to men who often held thousands of *florins* in government stocks. The average rental price of a large house was also proportionately lower than that of a small *casetta* in relation to its purchase or construction price. It is clear therefore that quality residences were not to be leased, as it was inconvenient, not particularly remunerative and, most importantly, it posed a threat to the family's appearance of steadfastness within its neighbourhood. Consequently, it is not surprising that when family houses were let, their owners were often keen to regain them quickly. This is shown in a number of *portate* which also give indications to the circumstances surrounding the lease of clan houses and the displeasure which it kindled.

In the 1480 *Catasto* Jacopo di Piero Rinuccini declared his family house in Via del Garbo[13] as being leased for the sum of *f* 34 a year until the coming All Saints' Day. Regardless of this considerable income, Jacopo made clear his desire to end the lease, pointing out that since at least 1427 the property had constantly served as the home to three generations of his family[14]. He had likewise given notice to two of the other tenants in the property[15]. The

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[11] The income from property rental was not frequent as payments tended only to be made once every six months. The following clause from a contract of 1472 is fairly typical: "...pro pensione et mercede et nomine pensionis florenorum tredici de siggilo pro singulo anno dictorum quattuor annorum et unius anseris pinguis, facendo solutionem de sex mensibus in sex mensis pro una dimidia prout tangit pro rata et ut moris est etc."; *NA* 766, fol. 180*v*. See also *NA* 2486, fol. 30*v*. and *NA* 791, fol. 220*r*. The inclusion of a fat goose is also fairly common.

[12] The value was extrapolated from the sum of the averages shown in Figure Two on page 112.

[13] This was the name of what is now the eastern end of Via della Condotta.

[14] "...e da Ognisanti in là, vi voglio tornare drento per mia abitazione chome senpre vi siano stati drento chome per l'antice nostre portate lo potrete vedere"; *Cat.* 1004, fol. 20*r*.

degree to which the lease had changed the normal state of affairs clearly disturbed Rinuccini, while both the inconvenience and the public display of impotence associated with having to leave his established residence would merely have compounded his discomfort.

In other cases in which the family residence was leased, it went to another clan member. This may have minimised the degree of alienation, but it repeatedly raised other problems which were exclusively connected with infra-clan leases. For example, from 1430 to 1441 Francesco di Cino Rinuccini rented a house from Jacopo di Francesco Rinuccini for *f* 21 a year[16]. After Jacopo's death, Francesco remained there, but ceased paying rent, despite having inherited only a seventh share of it[17]. In this case it is likely that Francesco was profiting from the lack of clarity concerning the division of this estate[18], but such recalcitrance was a frequent feature of leases held within a clan. Aside from the problem of actually obtaining money owing from a fellow clansman, the difficulties which led to a family house being relinquished did not allow for any reduction in the income it brought. Thus, if it were absolutely necessary to lease a domicile, it follows that the profits from the venture would have to be maximised. Given these circumstances, landlords perhaps had good reason to avoid leasing properties to relatives who might not even pay, for in such matters the families of a clan did not always co-operate with one another. Francesco di Giovanni Morelli made a more general point in this vein in his tax return of 1480 in a passage concerning money owed to him by his relatives; "...no' me n'à mai datto danaio e gli altri paghono malvolentieri, ch'è afaticha, mi tornano l'anno *f* 25 L^{a} che xarebbe meglio avegli avere da gli strani che da loro"[19].

Another case of non co-operation within a clan involves the heirs of messer Lotto di Vanni Castellani and the allocation of Castello Altafronte. An entry in messer Matteo di Michele

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[15] "Una parte della volta della sopradetta chasa tiene da mme a pigione Franc° di Nicholo fornaio...e da Ognisanti in là l'o licienziato perchè n'o bisognio per me e chosi è la verità"; *Cat.* 1004, fol. 20*r*. The stable was also to be vacated "perché n'ò bisognio per me per uso da per istalla chome senpre s'è usate"; *Monte Comune*, *Copie del Catasto* (hereafter *MC*) 40, fol. 12*r*.

[16] It had previously been let together with the *bottega* below it, but Francesco is only noted as having taken the house. His payment is recorded in *Cat.* 352, fol. 418*r*. and Jacopo's receipt in *Cat.* 353, fol. 47*r*.

[17] Francesco refers to himself here in the third person; "Item, à tenuta la chasa che fu del detto Jachopo e abitata per suo abitare. Da poi morì detto Jachopo e niente ne dava di pigione e à lla tenuta per insino al dì si partì e di poi mai s'appigiono e non s'apigiona perchè vogliano che lla sia per sua abitatazione della quale gli tocha la settima parte"; *Cat.* 615, fol. 476*v*.

[18] In 1442 disagreements were still delaying the final settlement of the inheritance. In his *portata* of that year another legatee, Jacopo di Cino Rinuccini wrote that "non n'ò mai potuto dividere in però non so dire dove si sia la mia parte e prima si saldi la mia scritta farò chiaro le vostre Riveranzie..."; *Cat.* 616, fol. 634*r*.

[19] *Cat.* 1005, fol. 272*r*.

Castellani's *campione* of 1427 claims that the property had been left by messer Lotto "to all the men born and as yet unborn of their family, that is as many shares as there are heads, now or in the future"[20]. It had been decided that messer Vanni's nephew, Matteo, who lived alone in the palace, should compensate the other heirs to the tune of *f* 45 a year. However, it seems unlikely that he ever paid anyone, despite making a detailed addition to his redaction of 1427 explaining the necessary calculations[21]. In 1430 one shareholder, Antonio di Niccolò noted that "I have never had anything"[22] and in 1433 another, Giovanni di Vanni, stated that fifteen years' of rent payments were outstanding and that the matter had been passed to the officials of the *Pupilli*[23]. In fact, despite Matteo, and later his son Francesco continually entering amounts of between twenty and forty *florins* as their contribution to the rest of the Castellani[24], no other clan member ever records having received anything.

The Morelli provide one last example of non-payment by a relative residing in a clan property. It concerns two adjoining houses in Corso dei Tintori. In 1427 they had belonged to and were inhabited by Bartolomeo di Giano Morelli[25]. On his death in 1436, one half of the block (house no. 32) passed to his infant son Francesco and during the 1440s it was leased out on his behalf by the *Magistrato dei Pupilli*[26]. By 1451 however, Francesco's aunt had taken over the house and Francesco stopped receiving rent payments all together, as

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[20] "...la detta casa overo palagio fu di messer Lotto e per suo testamento lasciò che fusse di tutti gli uomini nati di che nasceranno della loro famiglia sicché a tante parti quante sono teste o che saranno. Non si pùo vendere in alchuno modo. Abitala di volontà di tutti e per diferenza che fu già tra lloro fu lodato che ne paghassi di pignone *f* 45. Spende la pigione nell'achonciare della chasa che n'à bisogno e schontasi a cche l'avesse ad aviere"; *Cat.* 68, fol. 114*v*.

[21] *Cat.* 68, fol. 124*v*.

[22] "Abitalo le rede di messer Matteo e non ò anchora mai a<v>uto nulla"; *Cat.* 348, fol. 4*v*.

[23] "...e anni 15 vi torna messer Matteo, per insino a qui non abiamo mai avuto nulla di pigione, e domandamo detta pigione d'anni 15 v'è stato; siano dinazi agli uficiali de' popilli a domandare detta pigione. Inparo <c>he detti uficiali ànno a ghoverno messer Francescho, però anchora no' s<i>ano <c>hiariti..."; *Cat.* 348, fol. 442*r*. The involvement of a civic institution demonstrates that no satisfactory means of resolving the matter had been found within the clan. Legal involvement was not unusual in cases involving unrelated litigants, but for kin to resort to an outside body in this manner publicised their dissension and indicates the perceived scale of the problem. See D. V. and F. W. Kent, "A Self-Disciplining Pact made by the Peruzzi Family", *passim*.

[24] For example *f* 40 in 1433; *Cat.* 491, fol. 118*v*. From 1451 to 1469 each of Francesco di Matteo's *portate* contain an entry for *f* 20 allegedly given annually to monna Lena di Vanni "per un lodo fra noi"; *Cat.* 695, fol. 247*r*, *Cat.* 799, fol. 138*r*. (pencil pagination) and *Cat.* 911, fol. 173*r*. respectively. In 1451 Francesco even noted in his *Ricordanze* that he had reached an agreement to compensate monna Lena; *Ricordanze A*, pp. 142-143. However neither the *Ricordanze* nor monna Lena's own tax returns show any sign that it was honoured.

[25] *Cat.* 34, fol. 369*r*. Both properties are illustrated in the maps at the end of Chapter Two.

[26] In 1442 the combined properties were bringing *f* 24 a year; *Cat.* 617, fol. 408*r*. By 1447, when house no. 32 was leased on its own, it brought *f* 10; *Cat.* 664, fol. 589*r*. The details of the lease are noted in *Pupilli* 170 (1439-1454), fols. 143*v*.-144*r*. The ledger also shows that the tenants were constantly behind with their payments, for between December 1446 and 1449 the officers only collected *f* 16 s. 10 of the total due rent of *f* 30. It also appears that they eventually left without paying these arrears.

"she says she is improving it, which will be to my benefit"[27]. It is true that for Francesco to have lived alone in this house would have been wasteful, given the spatial constraints on that particular branch of the clan[28]. Nonetheless, young Francesco had a right to receive the rent due, but was exploited by his own kinsmen because he was both too young to take full control of his own affairs and too weak to argue his case.

The previous example also demonstrates the extent to which leasing and rental patterns followed the evolution of household typology. The majority of cases in which changes in family structure influenced property rental were caused by the expansion of the household. However, there were also instances in which the diminution of a household caused the family home to be let. One such instance, similar to the circumstances of Francesco Morelli, occurred in the Bartoli clan. In 1442 Giuliano and Antonio di Antonio Bartoli, aged 13 and 6 respectively, found themselves orphans and as a result their family house was leased[29], while their estate annually paid *f* 40 "to those in whose house we are staying"[30]. In large clans it was likely that place could be found for orphans (and their houses) by their relatives[31]. However, because of the small size of the Bartoli clan (there were only about three or four households in the quarter in this period), it seems that neither boy could be accommodated, nor their house justifiably retained for clan use. It was not until the late 1450s that Giuliano and Antonio could return to their home. In the meantime so much of their patrimony was consumed that by 1451 they were effectively bankrupt[32]. The inability of the Bartoli clan to retain either the boys or their house would also have weakened their presence in the neighbourhood and this also highlights why such strenuous efforts were usually made to avoid even the temporary alienation of family domiciles.

Another such example, first mentioned in Chapter Two, concerns the lease of house no. 4 by Piero and Giovanni di Domenico Corsi while they lived next door with their brother, Bartolo[33]. The income which the two received from the lease of this and another house did

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[27] "Non me ne dà niente perché dicie va su milgliore e ragione di me"; *Cat.* 700, fol. 624*r*.

[28] For the vicissitudes of this branch's housing problems see the passage starting on page 80 above.

[29] "Una chasa…la quale era per loro abitare, ma perché ànno né madre né padre l'ànno apigionata"; *Cat.* 615, fol. 418*r*.

[30] "Paghono l'anno *f* 40 a chi gli tiene in chasa" ; *Cat.* 615, fol. 418*r*.

[31] Lorenzo di Antonio Spinelli housed and married off three of his female cousins. See footnote 38 on page 160.

[32] Such is the tenor of their *portata*; *Cat.* 697, fol. 362*r*.

[33] See page 66 above.

not cover their 'spese delle bocche'[34] in Bartolo's house. However, as the expression implies, these costs included more than mere accommodation. The new joint household they created would have benefited from the economies of scale arising from the brothers' co-habitation. Furthermore, the arrangement was also typical of the pragmatic property management of this branch of the Corsi clan.

The examples from the Morelli, Bartoli and Corsi clans of the temporary alienation of family homes had the redeeming feature of pragmatism, which set them apart from Jacopo di Piero Rinuccini's reluctant surrender of his domicile. However, in no case did the financial gains of the move outweigh the emotional impact of leaving a family house and thus even the expedient leases by the Corsi were unlikely to establish a precedent.

The Leasing of Lesser Residential Properties

Whereas a family would show great determination to retain its established family domicile, the management of its other residential property could not have been in greater contrast. These houses were generally of a lower quality, often being mere shacks and hovels (*casette* and *casolare*) consisting of just an enclosed space with a roof – although sometimes even the latter was lacking[35]. They were neither integral to the family patrimony, nor even regularly declared in the *portate*. This was not due to a failure in the implementation of the *Catasto*, but was the result of the administrative limits placed upon it. If a property was not considered worth renting, or if it became absorbed into a neighbouring property, it fell outside the tax remit. In such cases it was only if the owner chose to record the change that its documentary survival would be assured. In 1427 and 1430 Riccardo di Niccolò Spinelli leased out a *casetta* (house no. 40) which abutted his own house[36]. By 1433 it had been incorporated into his domicile, yet this is known only because he explicitly mentions it[37]. From then until its purchase by Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli in 1452[38] it disappears entirely from all the documents consulted here. Therefore, it is only through the careful mapping of the area that it has been possible to establish the vicissitudes of such houses.

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[34] The expression is Giovanni's. He paid *f* 29 a year; *Cat.* 34, fol. 723*v*. and Piero paid *f* 25; *Cat.* 72, fol. 188*v*.

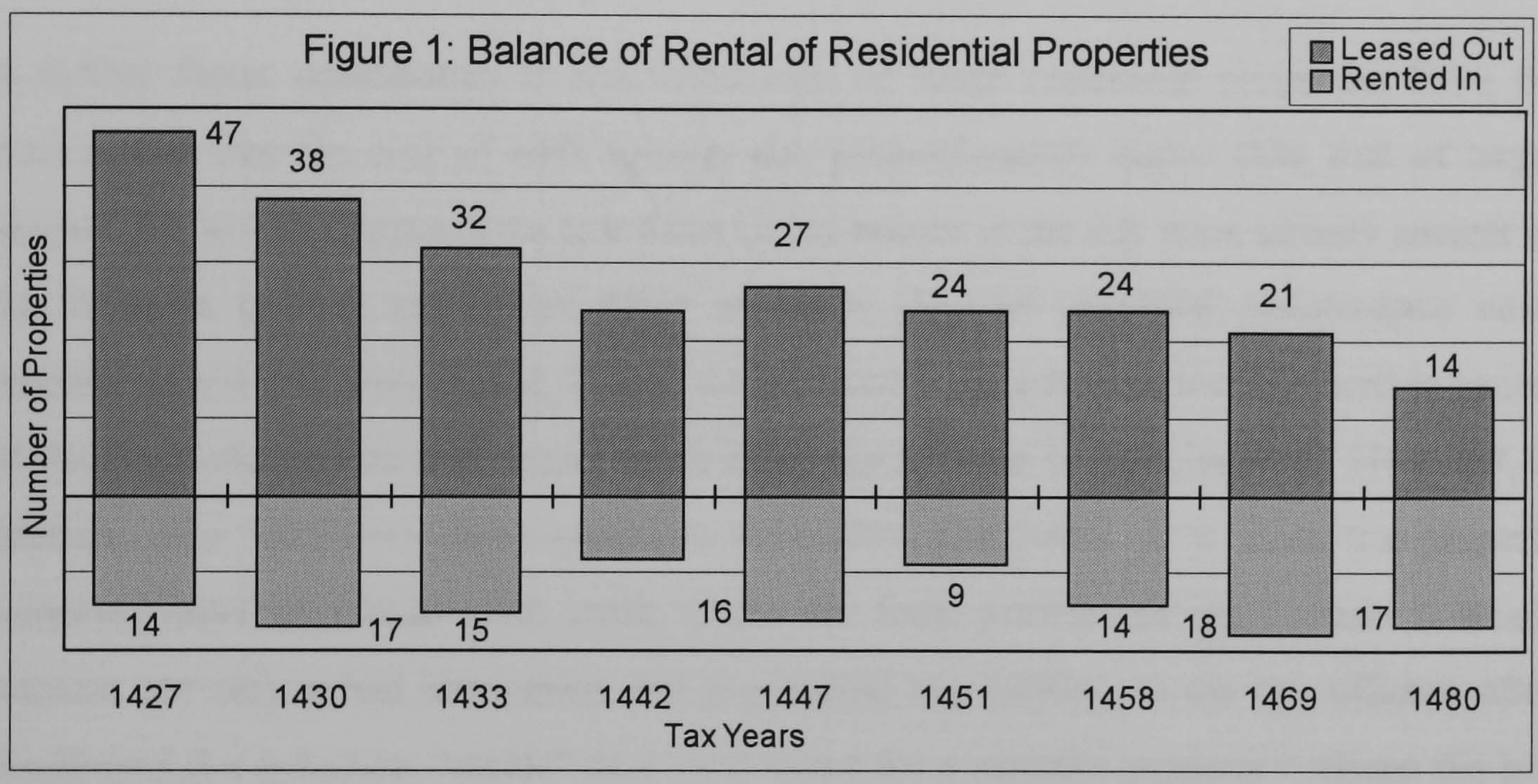
[35] In 1451 Michele di Alberto Castellani had a *casetta* which could not be leased "...perch'è rovino e non v'è se non un palcho"; *Cat.* 696, fol. 155*r*. In 1458 monna Contessa, the widow of Antonio di Niccolò Castellani also had a house which was unrented, "ed è stata cosi più tempo e però non si trae fori alchuni pezzo e piovevi come fuori"; *Cat.* 798, fol. 604*r*.

[36] *Cat.* 72, fol. 221*v*. and *Cat.* 355 fol. 507*r*. respectively.

[37] "Chasa e chasetta ove gli abitta con suo maserizie posta nel Borgho di Santa Croce..."; *Cat.* 492, fol. 456*v*.

[38] See page 159 below.

Adaptability was the key to the management of this type of property and this also clearly differentiates it from the administration of the established family residences. Minor houses were let opportunistically, if no better private use could be found for them, and they were consequently viewed entirely in terms of their utility and ability to generate income. This is therefore an appropriate point at which to put residential leasing into its broader context. The information from all twelve clans' housing rental has been extracted from the *Catasto* and tabulated to show how it developed between 1427 to 1480. Following the introduction of the *Catasto*, the families steadily reduced the numbers of residential properties which they made available for lease, as is illustrated in Figure One[39].



This highlights an important trend of leasing in the fifteenth century and one which, at least in part, can be explained as being induced by the *Catasto*. The earning potential of the houses generally leased out by the families was naturally lower than that of their established residences and also considerably less than that of all commercial property[40]. Yet they were still taxed at the same rate. As a result, in some cases the mere existence of this assessment on a *casetta* which had only ever been leased opportunistically was enough to bring its landlord to withdraw it from the market. This is because any houses leased by the families which only ever brought low returns when let experienced a high turnover rate of tenants. It is difficult to quantify this from the *Catasto*, for the tax redactions are only ever 'snap-shots' of the housing market in certain years and it is not possible to know what happened subsequently. However, a fairly rapid turnover of tenants can already be seen in the *portate*

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[39] No *portate* from 1442 survive for the *gonfalone* of Ruota and consequently in each of the graphs that follow the figures for this year tend to be exceptionally low and thus somewhat unreliable.

[40] For further information on the rental of commercial property see page 117 below.

and other sources give a yet more fluid picture[41]. This meant that at any particular time a house could be awaiting a new tenant and as a number of *portate* demonstrate, this situation could last for some time[42]. Moreover, as the property was still ostensibly available for rent whilst vacant, it continued to incur an imposition based on its most recent, or more usually, its highest recorded rental value[43]. Thus, by levying taxes on property receipts, the *Catasto* itself gradually created an unwillingness on the part of landlords to lease their *casette* or any other property which could just as easily be (re-)absorbed into the family domicile. This trend was quickly noted by the *Catasto* officials, who as early as 1434 specified that any rental property which had been absorbed into a domicile should no longer incur any tax[44].

A further factor contributing to the withdrawal of lesser residential properties from the market was that the cost of their upkeep was proportionately higher than that of larger houses. We saw in Chapter Two that many of the houses in the city were already ancient by the fifteenth century and would have therefore incurred perennial maintenance costs whether or not they were leased. Indeed the declared costs were occasionally well in excess of the 5% deduction on their rental value originally allowed by the *Catasto*[45]. However, in practice, after 1427 even these reductions were often disallowed. As a result, if a property remained unlet after renovation work, under the fiscal practice of the *Catasto* it would become not only a bad investment, but a potential tax liability, as the tax officers often disallowed the definition "vacant" as a valid status for a rentable property[46]. Given the low income from these properties and the frequency with which they were empty but still taxed,

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[41] The impression given throughout the *Ricordanze* of Francesco di Matteo Castellani is that sub-letting was very common.

[42] Armando Sapori also noted the relative frequency with which poorer properties were empty when compared with larger ones; "Case e botteghe a Firenze nel trecento", p. 309.

[43] In April 1434 the *Ufficiali del Catasto* decided that vacant properties should be taxed at not less than half the value at which they had last been let; *Cat.* 2, fol. 56*v*. (pencil pagination). By August 1469 no rent level was admissible if it were lower than that which the property had earned in 1427, 1451 or 1458; *ibid.*, fol. 123*r*.-123*v*. (pencil pagination).

[44] Directly below the *provvisione* cited in footnote 43 it was added "...che le cose che si contengono nella presente provisione non abbino luogo né intendasi per le case o botteghe le quali in verità fussono reducte a propria abitatione et uso di colui di cui fussono. Et che quelle solamente s'intendino essere ridocte a propria abitatione et uso: le quali saranno dichiarate infra 'l decto termine d'uno mese pe' gl'uficiali del catasto o le due parti di loro"; *Cat.* 2, fol. 56*v*. (pencil pagination).

[45] This allowance dates from December 1427; *Cat.* 2, fol. 62*v*. (pencil pagination). See also footnote 72 below.

[46] One of many possible examples concerns a house belonging to messer Francesco di Matteo Castellani. It was let for *f* 8 in 1451; *Ricordanze A*, p. 150, in 1458; *Cat.* 799, fol. 133*r*. (pencil pagination) and in 1469; *Cat.* 911, fol. 171*v*. In 1480 however, it was vacant and Francesco entered no rental value; *Cat.* 1002, fol. 168*r*. Yet, by diligently consulting Francesco's 1469 *portata* and even that of his second cousins Giovanni and Pippo di Vanni from 1427; *Cat.* 68, fol. 94*r*., - when the house had also been leased for *f* 8 - the officers discovered its value and simply added it to his *sustanze*. For a similar example concerning a 'vacant' *bottega*, see page 121 below.

it is not surprising that in 1495 Giovanni di Cristofano Spinelli wrote that one such property cost him more to maintain than it ever produced in rent[47].

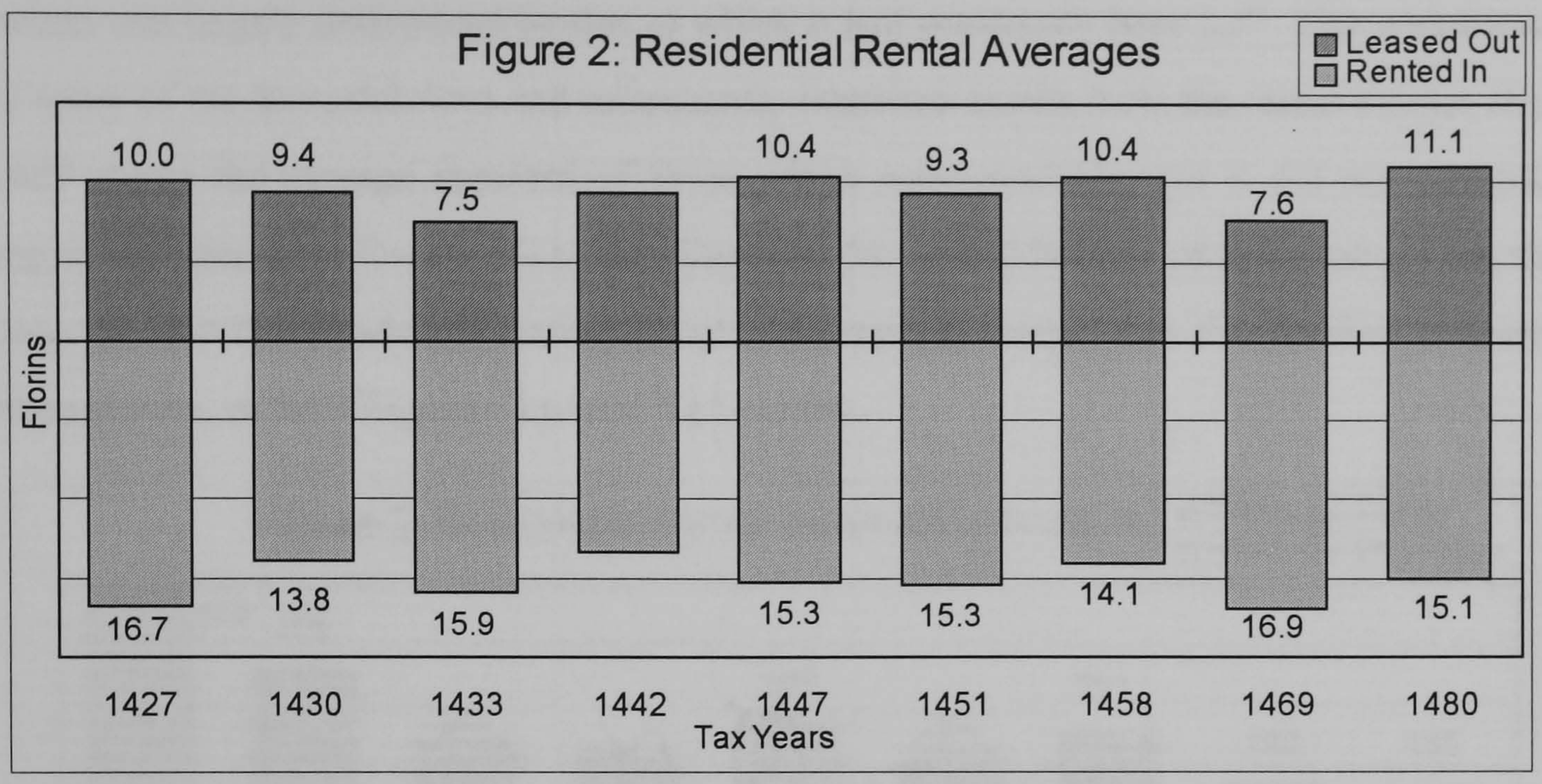

Figure Two is a graph of the average rental price of residential properties[48]. Although it indicates that there was stability in the prices of the houses which *were* rented, Figure One shows that their overall number fell sharply. In such circumstances it would be normal, all other things remaining equal, for the price of the leased properties to rise[49]. Yet in fact the price of leased housing in the *quattrocento* remained fairly stable. In the light of their reduced availability, the stable cost of rental accommodation implies that the market started this period with excess capacity, probably a result of the decimation of the city's population during the previous half century's frequent outbreaks of the plague. Many *portate* refer to vacant minor properties. However, it is difficult to establish their precise number at any point during the century as there was no reason to document their status. Another reason for the overall stability of their price is that, although the practice of supply and demand permeated the workings of the medieval economy, neither the method by which prices were reached[50] nor the causes of inflation (as opposed to blatant profiteering) were fully understood. As a result, there was no perceivable rationale by which the rent of a non-

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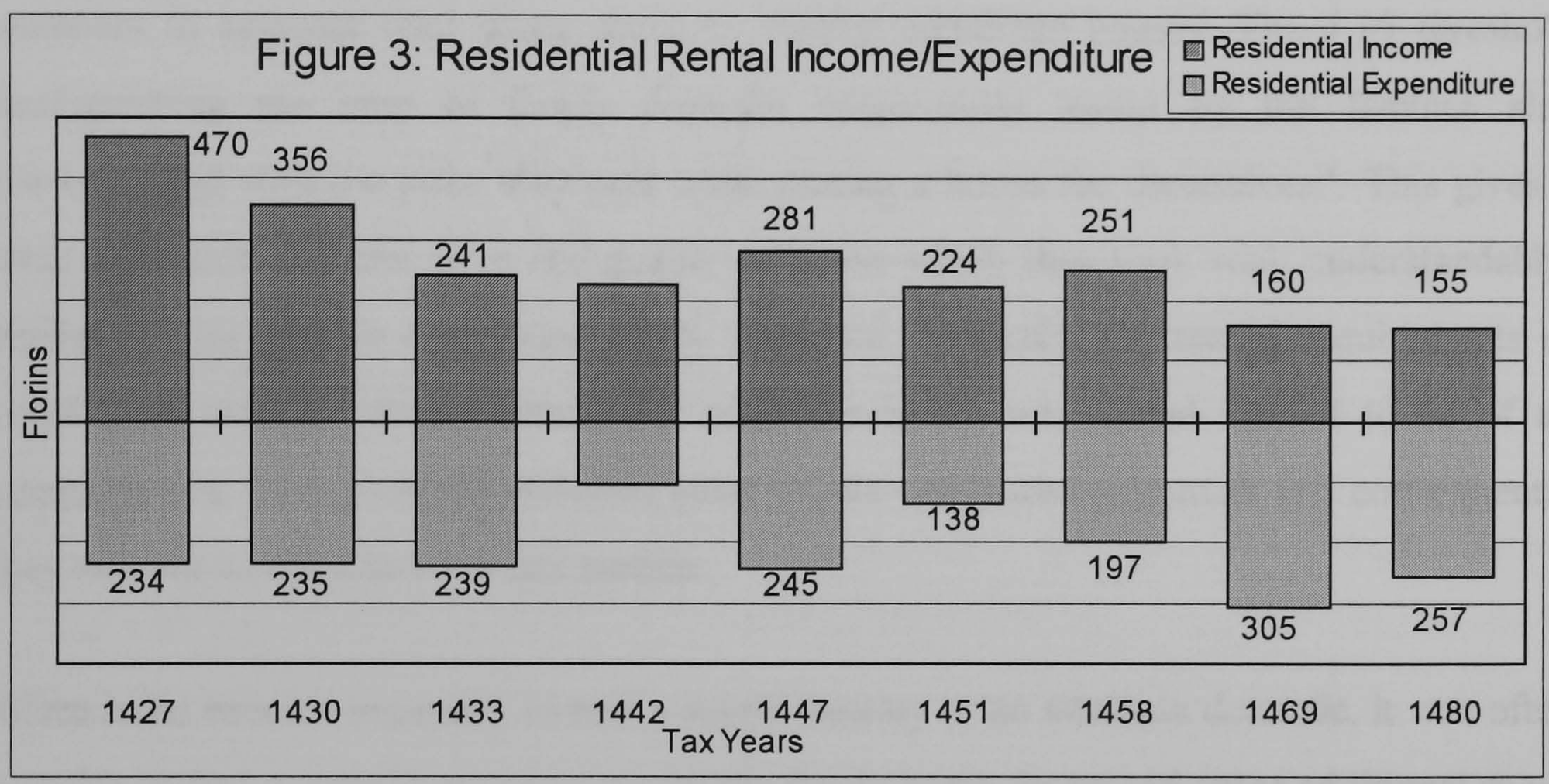
[47] "Una casa preso all'abitazione, la quale vi si spende più che non se ne trae perc<h>'è rovina e spiconata"; *Dec. Rep.* 16, fol. 423*r*. See also the example of Lionardo di Zanobi Bartoli's *bottega* below on page 118.

[48] This graph does not illustrate the occasions on which a rental house found no tenant, nor does it chart the hovels which their landlords withdrew from the market. As the taxes from 1442 to 1451 were *Estimi*, the financial values given in the *portate* for these years required calibration to allow direct comparison with the other *Catasti*.

[49] To a small extent this did indeed happen, but it was mainly due the relative appreciation of the *florin* over the silver-based *soldo* during the fifteenth century. Residential rents were generally declared in *florins*, but often paid in *soldi*, see *Ginori Conti - Rinuccini* 207, fol. 7*r*. This topic is dealt with in a brief excursus at the end of this chapter. Incidentally, it should be noted that these graphs only include rental values declared in the *portate* by the property owners and not those added later by the tax officers.

[50] Raymond de Roover, *San Bernardino of Siena and Sant'Antonino of Florence*, pp. 20-23.

fungible good such as a house could be raised, as once the lease had run its course the property was returned, intact, to its owner[51]. Therefore the price at which property was leased was largely determined by that at which it had previously been let[52]. The withdrawal of some of the less salubrious and infrequently-inhabited hovels from the rental market after 1427 raised the average standard of those which were available, but it did not constrict supply sufficiently to force a price rise. Whatever the overall balance of these influences, the outcome was that residential leasing became increasingly marginal to the families' property management, as both Figures One and Three show:



The *Catasto* encouraged landlords to put properties to other uses than rental, and on a magnified scale this reduced the number of *casette* to be found on the market. Such was the experience of Oretta, the widow of Alberto di Giovanni Castellani, who in 1433 wrote: "I do not have a house, but I would like one, [but] I still have not found one because I cannot find anyone who wants to rent me one, because of the Catasto"[53]. This is perhaps the clearest indictment of the *Catasto* and its effects on residential renting to surface here. Although her comment might have been merely the result of petulance, it still emphasises that it was the tax which she blamed for her difficulties. Monna Oretta was forty at that time and had assets of *f* 597 s. 14. She was by no means indigent. Even an average return on her estate would have given her an annual income from which she could have lived comfortably

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[51] In 1449 Filippo di Cino Rinuccini let a house with the condition that its tenants should return it "libera e spedita e rimurare dove eglino avessono rotto e rachonciare chome ll'era innanzi che la s'appigionassi…sanza niuna excieptizione o ghavillazione e remderla piutosto migliorata che piggiorata"; *Cat.* 698, fol. 361*r*.

[52] Armando Sapori also found that rent levels were largely stable in the *trecento*; "Case e botteghe a Firenze nel trecento", pp. 319 and 328. See also the long-term price stability of a house noted in footnote 46 above.

[53] "Non ò casa, convieneme la torre, ancora non l'à trovata per non truova chi voglia a pigionaremela per ragione del catasto"; *Cat.* 444, fol. 569*v*.

and rented a modest house. However it was precisely the type of property which she sought that was also most likely to expose its landlord to the above-mentioned difficulties and which was consequently being withdrawn from the market.

The Renting of Residential Property for the Clans

We saw in Chapter One that certain household types had an inherent propensity for numerical expansion because of their inclusion of fertile conjugal cells. In this section I shall investigate the circumstances in which the expansion of certain households required their members to augment their living space by renting additional houses. The *f* 15 threshold distinguishing the type of family domicile occasionally leased by the families also corresponded with the price they paid when renting a house for themselves[54]. This gives a clear indication that the price and quality of house which they took was, understandably, similar to that of their established family residence. Naturally, the spatial requirements of housing an enlarged family meant that whatever house was rented needed to be of an adequate size. This generally excluded most smaller residential properties and consequently they will not be considered in this section.

When it did become necessary to rent a supplementary or an alternate domicile, it was often possible to find a suitable property nearby the family home. In several cases additional space was even found in an immediately adjacent property. For example, in 1433 Bonsignore di Niccolò Spinelli rented the house next to his own in order to augment his residence[55]. In 1447 Giuliano di Amerigo Zati did the same, except that he increased the living space for his pregnant wife and seven children by renting two adjacent *casette*[56]. If no adjacent house was available for rental a family might have moved to a new property altogether. This need not have led to their removal from a clan enclave, for in the matter of house rental, clan members exhibited much the same degree of cohesion as was found in the positioning of their domiciles. For example, in 1427 Simone di Lapo Corsi leased his house in Via Buonfanti for *f* 16 and rented a larger one in the adjacent street, Via delle Pinzochere for

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[54] See Figure Two above. In 1430 Lionardo di Morello Morelli wrote that he needed "torre una chasa a pigione al meno di *f* xv d'oro"; *Cat.* 355, fol. 156*r*. Similarly in 1433 Paolo di Giovanni Castellani was looking for a house and expected to spend "al il meno, intorno di *f* 12 d'oro l'anno"; *Cat.* 444, fol. 632*r*. In his will of 1484, Andrea di Francesco Zati expressly bequeathed "domine Alexandre eius uxore dilecte…florenos quindicem auri in auro quolibet anno quo sic se orsum staret et habitaret, pro pensione unius domus eidem per solvendos annuatim et in initio anni"; *NA* 10881, fol. 59*v*.

[55] "Tengho una chasa a pigione, la quale è alato ala mia…per mio abitare"; *Cat.* 492, fol. 149*v*.

[56] "E più abiamo 2 chasette allato alla nostra dove abito…"; *Cat.* 666, fol. 459*v*. (pencil pagination). Antonio di Lorenzo Spinelli similarly rented a neighbouring house in 1469. See page 87 above.

f 25[57]. Throughout the 1430s and 1440s Niccolò di Cocco Donati was at no point able to accommodate his children, (whom at one point numbered twelve) in his family home in Via Vagellai, "che per non chapervi, non l'abito", as he succinctly put it[58]. Yet he too was able to find a succession of alternative houses in the same neighbourhood[59].

The patriarchal household also had a marked propensity to expand beyond the confines of the family domicile because of its inclusion of a young fertile cell. For example, by 1447 Galileo Galilei's four grandchildren, all fathered by his son Bernardo, pushed the population of his house beyond its physical capacity and as a result an unmarried son, Benedetto, had to move out to another property nearby; "perché non abbiamo tale chasa vi possiano habitare tutti"[60]. In 1469 Niccolò di Andrea Giugni reported two of his four sons as married and one of them, Andrea, as having a son. This too required the whole family to move to a larger property and as of 1 May Niccolò rented a house from the *Ufficiali dei Ribelli* at *f* 30 a year, whilst from 1 November his own home was to be leased at *f* 20 for five years[61].

The conjugal household and its natural successor, the 'vertically-extended' patriarchal model, had no monopoly on the scale of numerical expansion which required a household to find a new residence. In 1447 messer Bernardo and Giovanni di Filippo Giugni reported themselves as having rented another house, because their own could no longer contain them. They lived with their wives, their mother and five children who had in fact all been fathered by their dead younger brother Antonio. In 1447, the existing household split into its two constituent conjugal cells and Bernardo moved into a nearby house rented from the Rinuccini[62]. However, contrary to normal practice, this did not lead to the division of the brothers' estate which remained united until Bernardo's death in 1466[63]. It is also worth noting that, even prior to the augmentation of 1447, the family had already expanded its

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[57] *Cat.* 29, fol. 631*r*.-631*v*. It is perhaps significant that at the time of the rental Simone was also obliged to house one monna Piera, the widow of Cione di Cecho Cioni, for six months.

[58] *Cat.* 353, fol. 285*r*.

[59] *Cat.* 69, fol. 279*r*.-279*v*., *Cat.* 353, fols. 285*r*.-286*r*., *Cat.* 491 *bis*, fol. 390*r*. and *Cat.* 662, fol. 908*r*.-908*v*.

[60] *Cat.* 662, fol. 827*r*. Benedetto's subsequent living arrangements are dealt with from page 138 below.

[61] *Cat.* 915, fol. 650*r*.-650*v*. The *Ufficiali dei Ribelli* came under the control of the *Ufficiali del Torre* and governed civic and confiscated property; Stern, *The Criminal Law System*, pp. 185 *ff.*

[62] "Perchè non chapiono tutti, Bernardo tiene a pigione per suo abitare una chasa in vicinanza che ne pagha l'anno *f* ventidue da Pippo di Cino Rinuccini e frategli…"; *Cat.* 666, fol. 627*r*. (pencil pagination).

[63] However, from 1454 they were once more living together, following the purchase from their cousin Giovantonio di Jacopo Giugni of the portion of their domicile which they had not previously owned; *NA* 6202, fol. 106*v*.

living space, for since the mid-1430s the ground floor *bottega* under their living quarters had also been adopted for their habitation[64].

In most cases the houses which the families rented were let to them for much the same reasons as prompted the clan families' own leases. Several are noted as belonging to heirs or being leased by a widow, which implies that their owners were too young to live there or that their estate was yet to be settled[65]. Other properties belonged to religious establishments, or the income which they brought was bequeathed to fund *pietanze* or services in a chapel[66]. Others still came from civic offices such as the *Magistrato dei Pupilli*, which ran the estates of wards of court[67]. Thus the rental market, at least at the price level at which the families of these twelve clans rented property, seems to have been able to cater for fairly specific and localised accommodation needs. This added to the ease with which the clans' own family houses could be leased, since their owners were likely to find alternative accommodation nearby. However, it should not be forgotten that the ease with which another house might be found did not make the leasing of one's own domicile any more lucrative or desirable; it merely removed a potential obstacle to the procedure. The rental of alternative accommodation in this period therefore largely remained the result of practical need; it was not part of the process by which a Florentine would attempt to mark his presence on a neighbourhood.

The Trends of Residential Leasing

Given the decreasing returns offered by property rental in this period, it is no surprise to see that there are hardly any examples of clan members living off the income of residential property leasing. Cases like Giovanni di Niccolò Castellani, lamenting that the revenue from the larger part of his house in Chiasso Baldacca was "all that I have in this world"[68], were

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[64] Their 1447 *portata* reads, "una bottegha sotto detta chasa…che dal anni xv o più, se ne fa una chamera…per nostro abitare chome chiaramente si può vedere"; *Cat.* 666, fol. 627*r*. (pencil pagination). However, this conversion did not take place until after 1433, as is indicated by the passage cited on page 121 below.

[65] Simone di Lapo Corsi's house mentioned above on page 114 was rented "dalle rede di Salvestro Orlandi e da mona Pipa, donna fu di Franc° Bischeri e sirochia del detto Silvestro"; *Cat.* 29, fol. 631*v*. For other similar examples see *Cat.* 72, fol. 115*v*., *Cat.* 915, fol. 448*v*. and *Cat.* 911, fol. 532*v*.

[66] Rinieri di ser Ricco Spinelli rented a house "delle monarche di via Ghibellina"; *Cat.* 1005, fol. 622*r*. Messer Bernardo and Giovanni di Filippo Giugni held one from the Certosa; *Cat.* 702, fol. 391*r*. The heirs of Castellano Castellani rented theirs from Santa Maria Nuova; *Cat.* 911, fol. 169*v*. and in 1495 the sons of Girolamo Bartoli rented a house from the monks of San Benedetto "fuori della porta a Pinti"; *Dec. Rep.* 15, fol. 58*r*.

[67] For example, in Francesco di Amerigo Zati's redaction of 1430 he wrote, "No' ò chasa e sto a pigiona in Via Ghibellina in una chasa ò dagli ufficali de' popili"; *Cat.* 358, fol. 411*r*. See also footnote 65 on page 69.

[68] "È questa tutta la rendita ò in questo mondo"; *Cat.* 348, fol. 402*r*.

the exception. Indeed, the returns from the residential properties in which the families themselves did not live were either so low, or their letting so infrequent that it is unlikely that any were bought with profit in mind. The 5% deduction for the upkeep of property allowed by the *Catasto* may have been intended to encourage urban leasing, but due to its irregular admission into the fiscal calculations, its impact was negligible. The workings of the tax meant that leasing certain low quality properties ceased to be economically viable and consequently by the end of this period residential property which was still being leased was mainly that which could be put to no better use by the families themselves. In fact, the *Catasto* was ultimately so effective in discouraging rental that by 1474 legislation was passed to make any house expressly built for leasing exempt from taxation for twenty years. The measure was repeated in 1489, when the period of fiscal grace was doubled[69].

The Market for the Leasing of *Botteghe*

In as much as this study deals with various elements of clan housing in the *quattrocento*, the importance of shop rental might seem marginal. Yet, as we saw at the beginning of this chapter, the fiscal division of a building into a number of income-bearing units belies the degree to which workshop and residence were architecturally bound together in Florentine houses of this period. To ignore the changing pattern of commercial property rental would potentially be to miss the important influence which it had on the usage and eventually even on the design of Florentine buildings.

Commercial leasing was a mainstay of the twelve clans' property management, for in the fifteenth century it provided a much more lucrative form of income than residential leasing, as can be seen from a comparison between Figures Three and Four. Commercial properties brought roughly one-and-three-quarter times as much income per unit as residential property. Thus, despite the fact that between 1427 and 1495 the total number of *botteghe* leased was only 216, (23% fewer than the 281 residences let in the same period), the income which they brought was 38% greater in absolute terms. This was a result of both their high average value - which often exceeded that of the families' own homes[70] - and the wider economic importance of the companies which rented them.

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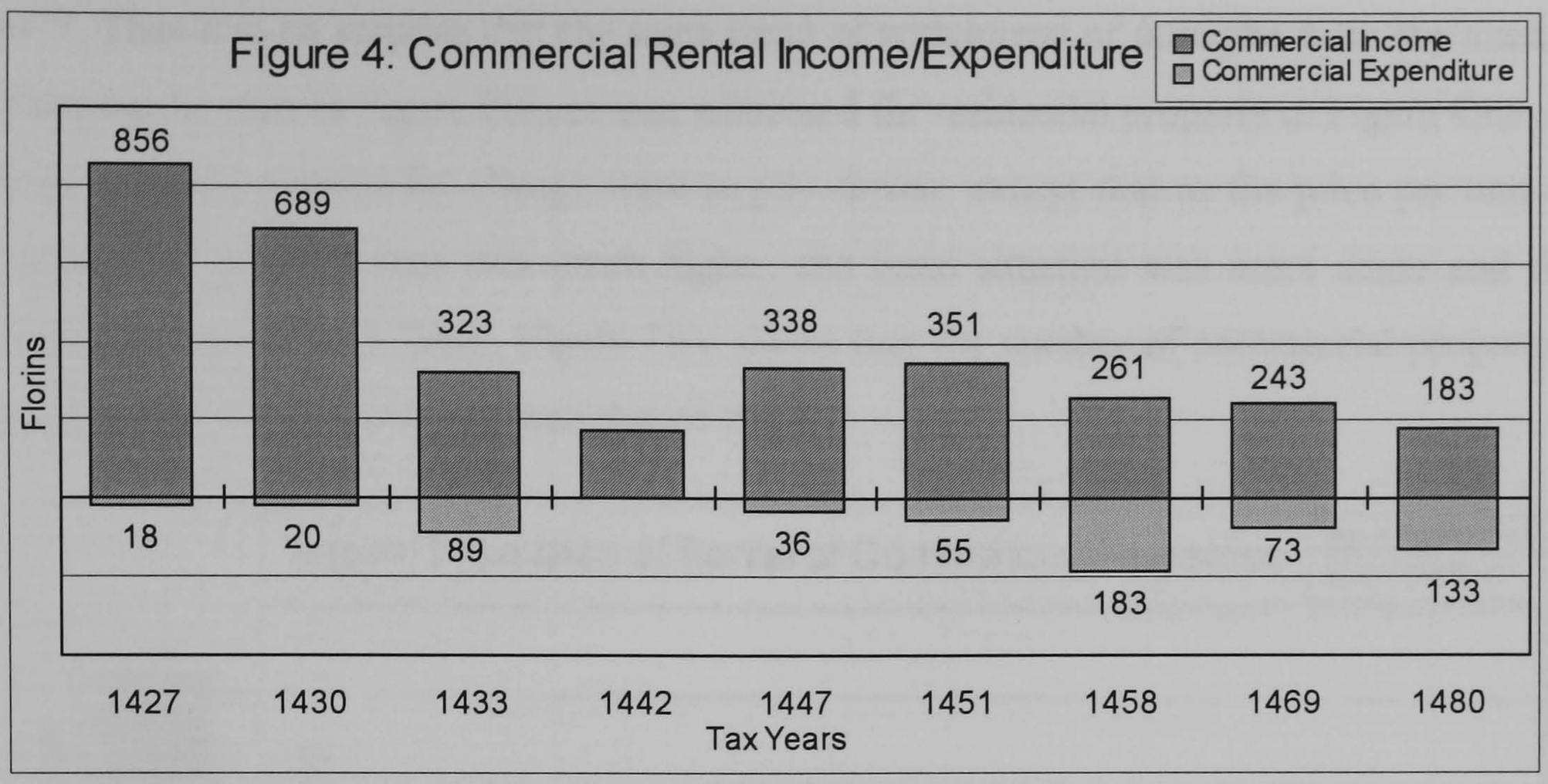
[69] *Provvisioni Registri* 165, fols. 26*v*.-27*r*. from April 1474 and *ibid*., 180, fols. 16*v*.-17*v*. from September 1489.

[70] In 1427 three shops under Giovanni di Renzo Salterelli's home brought an income of *f* 83 a year, more than twice the income from the most expensive palace leased during this period.

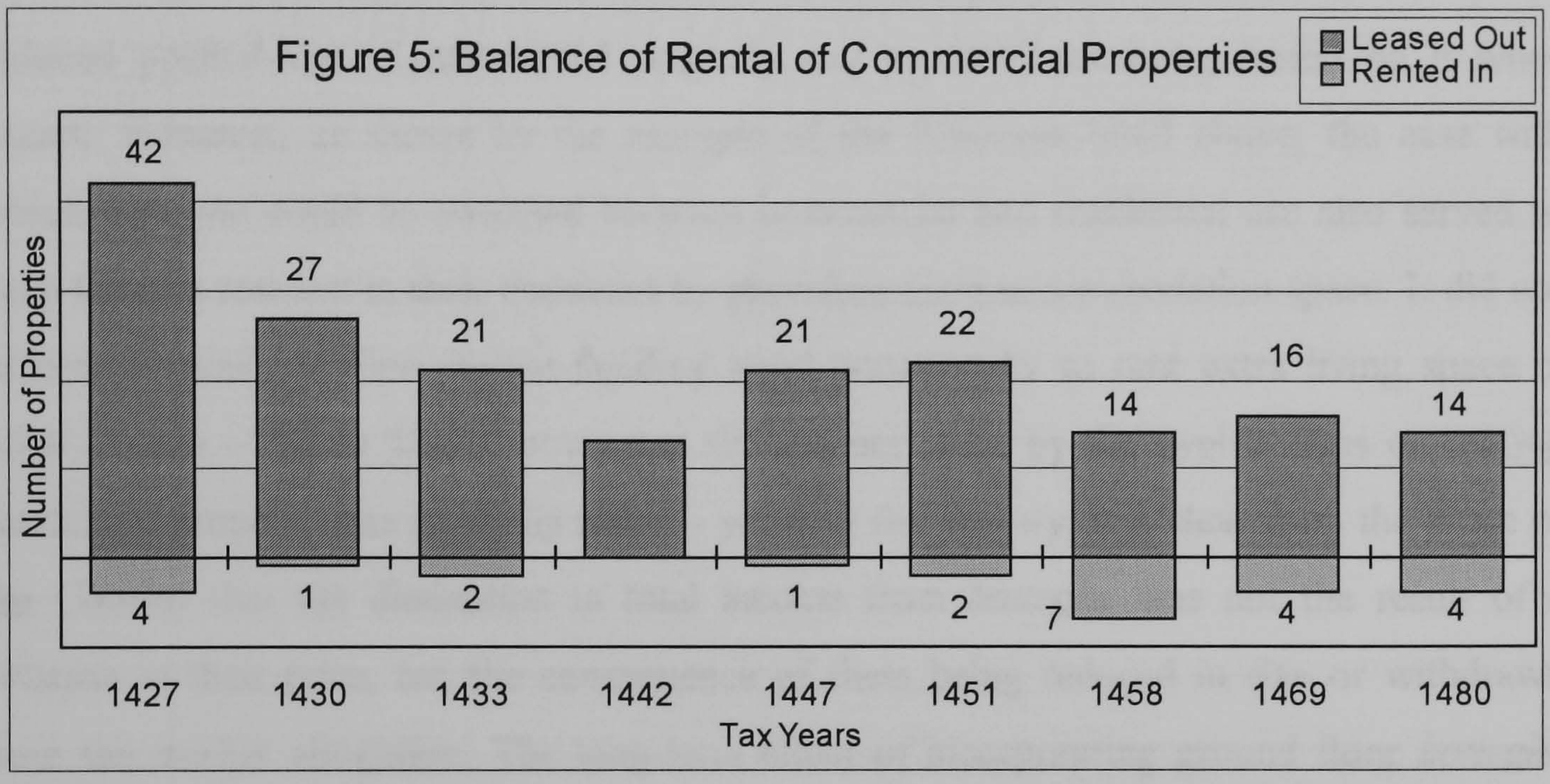


Most of the commercial property let by the families was situated, like their residences, in the Quarter of Santa Croce. The largest, most lucrative and most interesting with regard to their usage were actually positioned directly below the families' own living quarters. Members of the 'older' Bartoli, Castellani, Giugni {10}, Rinuccini and Salterelli clans leased the ground floor of their family houses for commercial purposes. These spaces were often divided into a number of separate *botteghe*, which increased the overall income and presumably also suited the spatial requirements of their tenants' trades. No one trade predominated in any of the *botteghe*, and to judge from the frequency with which the crafts exercised in them changed, it is unlikely that any of them were physically dedicated to a single type of business[71].

Nevertheless, it is clear that as the clans were almost entirely on the supply side of commercial property rental, they also took the brunt of any fiscal legislation which affected it. There was no tax imposition on lease holders and, of course, the sum spent on rent was tax deductible. There were no such perks for the property owners beyond deductions for upkeep, yet as was often the case with residential leasing, these were also often inadmissible in commercial rentals. It was often claimed in the *portate* that *botteghe* became unusable without regular maintenance work and the discontinuation of maintenance deductions after 1427 was certainly a further disincentive to keeping some of them available for rental. Indeed as early as 1430, Lionardo di Zanobi Bartoli's *campione* reported a *bottega* under his house in Via del Palagio as being a heavy liability: "…it costs more to run than it brings

[71] The Giugni and Rinuccini, who lived close to San Martino, usually leased their *botteghe* to *lanaiuoli*.

in"[72]. Thus it is no surprise that the same trend of withdrawal of *botteghe* from the market place can be seen in Figure Five as was witnessed for residential property in Figure One. In both cases the reasons for change were largely similar, except that as the price per unit of commercial property was that much higher, the fiscal situation was more acute and the families' reaction to it faster. Figure Five shows that the number of commercial properties being leased in 1433 was only half that of 1427.



Given the larger-than-average size and value of the *botteghe* owned by the families studied here, the tax penalties they would have incurred when vacant were particularly grave, more especially when compared with their tax-free status prior to 1427. Furthermore, the fact that many of them were positioned directly below family living quarters might have caused a rethink concerning their usage and resulted in them being 'absorbed' into the domicile, just as had happened with a number of the low-status *casette*.

The *botteghe* and *fondachetto* under Giovanni di Renzo Salterelli's house were worth *f* 83 a year in 1427, which put them well above the value of the average property; yet if empty, they were potentially a huge fiscal liability[73]. This created a situation favouring their absorption into the family living quarters. Giovanni Salterelli sold his *botteghe* in 1442, but other examples show how their usage changed over the century. In 1433 Jacopo di Francesco Rinuccini was leasing a house to his cousin, Francesco di Cino. It had a vacant

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[72] "…chavasi della detta bottegha pocho, che n'ò della intera s 20 il mese, che dicie va il speso più che quello n'dà"; *Cat.* 359, fol. 624*r*.

[73] *Cat.* 68, fol. 89*r*. A similar example concerning the Giugni appears below on page 124.

bottega on the ground floor which Francesco had turned into a *camera* for his own use[74]. The situation did not prove permanent, for in 1451 the area was again described as a *bottega*, albeit unlet[75]. By 1480 a part of the ground floor was again being used for the accommodation of a resident, Jacopo's son Giulianmaria, who added that he had "undone all features of the workshop"[76].

The tactic of converting shops into habitation space was primarily motivated to counter the reduced profitability of commercial property and to avoid tax being levied on it when vacant. However, as shown by the example of the Rinuccini cited above, the ease with which *botteghe* could be switched between commercial and residential use also served to keep families resident in their domiciles by providing extra accommodation space. It did not of course totally obviate certain families' need occasionally to rent extra living space in other houses – Figure Three shows that the amount spent by the twelve clans on renting residential property was generally stable – yet over the century, it is clear from the prose of the *Catasto* that the diminution in total income from *botteghe* was not the result of a collapse in their price, but the consequence of them being reduced in size or withdrawn from the market altogether. The long-term effect of incorporating ground floor *botteghe* into a family's living quarters can be seen in a number of palaces built in the second half of the century which eschew the previously ubiquitous ground-floor *botteghe*. A building project from 1415 more than doubled the number of leasable *botteghe* on the ground floor of the *Palazzo* of the Parte Guelfa {11}, and yet the Canacci Palace {12} which was built just around the corner later in the century incorporates none at all[77]. In the Spinelli and Morelli palaces in Borgo Santa Croce, the familiar *botteghe* arch form became bedecked with strikingly-rusticated voussoirs and was transformed into the entrance of an *androne*, whilst in the Rucellai Palace it was replaced altogether by the use of trabeation[78].

Figure Six shows trade in commercial property to have been much more volatile than that for housing. This can partially be explained by the fact that demand for housing was less

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[74] "Una chasa…apigionata a Franc° di Cino per *f* 21. È vi sotto 1ª bottegha…ora è spigionata però no'lla mettere nulla…à lla ridotta Franc° di Cino detto a suo uso di casa per 1ª camera…"; *Cat.* 447, fol. 454*v*.

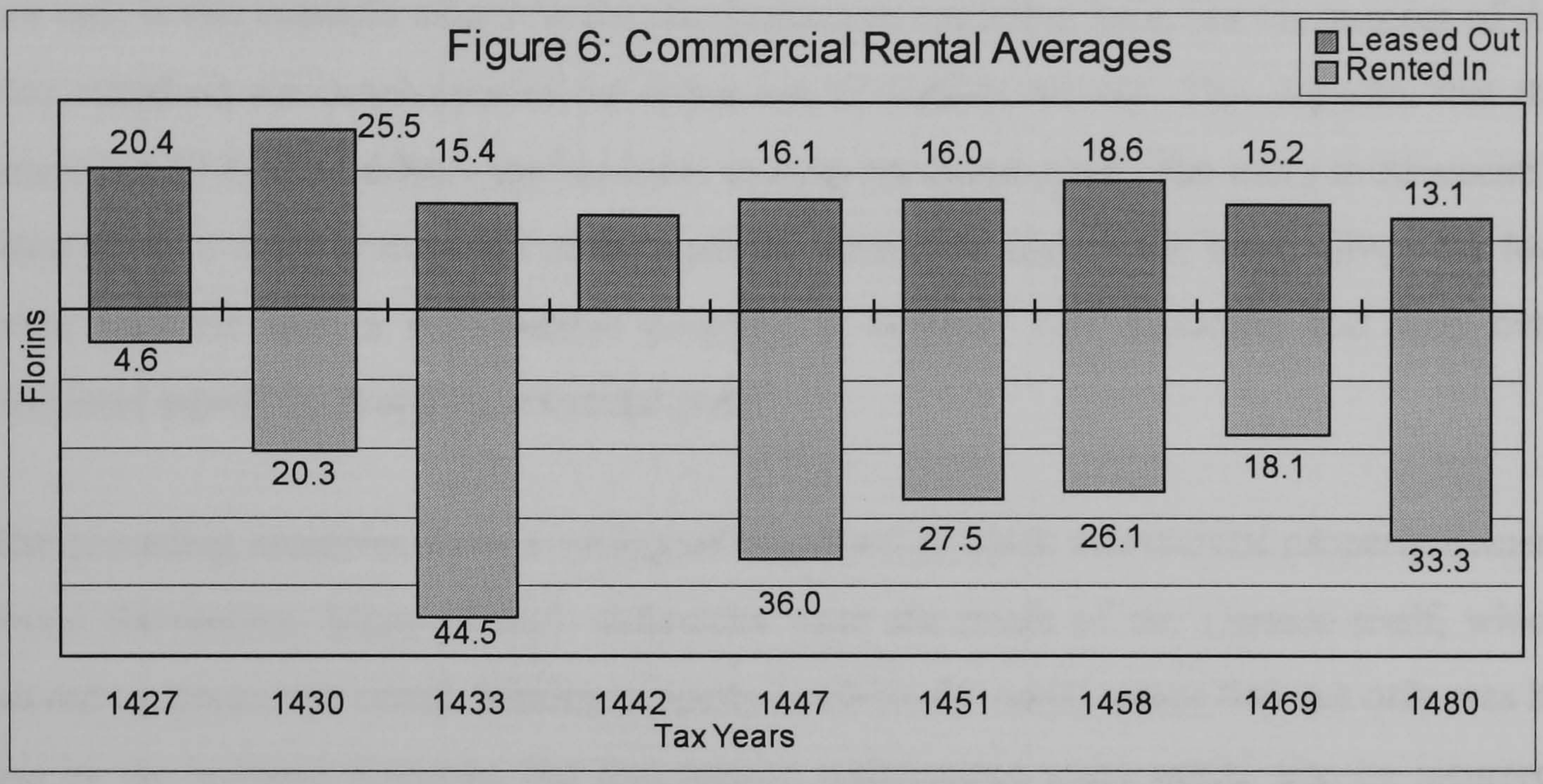
[75] *Cat.* 697, fol. 1*r*.

[76] "…per me e per mio uso d'abitazione. È disfatto ogni asercizio atto ad arte di lana chome chiaro lo potete vedere"; *Cat.* 1003, fol. 479*r*. The latter comment was clearly to show that it should no longer incur any tax.

[77] There were no workshops in any of the clans' dwellings which were rebuilt in this period.

[78] *Palazzo* Corsi-Horne still betrays its architect's efforts to hide the previous building's *botteghe* arches {15}. See also the comments of Brenda Preyer in "The 'chasa overo palagio' of Alberto di Zanobi", p. 393.

elastic, as it was primarily governed by the need for shelter and was thus less dependent on external economic factors. The graph also shows that between 1427 and 1430 the average price of *botteghe* rose. This was not the result of a price squeeze, but of the moves to withdraw meaner, less profitable *botteghe* from the market, as the clans were aware that these properties were most likely to become a fiscal liability.



The dilemma facing the lessors of commercial property is perhaps best summed up by Filippo di Niccolò Giugni. In 1433 he wrote in his *portata* that because property could not be entered as unlet in the Catasto, he was willing to surrender his rights to a house and *bottega* which had brought him an annual income of *f* 30 only a few years before. His outburst may have been rhetorical, but it shows a strong reluctance to recognise 'unrented' (*spigionata*) as a status for rental property[79]. Filippo wrote:

> "⅔ of a house with a wool shop underneath it. It has been closed for a long time because I can't find anybody who wants it at any price and for that reason it should not be subject to the catasto at all. I would happily give it as a present to anyone who would maintain it for us"[80].

A less drastic method of avoiding a tax levy on the income from a property was simply to commit fraud. We saw in footnote 76 that in 1480 Giulianmaria di Jacopo Rinuccini insisted that he had removed all the commercial premises from the ground floor of his house. Yet in 1485 he surreptitiously leased a storeroom there to Battista di Giovanni Serristori's

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[79] See the discussion on page 111 above.

[80] "⅔ d'una chasa e una botteghetta sotto detta chasa a uso d'arte di lana. È stata più tenpo serata perché no' si truova che lla voglia per prego niuno e però non si debbe essere per nulla a chatastata, che voluntieri la daremo in dono a uno che cce la mantenesse"; *Cat.* 452, fol. 318*r*. As can be seen on page 116 above, the *bottega* was not given away, but was converted soon after into further living space for the house's ten inhabitants.

company of *lanaiuoli*. His record of the contract included the stipulation that if Serristori were to offset the rent against his *sustanze* in any taxes – as he was fully entitled to do – he would be liable to pay the corresponding increase in Rinuccini's tax assessment[81]. This would avoid the appearance of the lease in the *portate*. If this technique was widespread, it could have led to an over-estimation of the contraction of rental in this period. However, not only is this example unique in the documentation consulted here, but the success of the ploy relied on the connivance of the lessee not to declare the rent. This suggests that the lessor would have to offer some incentive to keep the lessee quiet. The entry in Rinuccini's *libro di dare e avere* does not state explicitly what this might have been. Given the low price paid for such a well-situated property, it is likely that Rinuccini had won over Serristori merely by dropping the rental price.

The preceding examples show a variety of situations in which commercial property owners found themselves. Many of their difficulties were the result of the *Catasto* itself, which served to discourage rental. Making property available for rental meant that not only was its use by the landlord foregone, but that regular maintenance costs would also be incurred. There was still the possibility that it might remain empty and because no deductions could be claimed unless there was an income from which to deduct it, these expenses would also be lost. The fact that it was available for rent signified that it would probably attract a fiscal assessment, whether let or not, thus further adding to the potential loss of the holding. Lastly, the economic viability of the business occupying a shop was an issue in the leasing of commercial property which did not figure in residential rental and given the higher value – and thus higher taxable value – of commercial property, any shop that remained empty over a long period may well have tempted its owner to convert it for some other less tax-vulnerable purpose.

The Trends of *Botteghe* Rental

The trend of withdrawing shops from the market place eventually had repercussions on their availability. In 1480 Neri and Francesco di Filippo Rinuccini wrote that a decade earlier they had divided a *bottega* into two and though it "had never been let for more than *f* 12 in our

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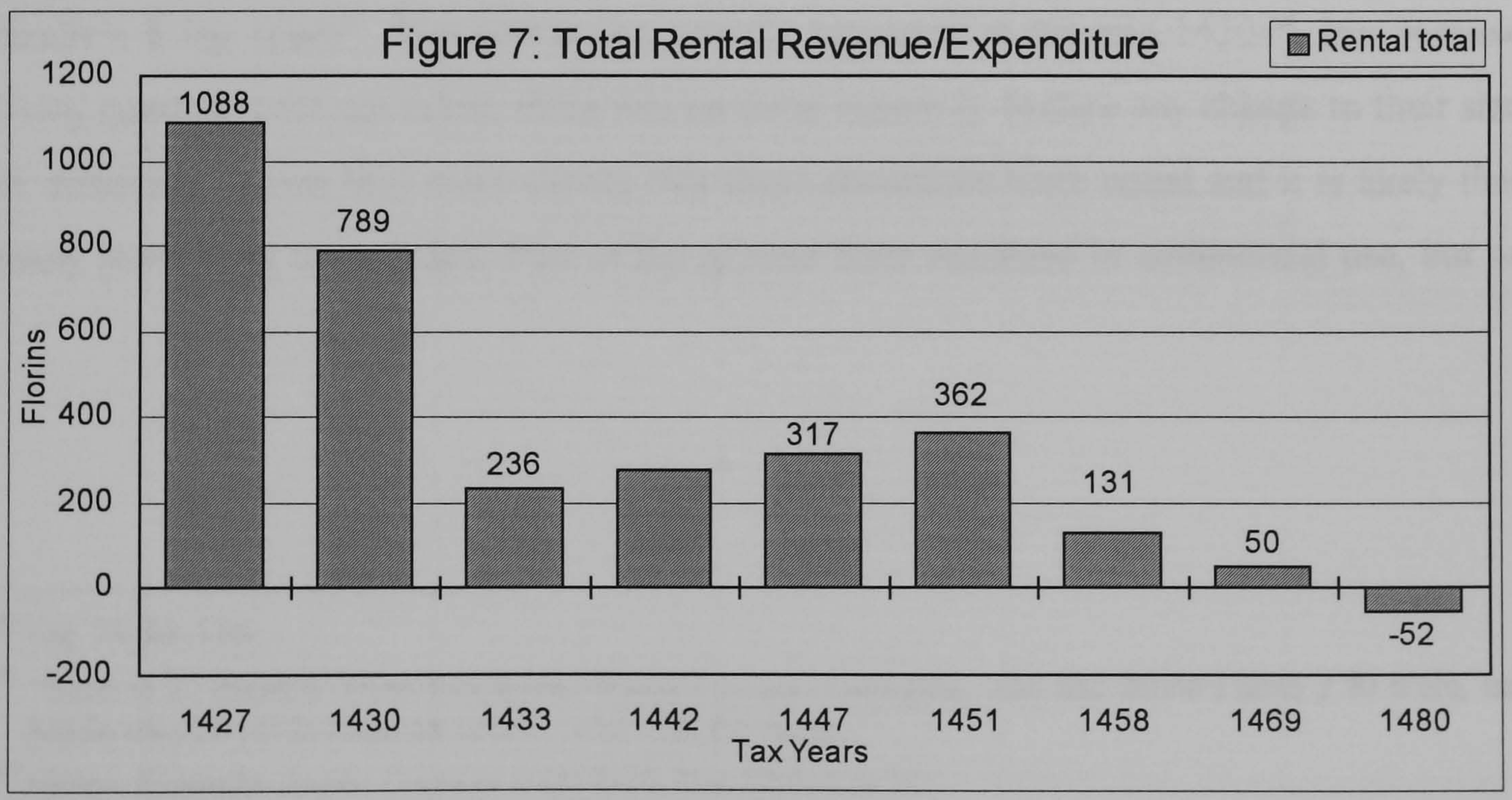
[81] A copy of the contract, signed by Serristori's representative obliged the company members not to "...dire o portare o fare portare a gravezza o a chatasto o graveza distrubuzione di gravezza che ssi avesse a porre pel chomune di Firenze e in chaso che detti Batista Seristori o sue conp[a] portosino o faciesino portare a veruna graveza di che in su detto maghazino avessi avere graveza di nesuna ragione sono rimaso dacordo con Pandolfo di Marcho Beleci condutore di detto maghazino possa loro domandare tutto quella e rata di graveza tochassi in su detto maghazino durante tale distribuzione di gravezza..."; *Ginori Conti - Rinuccini* 207, fol. 222*v*.

lifetime", there was such a "critical shortage" (*charestia grande*) of commercial space at that time, that despite it being "unsuitably positioned" for use in the wool business, both halves were leased for *f* 22, more than they had brought at any time since 1430[82].

The situation experienced by the Rinuccini was probably the result of a short-term growth in demand for *botteghe*, yet as the *portate* can only quantify the supply of properties, the extent of the shortage cannot be assessed here. The Rinuccini example and the case study of the Giugni below show that it remained possible to convert properties quite easily between commercial and residential usage. However, this was less likely to happen if a shop had become incorporated into the landlord's living area. It is therefore likely that the *bottega* deficit of 1470 resulted from a sudden increase in demand which the market was ill-prepared or unwilling to meet. The demise of commercial leasing, the backbone of the families' urban property income in the first half of the century, finally affected the overall profitability of the clans' rental. Figure Five shows that by 1458 the total number of *botteghe* let by the twelve clans was down to fourteen, a third of its 1427 level, and Figure Seven shows that by 1480 the total income which leasing brought the clans was less than the total amount expended on rental.



[82] However, by the 1480 redaction, in which this information appears, the brothers mention that they had again reunited the workshops and were leasing them for only *f* 12. Nor were they expecting a repetition of the situation of 1470, as they insisted that when it became empty, it was likely to remain so for some time: "la quale per la drieto indivise per volerla riducere a 2 e hora s'è ritornata pure chome s'era posta nel popolo di Santo Stefano a Badia di Firenze, overo di San Martino…La quale bottegha è stata più tempo spigionata per esser in luogho pocho apto al mestiero di lana e l'ultimo pigione se n'ebbe da Sandro barbiere, fu *f* xii l'anno, cioè *f* 12 di sugg°, la nnon è mai a nostro tempi s'è appigionata in più p[e]regio excepto che nell anno 1470, al tempo del chatasto, stendo charestia grande di bottghe su divise e paghone <*f*> 22 e vi preghiamo che a questo abbiate righuardo e maxime stendo spigionata e apta starsi un buon pezzo"; *Cat.* 1004, fol. 196*r*.

A Case Study: The Giugni

The vicissitudes of commercial and residential rental can best be seen when followed over an extended period. A case study of one family and the rental history of one of their houses is a valuable way of putting the various trends of this topic into context to show the changing patterns of apportioning space within a family house. A good example of this is the case of Giovanni di Domenico Giugni's residence. Giovanni was the eldest of Domenico Giugni's three sons, who all shared a tax declaration in 1427. However, they did not all live together, for the middle brother, Bernardo was in rented accommodation nearby. Seven people remained in the family domicile, including the conjugal cells of Giovanni and his youngest brother Niccolò, so the household retained a considerable potential for growth.

In 1427 Giovanni declared the warehouse under the house to be leased for *f* 30[83]. By 1430 it was about to be vacated[84] and in 1433 it was unleased. Yet it still incurred a tax of about 14 *soldi* 3 *denari* each time the *Catasto* was levied – on average over twenty-five times a year during this period[85]. The 1442 *portate* for Ruota have not survived, but in 1447 Giovanni was leasing just part of the warehouse to a cobbler for *f* 12[86]. The reason for this appears in his 1451 *portata*. He had incorporated the larger part of the ground floor into his family's living space[87]. The conversion actually happened in the mid-1430s[88], but because living quarters were not taxed, there was no fiscal reason to declare any change to their size or condition. It was thus mere chance that these alterations were noted and it is likely that many more went unrecorded. Part of the ground floor remained in commercial use, but as

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[83] *Cat.* 73, fol. 110*r*.

[84] "Sotto vi 1° fondacho tiene Bartolomeo Peruzi e la sua compagnia…che nne danno l'anno *f* 30 d'oro, ma ànnolo rifiutato per lo tenporale cattivo"; *Cat.* 390, fol. 1000*r*.

[85] Molho, *Florentine Public Finances in the Early Renaissance*, p. 92.

[86] "…ogi n'apigiono una parte a Giovanni Armadori, paghame l'anno *f* dodici"; *Cat.* 666, fol. 123*r*. (pencil pagination).

[87] "Nel primo catasto erano i fondachi soto chaxa a Bartolomeo Peruzzi e compagnia. Ogi l'abitiamo la magiore parte per noi. Una parte n'apigioniamo a Giovanni Amadori chalzaiuolo per £ 56 l'anno, cioè £ cinquantasei et danne l'anorio cioè chalze et altri nostri bixoni, stimoli *f* xii"; *Cat.* 702, fol. 37*r*.

[88] This is known from an entry in Giovanni's 1458 *portata*: "Et più va sotto uno certo fondachetto…la quale da 20 anni in qua abbiamo abitati per nostro uso"; *Cat.* 810, fol. 846*r*. In 1433 Giovanni's brother Niccolò had also converted part of the commercial premises under his house into living quarters for his family; "…una bottegha di sotto, tiella a pigione Mariano legniauolo e danne l'anno *f* 5 e resto abitano eglino, cioè Nicolò"; *Cat.* 493, fol. 318*v*., as had their cousin, Filippo di Niccolò Giugni; see footnote 64 above.

Giovanni's son Domenico noted in 1469, the conversion of the warehouse into living space earned him a reduction of *f* 12 on the tax levied on the property[89].

By 1480 ownership of the property was divided between Domenico's eight sons, six of whom were living in the house, with a total of three wives and thirteen children. This was the largest number to inhabit the property since 1427. Their *portate* imply that the warehouse had gone, but that some space was still spared for commercial use which brought just *f* 6 a year[90]. In 1495 there were a cobbler and a slipper maker in the two shops at the front part of the house, but most of the warehouse ended the century as living space[91]. Thanks to one of the quirks of the *Decima repubblicana*, there is also an entry from the early sixteenth century concerning the period when the house had passed into the hands of Luigi di Bernardo di Domenico Giugni. His redaction shows that the lack of permanence in the apportioning of space continued, for he was about to evict a non-paying cloth worker from a ground-floor *bottega* in order to use the space as a *camera* again[92].

In a period spanning over eighty years there was seldom any rentable space in this property that was inflexible in its usage. This lack of permanence should not be seen as disadvantageous; it allowed the property to respond flexibly to changes in the family's needs or, if desired, in the demand for new shop space. At the start of the period it was clear that landlords could seldom afford to live in ground-floor shop space that could be leased out so profitably, but as the *Catasto* produced a change in the entire economics of property management, later in the century it often became the case that these same families could not afford *not* to live in them.

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[89] "Una chasa posta nel popolo di Santo Romolo...la quale tengho per mio abitare. Eravi nel primo chatasto sotto, uno fondacho che se ne dava *f* 30 l'anno, et nel chatasto del '57, perché la magiore parte di deto fondacho ho ridotto per mio abitare, me fu sbatuto *f* dodici della detta soma"; *Cat.* 915, fol. 252*r*.

[90] "...sotto detta chasa era un fondacho che nel chatasto 1427 se ne dava *f* xxx di sugg° l'anno...et oggi ne chaviamo *f* vi di sugg°"; *Cat.* 1007, fol. 202*r*.

[91] "E sotto detta chasa è ne dua botteghe dalla parte dinanzi, che nell'una sta Bt° di Domec° pianellaio, che nne pagha di pigione l'anno *f* sei L[a] e nell'altra sta Giovanni di Falcho chalzolaio, che di q<uell>[a] se ne tiene la metà per uso della chasa e l'altra metà tiene a detta chasa"; *Dec. Rep.* 14, fol. 109*r*.

[92] "Una bottegha fatta d'una chamera terrena della sopradetta chasa, stavi dentro Piero cimatore, paghane l'anno *f* x di sug° di pigione. Perchè non mi pagha, gli'ò dato licentia e torneròlla a chamera e non n'è charta ne scritta"; *Dec. Rep.* 15, fol. 69*r*. and fol. 383*r*. (pencil pagination).

Conclusion

From at least 1427 the clans consistently spent more on renting themselves accommodation than they received in income from the residential houses which they leased out. The cash shortfall that this caused had always been offset by the value of their commercial property receipts. By 1480 this credit balance had gone, for Table 7 shows how by 1480 the clans' overall rental revenue had moved into the red. By calculating that a property would earn only 7% of its value in rent each year, the *Catasto* recognised the low returns of property leasing, for the banks generally paid 8% on term deposits[93]. Yet this suggests that, even before any upkeep costs were considered, leasing property was an uneconomic use of capital. In actual fact property could bring more than 7% a year *when leased*. However, the crucial qualification was that in practice, whenever a property was not leased, the nature of the *Catasto* meant that it could become a potential drain on the patrimony. This had the effect of reducing the number of properties made available for leasing, as people reconsidered the usage of fiscally-vulnerable houses and shops. Among these 'vulnerable' properties were many in which the city's poor lived and their withdrawal from the market eventually forced the government to seek a remedy for the situation[94].

In architectural terms, the effect of these changes polarised the division between the clan properties which were leased and those which were lived in. Opportunistic rental brought the risk of a tax levy when a property fell empty and thus, when possible, it became better to incorporate it more permanently into the only building in most patrimonies which remained tax-exempt throughout this period: the family house. This in turn brought about not only the crystallisation of dedicated family houses, but also of their layout. Houses increasingly became exclusively the site of a family's residence and this is reflected in the mid-to-late-*quattrocento* palace style in which the residence and the shop are no longer combined. The impact of this change was far-reaching and in the following two chapters we shall investigate the circumstances surrounding the construction of three palaces in this period of changing architectural style.

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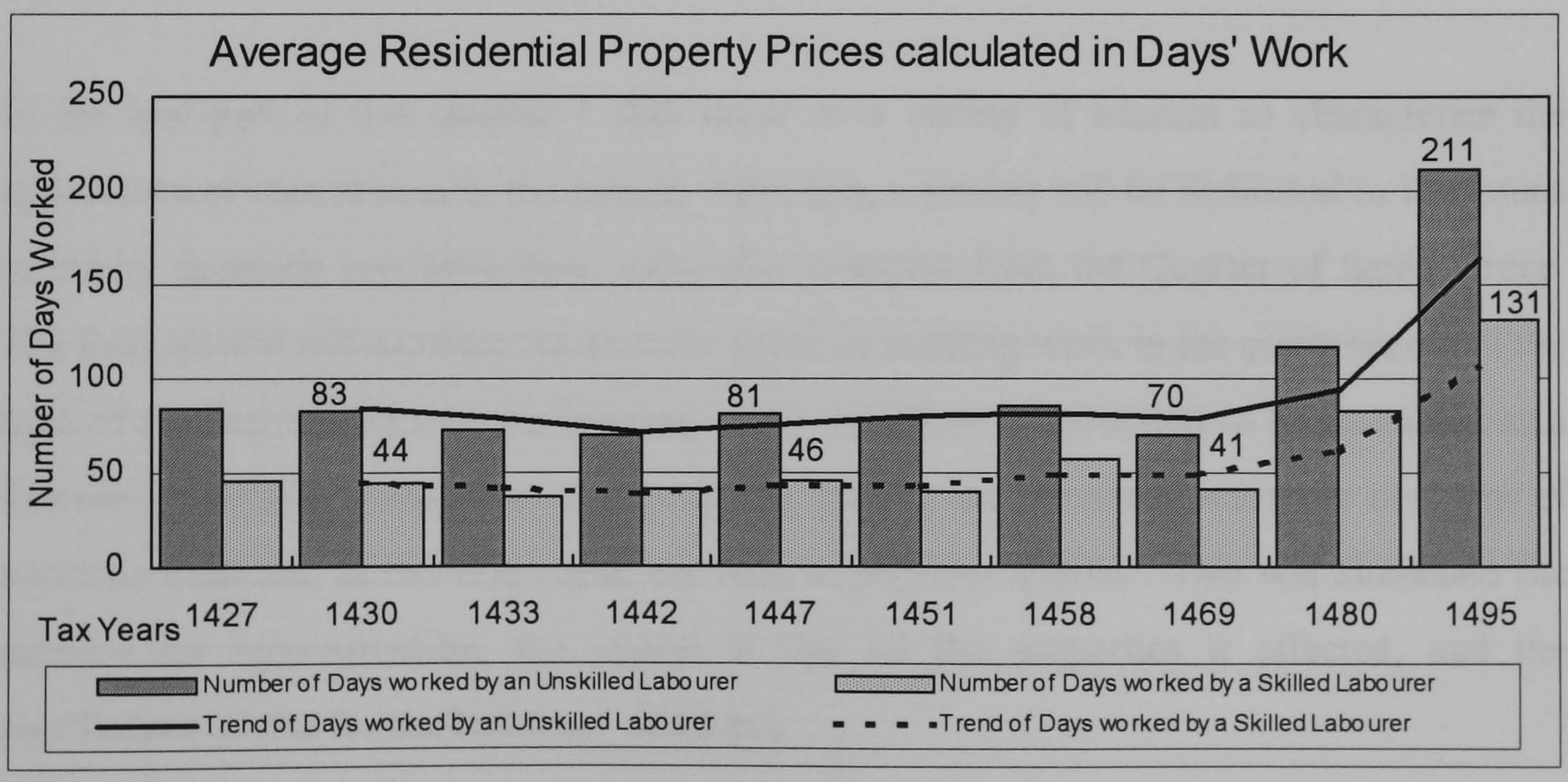
[93] Goldthwaite, *Wealth and the Demand for Art in Italy*, pp. 39-40.

[94] Consequently, the Signoria decreed that from 1463 the "uficiali del Monte potessino comprare edifici de' non sopportanti le gravezze, come sono chiese e spedali, a ragione di fiorini 25%; e che quelli tali di chi fusse tale monte, fussino tenuti di tale prezzo murarne case, acciocchè il popolo avesse da abitare commodamente; perocchè per la grande moltitudine, e per lo assai murare di belle e grandi case dagli uomini nobile e potenti, pativa il popolo disagio di abitazioni"; *Ricordi storici di Filippo di Cino Rinuccini*, XC.

Excursus: The Real Cost of Residential Property Rental

During the period under study here rents were generally calculated in *florins* but often paid in *soldi di piccioli*, the Florentine silver-based currency. The value of the gold *florin* was stable in this period, whilst the *soldo* constantly fell in value: in 1400 there were seventy-six *soldi* to the *florin*, by 1500 there were one hundred and forty. This meant that the real cost of settling debts in *soldi* for a product priced in *florins* rose, even whilst its nominal price remained constant.

Figure Two on page 112 shows that the houses which the clans rented out tended to fetch about *f* 10 each. But what did this sum mean in real terms ? What proportion of a labourer's income did this represent ? To answer this, I have used the figures from Appendix Three of Richard Goldthwaite's *The Building of Renaissance Florence*, which charts the income of both a skilled and an unskilled labourer over this period. I then took the average cost, in *soldi di piccioli*, of the residential properties leased by the clans and calculated their price in terms of the actual days worked by both these types of labourers[95]. The resulting graph shows the rental price of housing to have been relatively stable during the period. It did rise towards the end of the century, but this was mainly a result of changes in the relative value of the two currencies, rather than a nominal rise in the actual rent due.



[95] It should be kept in mind whilst using this graph that medieval labourers worked on average for 270 days a year and were only paid for each day on which they did work; Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence*, p. 289.

Chapter Four

Housing Typology and Building in Fifteenth-Century Florence

Introduction

In the preceding chapters we have examined various aspects of Florentine households and the neighbourhoods in which they resided. However, little has so far been said about the actual bricks and mortar of the houses in which Florentines lived. For, in addition to the imperative of patrimonial unity and the more abstract notion of *casa* which bound a family together, the physical house itself also played a significant role in defining the household it accommodated. In this chapter I would therefore like to investigate and describe the appearance of the houses in which clan families lived. In Chapter Three we saw that there was a persistent determination to reserve clan housing exclusively for the accommodation of clan families. However, the part which the appearance of these properties played in this strategy was seldom explicitly articulated. One example which does stress the importance of the physical aspect of a clan domicile appears in the will of Giovanni di Paolo Morelli, for he made the inheritance of his house conditional on it being subsequently neither divided nor physically changed in any respect[1]. My aim here is thus to investigate the workings of the relationship between a residence's articulation and its indispensability as a clan habitation.

In the first part of this chapter I shall draw on a variety of sources to characterise the appearance of clan houses in this period. After this, a section will be dedicated to the issues raised by domestic reconstruction, using two examples from the Quarter of Santa Croce. The final section will examine the broader issues of building work in the *quattrocento* in the light of the requirements of clan housing. This will allow construction to be examined as a function of housing, rather than remaining restricted to the somewhat narrower concerns of aesthetic criticism, as has often been the case in previous studies[2]. This will illuminate the motives for reconstruction, the impact it had on the properties it affected, and the significance of this for the buildings' residents.

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[1] "...et quod dicta domus non possit quoquo modo dividi vel aliquid innovari, sed stare debeat in eodem statu in quo ad presens est"; *NA* 18000, fol. 44*r*. The passage comes from Giovanni's last will of 1430.

[2] James Ackerman's comment that the palaces of the *quattrocento* "were built to be looked at more than to be lived in" is typical of this vein of architectural criticism; *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, p. 173.

The Physical Appearance of the Houses

We saw in Chapter One that great importance was attached to maintaining the co-residence of the patrimonial unit and in Chapter Two that the Corsi and Morelli periodically adapted or reallocated their houses to suit the changing circumstances of their households. Thus, we can learn much about the demands placed on fifteenth-century houses by characterising both their appearance and the reconstructions they underwent. Yet despite the frequent survival of much medieval housing in Florence, it is still difficult to identify precisely its appearance in the *quattrocento*. Many of the extant houses which were inhabited in the fifteenth century were by then already 'old'[3]. Indeed, they may already have been extensively altered since first being constructed. Consequently, one cannot be sure that it is even their 'original' appearance that needs to be established. The magnitude of this problem is only exacerbated by the fact that subsequent reconstruction and revivalist restoration has further diminished our chance of defining their appearance in the fifteenth century. Thus although each surviving house remains an historical document of great potential, great care is needed to discern what it can actually tell us about the housing priorities of the period in question.

It is not feasible to study the history of this area's urban fabric from graphic evidence, as no contemporary plans or elevations of any of its buildings survive. In fact architectural drawings before the sixteenth century are virtually "non existent"[4] and both contemporary depictions in paintings and descriptions in literary texts are often vague or motivated by aims other than providing an accurate portrayal[5]. The introduction of perspective in this era enabled buildings to be depicted with priorities that can be shared by the modern architectural historian[6], and both Domenico Veneziano in his *predella* of *The Miracle of Saint Zanobius* and Domenico Ghirlandaio in the *Resuscitation of the son of the Roman Notary* in Santa Trinità produced recognisable likenesses of actual Florentine streets[7]. However, we should not be lured into believing that just because the setting is known, the

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[3] See the example in footnote 43 on page 136 below.

[4] Ackerman, "Architectural Practice in the Italian Renaissance", p. 3.

[5] A significant proportion of the fifteenth-century literature on architecture was produced by humanists, but as a result of the crucial importance of architectural patronage in this period, much of it is steeped in ekphrasis and *amplificatio* and thus tells us more about renaissance rhetoric than the appearance of the buildings it purports to describe. For textual examples see Canfield, "The Florentine Humanists' Concept of Architecture".

[6] See Gori-Montanelli, *Architettura e paesaggio*, pp. 119 *ff.* Numerous plans, elevations and axonometric drawings of the buildings in fifteenth-century paintings are shown in Gambuti, *L'Architettura dei pittori*.

[7] Ghirlandaio's depiction of the street in front of the church of Santa Trinità even seduced Vasari into thinking that the fresco depicted the resuscitation of a member of the Spini family, as a figure is shown falling from their family palace; *Lives of the Painters,* vol. 2, p. 69.

painting itself provides a photographic likeness[8]. There was no culture of individualistic portraiture in early *quattrocento* art, for its priorities were to evoke general types rather than exact representations[9]. Objects served only to lend conviction to the human or divine *storia*. Thus, the representation of buildings in this period probably conforms only to a generic typology and the idea of townscapes which they convey should only be used to corroborate other physical or documentary evidence.

This brings us back to the physical evidence of the buildings and the sites on which they stood. The plots or *casolaria* in the *gonfalone* of Leon Nero were largely laid out in the thirteenth century, therefore their partitioning and positioning reflected the housing needs of that period. By the fifteenth century many of these buildings had been subjected to extensive alterations, yet they still retained their boundary walls and foundations, as substructure was too fundamental to move without widespread demolition work. As a result, the original exterior walls usually still demarcated a property's confines. The threat of fines for damaging neighbouring property also acted as a disincentive to meddle with perimeter walls[10]. The survival of such fundamental elements of the original *casolaria* invites the possibility that other structural aspects of the first properties to have stood on them might also have endured. Despite this, in the 1960s Howard Saalman claimed that "many, if not all, 'old' houses" in the centre of Florence should be dated only from the fifteenth century. He later modified his opinion, based on the evidence of a number of properties in the Quarter of Santa Croce which still retain much of their early medieval fabric[11]. This meant that building *ex novo* in the city centre was largely unnecessary and it was consequently the very conspicuousness of the demolition work preceding the construction of the Medici and

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[8] Although the *quattrocento* largely saw the disappearance of the symbolic or token representation of buildings so characteristic of the *trecento*, artists employed perspective less to portray actual buildings than to enable flights of fancy by creating exaggerated depictions of idealised architecture. This trend is particularly prominent in the work of Gozzoli, Perugino, Pinturicchio and Signorelli. Indeed, 'painted architecture' could be a forerunner of its subsequent creation in stone; Francastel, "Imagination et réalité", p. 197. See also the comments concerning pictorial representations of buildings by Staale Sinding-Larsen; "A tale of two cities", pp. 165-166.

[9] Gombrich, "Apollonio di Giovanni", p. 14.

[10] "Statutum est quod quicumque habuerit terram iuxta aliquam domum vel casolare in civitate Florentie vel comitatu, et ipse cavaverit seu cavari fecerit, ita quod domus vel casolare dissiparetur vel aliquod dampnum reciperet in ea domo vel casolari seu terreno, teneatur dominus Capitaneus et Defensor eum condempnare in libris vigintiquinque f. p. et facere reaptari suis expensis"; Caggese (ed.), *Statuto del capitano del popolo 1322-1325*, book three, rubric XV, p. 157.

[11] "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano", p. 9. His modified position is to be found in Saalman, "One-Bay Houses in the Quarter of Santa Croce", pp. 144-145. A further incentive to reuse existing masonry was the fact that newly-cut stone and bricks brought into the city incurred a patron not only transportation costs, but also taxes at the city gate; Goldthwaite, "The building of the Strozzi Palace", pp. 148 and 158.

Strozzi Palaces which made them so remarkable, for such measures were quite exceptional by the *quattrocento*[12].

Several houses in the Quarter of Santa Croce still have façade widths, or delineated sections thereof, with dimensions clearly showing the influence of their original building plots. For example the *casolaria* shown in illustration 16 are eight *braccia* (4.6m) wide. A *casolare* of this breadth could only accommodate a single-bay house, with two frontal openings in each storey. This disposition of apertures in the façade was naturally retained when *casolaria* were joined together. However, just as the entrances to single-bay houses are displaced to one side, so are those of larger houses which have been created through the fusion of single-plot properties. Thus a considerable number of houses in the area with modern façades spanning several bays still betray their medieval origins by the asymmetrical position of their main door {20}[13].

The slenderness of houses occupying a single *casolare* created space for just one room to span the width of each floor. This left no option but for properties accommodating larger households to reach upwards to maximise the living space they offered[14]. Indeed, most of the properties in the area must have had at least two stories, if only to accommodate the number of people reported to have been living in them[15]. The construction of taller houses may have benefited from the plethora of towers in the city; by 1200 there were already at least 150 of them[16]. One notable example in Leon Nero is the *Torre degli Alberti* {5}, which stands at the mouth of Borgo Santa Croce. Yet despite the fact that such towers were as narrow as the *casolaria* on which houses were built, I do not believe that there is a tangible connection between them and the evolution of the standard Florentine residence, as they

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[12] In a letter dated March 1445 Bartolomeo Sassetti wrote "...tu debi avere sentito del Canto della Via Largha, gittato in terra per dare modo di fare il palagio..."; D. V. and F. W. Kent, "Two Comments of March 1445 on the Medici Palace", p. 796. Over a dozen buildings were demolished prior to the construction of the Strozzi Palace; Goldthwaite, "The building of the Strozzi Palace", p. 112. Previously only civic building projects had caused such extensive demolition, like that around the *Palazzo della Signoria* from 1299; Rubinstein, *The Palazzo Vecchio*, pp. 81-87, or around the Duomo from 1388; Trachtenberg, "What Brunelleschi saw", p. 34.

[13] Marchini, "Facciate Fiorentine", pp. 23-24.

[14] In *On the Art of Building* Alberti specifies that houses with timber roofs should be forty percent taller than they are wide; book nine, chapter two. While few extant houses conform to these rather wide ideal proportions, many at least approach them {16 and 17}.

[15] The following houses shown on the maps at the end of Chapter Two had at least one upper storey: nos. 1-2; *Cat.* 663, fol. 309*v*., nos. 5-7; *NA* 622, fol. 242*v*., no. 11; *Cat.* 354, fol. 427*r*., no. 17; *MC* 50, fol. 140*r*., no. 18; *Diplomatico* 1444 Agosto 18 (Normale), Deposito Gherardi, nos. 23-24; *NA* 20259, fol. 13*v*., no. 30; *NA* 20830, fol. 316*r*. and no. 47; *NA* 10446, fol. 231*r*. Many other properties probably had three stories, but the only documented example is house no. 31; *Pupilli* 166 (1430-1431), fol. 291*r*.

[16] Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates*, p. 3.

performed totally different functions. During this period the Alberti tower was not integrated with the clan residences which surrounded it, because of the fundamentally different purpose it served[17]. The original effectiveness of a tower as a defensible bastion made it ill-suited for long-term habitation. Adapting these towers for residential use through the construction of balconies[18] and the opening up of new entrances may have reduced their impregnability, but it would not have greatly increased the comfort they offered and it remained difficult to get light, water or even people into them[19]. The towers which were inhabited can be considered as no longer being effectively impenetrable, but merely a convenient source of uncomfortable accommodation.

The narrowness common to both towers and houses meant that certain architectural features had to be placed externally. Stairs were often positioned along an outside wall, rising from a courtyard or a *chiasso*[20]. One example of a semi-external staircase can still be seen in house no. 37 {18}. It originally ran along an outside wall, but has since been incorporated into the internal fabric of the house[21]. Taller houses especially would have had wooden walkways or balconies standing proud of their façades to allow access to the upper stories. These overhanging extensions, known as *sporti*, had been a feature of Florentine housing since at least the tenth century and resulted from the desire to increase the living area derived from a ground plot of fixed size {19}. They were gradually incorporated lower down the building, denying daylight to the already narrow streets and house interiors. In some places within the 1175 circuit of walls these appurtenances reached right across from one building to another creating a tunnelled street known as a *volta* {21}. Numerous incisions into the ground-floor stone work of a number of buildings around Piazza Santa

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[17] House no. 27 wrapped around the back of the tower from Via de' Benci to Borgo Santa Croce; it was described as "1° Palagio con belo abituro con corte e pozo che riesce infino nel borgo di Santa Croce"; *Cat.* 34, fol. 608*v*.

[18] Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates*, p. 93

[19] The towers of rural Tuscany lacked "nicht nur der Raum zum Wohnen, sondern überhaupt alles, was man an Komfort in anderen gleichzeitigen Bauten nachweisen kann: Feuerstellen, Wandbehälter und sogar Öffnungen, seien es nun Fenster oder Türen. In manchen Fällen ist bis zum Turmabschluss der Einstieg die einzige Lichtquelle überhaupt gewesen, wenn man einmal von den Rüstlöchern absieht. Bauten dieses Typus sind also nur im Belagerungsfall "bewohnt" worden"; Braune, *Türme und Turmhäuser in Toscana*, p. 40. Any urban tower offering the same degree of protection would also have necessarily created the same degree of discomfort for its residents. Isabelle Hyman also maintains that towers could not be classed as residential architecture; *Fifteenth century Florentine Studies*, p. 11.

[20] "Interior vaulted staircases represented a complete novelty in Tuscan architecture around 1420"; Saalman, "The Palazzo Comunale in Montepulciano", p. 9.

[21] It is marked '*f*' on Maps nos. 3 and 6. The windows overlooking this stairwell are small, square and still protected by iron grids, as was common for any external window close to ground level. The western half of house no. 37 was very probably originally a *chiasso*, providing access to houses positioned behind those which faced directly onto Borgo Santa Croce.

Croce still show where the support struts for these constructions would have been placed[22]. Since at least 1299 *sporti* on buildings in Florence had been annually taxed at the rate of 4 denari each[23]. By 1320 at the latest, it was forbidden to build them below a height of five *braccia*[24] (about 3m.). House owners who transgressed these regulations would be fined and forced to remove them. Yet they remained so rampant that in the 1340s these fines raised *f* 7000 annually[25]. The presence of *sporti*, balconies or *palchetti* would also have acted to discourage elaborately dressed stonework above the level of the ground floor[26]. The external walls of upper stories consequently generally comprised a rubble mixture covered with a layer of *intonaco*[27]. In the *quattrocento*, it was still forbidden to build *sporti* at a height of less than six *braccia* and, on request, the Podestà would enforce the removal of any under five *braccia*[28]. However, with both the rise of internal stairs and the easing of competition for ground space following the Black Death, the incidence of new *sporti* probably declined. Extant ones, however, would have remained in place, for it was not until a change of taste following the fall of the republic that they were removed *en masse*[29].

In contrast to the absence of cut stone on upper stories, it was frequently used for surfacing ground floor walls, as the prohibition of street furniture and the restrictions on low-placed *sporti* meant that it would have been visible. Indeed, the importance of the appearance of buildings at street level was such that owners of empty plots were even required to wall them off to a height of over two metres[30]. Thus, it was the attention paid to the exposed

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[22] The strikingly-painted *sporti* on *Palazzo* Antella of the 1560s were not the first to be positioned there, for they replaced older "sporti antichi e brutti"; Agostino Lapini, *Diario fiorentino*, p. 147.

[23] Gaye (ed.), *Carteggio inedito*, vol. 1, p. 443. *Volte* which ran above urban streets were fined at the rate of 12 denari per square *braccia*; *ibid.*

[24] "...Additum est M.°CCC.°XVIIII°...die XX.° martii: Et quod nullus in civitate Florentie construat vel hedificet aut teneat aliquod tectum de lastris, tegulis vel assidibus propre terram per quinque bracchia, mensuranda a terra ad stillicidum ipsius tecti"; Caggese (ed.), *Statuto del podestà dall'anno 1325*, book four, rubric XLIV, p. 339.

[25] Giovanni Villani, *Nuova Cronica*, vol. 3, book twelve, chapter ninety-two, p. 193. The extent of these fines implies that instead of removing hundreds of *sporti*, the authorities settled for the regular revenue they raised.

[26] Friedman, "Palaces and the Street in Late-Medieval and Renaissance Italy", pp. 87-88.

[27] The specifications of a house constructed for the Del Bene during the *trecento* show that both the internal and external walls were plastered; Sanpaolesi, "Un progetto di costruzione", p. 265. *Palazzo* Salviati {22} and Giandonati both show how fictive ashlar stone work was incised onto *intonaco* to give the impression of cut stone, at a fraction of the cost. The coarse infill below can be seen where the *intonaco* has since fallen off {25}.

[28] Kluch (ed.), *Statuta Populi et Communis Florentiae*, vol. 2, book four, rubric LXIII, p. 429.

[29] Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina*, vol. 1, pp. 48-50. However, as early as 1363 the consuls of the *Calimala* ordered that the walls of houses facing the Piazza del Duomo should be stripped of their *sporti* and evenly plastered to a height of sixteen *braccia*; Braunfels, *Mittelalterliche Stadtbaukunst*, document 7, p. 253.

[30] "Pro maiori pulcritudine civitatis Florentie, statutum et provisum est quod omnes et singuli habentes casolaria in civitate Florentie intra muros civitatis teneantur et debeant remurare vel claudere ipsa casolaria iuxta viam usque ad altitudinem quattuor bracchiorum"; Caggese (ed.), *Statuto del podestà dall'anno 1325*, book four, rubric LXV, p. 353.

ground level masonry of medieval houses and not the often slapdash appearance of their upper floors, now usually denuded of their original external fixtures and plaster, which best demonstrates the imperative for visual uniformity in Florentine architecture {23}.

The interior of houses with wooden superstructures on their façades would have received little daylight from the street. Although large window frames were placed on house fronts, the paucity of light they received would have rendered them as valuable for airing as for illuminating the apartments[31]. The windows themselves were held in wooden frames[32]. Few were glazed, most held only a stretched piece of oiled cloth[33]. The access of light was an important issue and needed to be maximised wherever possible[34]. As streets were often dark and narrow, it was important to ensure the good access of light to the rear of a building. Courtyards and light wells were therefore not just confined to the city's larger houses, they were standard in even the smallest of properties, as is shown by the grey-coloured areas on the maps in Chapter Two[35]. These maps show which areas would originally have been open to the sky. Several open spaces have since been built over, but their position can still be established using a combination of physical and documentary evidence[36]. We can also infer from the universal need for light wells that any interference with the light reaching a neighbour's property was a serious issue[37], which could easily lead to litigation[38]. Another

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[31] See also Friedman, "Palaces and the Street", p. 81. The presence of shutters on the small ground floor windows would have only further reduced the access to the building of the little light that did reach street level.

[32] Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina*, vol. 1, p. 122.

[33] In 1471, while improving his house in Borgo Santa Croce (no. 18), Lorenzo di Matteo Morelli ordered "1° ~~finestra~~ telaio da finestra inpannata...per 1ª finestra di sala e per 1° telaio da una finestra di sala per sotto la meza finestra del vetro tutti inpanati..."; *GPA* 137, fol. 54*r*. For another example, see footnote 48 on page 163.

[34] Speaking of his palace in Pienza, Pius II wrote "if, as some think, the first charm of a house is light, surely no house could be preferred to this one, which...lets in abundant light not only through outside windows but through inside ones looking on the inner court and distributes it even down to the storerooms and the cellar"; *Secret Memoirs of a Renaissance Pope*, p. 276. No Florentine house could match the setting of this palace, but many would also have been designed to maximise the intake of available light.

[35] The near universality of *cortile* and light wells, even in single-bay properties, can perhaps best be seen in illustration 4, as only very few of the houses it shows had been aggregated at the time the map was created.

[36] The areas marked on the maps which were judged to have been *cortile* are limited to the properties to which I gained access and are very probably an underestimation of the original extent of courtyards and light wells. Many of these spaces survived until relatively recently; the owner of property no. 7 told me that he had roofed over the *cortile* in that building as late as the 1960s, to create more space for displaying merchandise.

[37] In 1440 Lorenzo di Bartolo Guidi's renovations to a *bottega* in the parish of San Tommaso were made conditional of him not denying light to the adjacent workshop: "dobbiala anchonciare chome a noi piace, riservando la finestra che dà luce ala bottegha dove sta Choppo e Giovanni di Giudo setaiuoli a minute, ogni altre chose possiamo acchoncare a nostro piacimento"; Archivio degli Innocenti, *Estranei* 589, fol. 67*v*. For similar cases, see the property division contract on page 88 and that mentioned by Alessandra Strozzi; *Lettere di una gentildonna fiorentina*, p. 38.

[38] In 1487, Bernardo Rinieri went to the Podestà to force Marco Parente, his "vicino a muro chomune" to remove a window which overlooked Rinieri's courtyard; *CRS* San Francesco 95, *filza* 212, fol. 83*r*.

feature common to all types of houses were water wells. Schiaparelli dates their appearance only from the 1330s, but already by the fifteenth century, it appears that substantially more properties in the area had a well in their courtyards than did not[39].

The exact internal layout of these houses is perhaps the hardest aspect to establish, as it has been subject to the most change. Aside from the remaining physical evidence, the best indication as to the usage of rooms is to be found in the inventories of the *Notarile* and *Magistrato dei Pupilli*. These documents were created to record the subject's possessions and in which rooms in the house they were to be found[40]. By analysing the contents of each room one can deduce much about how it was used and how it differed from those around it. In terms of housing typology these inventories show that houses of all sizes were generally based on a common template[41]. Even the smallest properties with just one internal wall would always be split into the two basic types of room: the *sala* and the *camera*.

The degree to which the above-mentioned physical attributes were common to most properties shows that the houses of Leon Nero were characterised more by their similarity to one another than by their differences. The universality of courtyards, wells and specific room types meant that the most significant feature by which houses could be differentiated was merely the scale on which they were built, for the smaller properties generally incorporated most of the features of the large *palazzi*[42]. The general homogeneity of houses also meant that there was little physical difference between those dedicated as clan residences and others which were generally leased out. Thus, given the physical similarity of most houses, it was the prolonged habitation of clan residences as much as their particular features which defined their clannishness. Given the overall similarity of properties, it is understandable that the physical features which differentiated a house from those around it were carefully nurtured and preserved, as was demonstrated in the passage from Giovanni di Paolo Morelli's will cited above in footnote 1 on page 128.

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[39] Schiaparelli, *La casa fiorentina*, vol. 1, pp. 76-77. Each well is indicated on the maps at the end of Chapter Two with the letter 'P'.

[40] Kent Lydecker proposed that the order in which rooms appear in the inventories can indicate the layout of the house; *The Domestic Setting of the Arts*, pp. 14 *ff*. While this is true in theory, it remains problematic to translate the inventories into a house which can be conceived in three dimensions in the absence of an accurate plan.

[41] A standard house might be described as having "salis, cameris, palchis, tecto, curia, volta, puteo, terrena et aliis suis hedificiis et pertinentiis". A larger property could also have a *lodia*, *stabulo* or *coquinis*.

[42] Schiaparelli also emphasises that houses of differing sizes were "tuttavia disposte internamente con una certa uniformità", *La casa fiorentina*, vol. 1, p. 5.

The overall appearance of Florentine houses in the fifteenth century was therefore largely determined by their past and those who altered them would have done little to eradicate the physical evidence of that past. This was because a house and the site on which it stood provided the embodiment of its residents' collective past[43]. Houses were the repository of their inhabitants' civic identity and anybody rebuilding their residence would certainly have been mindful of this. Indeed, people built as much to commemorate the site on which their house stood as for their own personal utility. Houses and residents were bound by a symbiotic relationship in which the preservation and enhancement of the property both ensured its patron's memorialisation and honoured his predecessors. All construction work on them would therefore have been driven by the knowledge that a family's standing was both derived from and contributory to the perception of its domicile. Rebuilding therefore had weighty connotations, because it constituted a public attempt to manipulate the civic perception of its patron. Successful renovation would naturally bring praise. However, more significant is the fact that those who tried to build but failed were greeted not with indifference, but with censure, for this shows the very gravity of the venture[44].

The Practice of Construction in the Quarter of Santa Croce

It has been claimed that during the fifteenth century Florence experienced a 'building boom'[45]. However, not only is it doubtful that anything spanning a century can be described in such explosive terms, the word 'boom' also implies a sudden and complete change. Unfortunately the lack of knowledge concerning the scale of housing construction in the preceding era must rule out such a notion. This is not to dispute that a considerable amount of domestic reconstruction work was undertaken during the *quattrocento*, but just to point out that until more is known about its extent in the *trecento*, little can be said to quantify the change it underwent in the following century[46]. The fact that late medieval Florentine housing can still be described as "anonymous"[47] is entirely due to the failure of modern

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[43] The Florentine sense of the past was particularly acute when dealing with houses. One member of the Tedaldi kept a giant stone from his ruined ancestral tower in his house and another resident of Leon Nero declared his house to have been in his family for two centuries: "la quale s'è data a tutte le graveze pe' mia anticiesori: è stata nostra anni 200"; F. W. Kent, "Quattrocento Florentine Taste in Palaces", footnotes nos. 4 and 10. I am grateful to Professor Kent for providing me with a copy of this article. See also his *Household and Lineage*, p. 230.

[44] Bartolomeo Barbadori was considered as having failed himself by not completing his palace; Antonio Manetti, *Vita di Filippo Brunelleschi*, p. 103. Filippo Strozzi, Lorenzo de' Larioni, Giovanni Rucellai, Giuliano Gondi, Bono Boni and Benedetto Galilei (see below) were also unsuccessful in finishing their new palaces.

[45] Richard Goldthwaite first applied the term in "The Florentine Palace as Domestic Architecture", p. 977.

[46] Little has changed in the state of literature since 1975, when Sinding-Larsen noted the lack of a study of the typology of *trecento* domestic architecture; "A tale of two cities", p. 163.

[47] Goldthwaite, "The Florentine Palace as Domestic Architecture", p. 984.

architectural scholarship to acquaint itself with it. Brenda Preyer however, has recently demonstrated that the style of domestic architecture prevailing at the outset of the *quattrocento* was in fact still being employed well into the latter half of the century[48]. Other similar examples are no doubt still extant, but until there is a keener understanding of the range of styles employed in fifteenth-century domestic architecture, these houses are unlikely to be able to shed their anonymity. Therefore by basing the 'boom' theory on the emergence of conspicuous renaissance palaces in the fifteenth century, Goldthwaite has misrepresented both the diffusion of the *all'antica* style and the exclusivity of its use in domestic building work of the period. Until more is known about the full stylistic variety of Florentine domestic architecture in the fifteenth century, any attempt to quantify it is therefore bound to be questionable. As scholarship currently stands, fifteenth-century domestic architecture *is* renaissance architecture and so strong is the desire of architectural historians to identify the mid-to-late fifteenth century exclusively with the *all'antica* style that it has been difficult to countenance the concurrent use of any other style in Florence[49]. Thus, although the literature of Florentine architectural history is still largely based on *Stilkritik*, the various styles employed have actually yet to be fully established. To draw a parallel, Neri di Bicci and Apollonio di Giovanni's work has been accepted as representative of a particular strand of *quattrocento* painting. However, buildings which do not conform to the perceived renaissance style have simply been ignored or misdated. As long as Florentine architectural history is shackled by the exclusive application of stylistic criteria, there is little chance that any building of a divergent style will be able to establish its credentials as being fifteenth-century. Ironically, it is the rigorous application of these criteria that has also led to the frequent omission of the Cocchi-Donati Palace on Piazza Santa Croce from the canon of fifteenth century buildings as it appears to be 'too modern'[50].

The environs of Piazza Santa Croce proved a popular area for domestic reconstruction work in this period, for I have found three examples of important palaces built in Borgo Santa Croce and another two on the piazza itself. The earliest was created by Antonio di Salvestro Serristori in Borgo Santa Croce in what is now property no. 34[51]. It was started in

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[48] "The "chasa overo palagio" of Alberto di Zanobi", pp. 398-399.

[49] A further problem is to establish just what constituted *all'antica* in the minds of fifteenth-century Florentines. One wonders which particular features enabled the following descriptions: "1ª nostra dona al'anticha cholla lumiera" and "1° crocifisso al'anticha"; *Pupilli* 180 (1495-1501), fol. 201*v*.

[50] See footnote 65 on page 140 below.

[51] See footnote 42 on page 64.

the 1430s, but later largely replaced by the present Corsini Palace. In the 1460s Tommaso Spinelli converted houses nos. 38 to 40 into a palace and in the following decade Girolamo di Matteo Morelli rebuilt the house opposite (no. 17)[52]. Two further palaces, the Galilei and the Cocchi-Donati, which both faced directly onto the piazza, will be investigated below.

My concern here however is not just to analyse building style *per se*, but to investigate the motivation, connotations and practice of building itself. Style is of course a contributory feature to any work of domestic architecture, but if we are fully to understand its implications, it should be studied within the context of the role which houses fulfilled. In this section of the chapter I shall therefore examine the broader questions of the significance of reconstructing a house. What caused people to build and what determined how and when they did ? Was rebuilding undertaken for the purpose of making a better home ?

Of the five major reconstruction projects mentioned above, two demonstrate the gamble and potential gain of what I consider to have been speculative construction. The first is the palace built by Benedetto di Giovanni Galilei, the second that of the brothers, Francesco and Borghino di Niccolò Cocchi-Donati. Neither the Galilei nor the Cocchi-Donati were large clans; there were just two families of Galilei in 1427, and neither clan was well-established on the city's political stage[53]. Both *palazzi* were built by younger siblings who had been denied access to build on the established family site and had therefore moved elsewhere[54]. However, rather than undermining the link between a family and the site of its established residence, these two examples in fact show how such ties were initially forged.

Benedetto di Galileo Galilei's Palace

In 1447 Galileo di Giovanni Galilei found himself unable to accommodate his entire family in his house in Via dell'Anguillara[55] and thus the youngest of his three sons, thirty-two-year old Benedetto moved into rented accommodation nearby. By 1451 Galileo was dead and his inheritance had been divided. The two elder sons stayed in the family home and redacted separately from Benedetto, who owned no physical property and remained in rented

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[52] For the Morelli, see page 83 above. The Spinelli Palace is dealt with in detail in Chapter Five.

[53] The fathers of both of these architectural patrons had been the first of their clans to achieve the office of *Gonfaloniere di Giustizia*; Benedetto's father, Galileo in 1445 and Niccolò di Cocco Donati in 1434; San Luigi, *Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, vol. 20, pages 77 and 74 respectively.

[54] A third case, which lies just outside the period of this study, is the *Palazzo* Corsi-Horne, which was also built on a recently-purchased site by the younger brothers of a Corsi family, see Preyer, *Il Palazzo Corsi-Horne*.

[55] The street in which the house stood is mentioned by his son in *Cat.* 912, fol. 153*r*.

accommodation[56]. Five months later, in January 1452, Benedetto bought a house five hundred metres away from his family home for *f* 150. This new property, significantly, stood on the north side of Piazza Santa Croce. Unfortunately, apart from the fact that it was close to Via della Fogna[57], there is no further documentary or physical evidence by which to locate precisely this or the other houses which Benedetto subsequently purchased, as they have all been subsumed in later buildings. Benedetto did not move into his new property immediately, but leased it back to Bartolomeo di Lorenzo, the tailor from whom he had just bought it[58]. A little over a year later, Benedetto bought one of two adjoining houses owned by Niccolò and Alessandro di Antonio da Filicaia, which also faced onto the piazza. The property was described as a *domunculam* in the contract, but it cost the same as Benedetto's first purchase[59]. A mere nine days later he obtained the other adjoining house for a further *f* 150[60]. He did little with these three properties until November 1455, when he obtained a building licence from ser Fiore di ser Tommaso Fiori, who lived next door to Benedetto's property[61]. A little over a month later Benedetto purchased another two houses from ser Fiore, which were sited behind one he already owned in Via della Fogna. Two years later Benedetto was living in his new house with his wife and two young daughters, invoking divine help to finish it[62]. He never did, for his heirs noted that it was still being erected in 1480[63]. Nonetheless, Benedetto's achievement still won him a mention in Benedetto Dei's list of notable families living on the city's piazze in 1470[64]. Thus although

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[56] *Cat.* 698, fol. 758*r*.

[57] *NA* 733, fol. 82*v*. Since 1901 this street has been known as Via da Verrazzano; *Stradario storico*, entry no. 310.

[58] *NA* 732, fol. 45*r*.-45*v*.

[59] *NA* 732, fol. 111*v*. The contract is from May 1453.

[60] *NA* 732, fol. 112*r*. The dates of the purchases given in Benedetto's 1458 *portata* (*Cat.* 801, fol. 957*r*.-957*v*.) do not tally with those given in the notarial contracts.

[61] In the *licentia* ser Fiori is cited as Benedetto's "consorti muro comuni mediante". He gave permission for the "fondandi et murandi de novo quascumque domus etc., iuxta dictum ser Fronte etc., et faciendi seu fieri faciendi muros dicte domus tam equales etc., cum muris domus dicti ser Frontis quam inequales etc., eo modo et forma et prout dicto Benedicto videbitur"; *NA* 733, fol. 64*r*. It is not clear whether obtaining permission was mandatory or merely advisable for those wishing to build, but such acts had been used in Florence since at least the thirteenth century; Masi (ed.), *Formularium Florentinum*, pp. 39-40. However, the licence in itself is unlikely to have freed Benedetto from adhering to the terms of the statute cited in footnote 10 on page 130.

[62] "Della sopradette cinque chase ò fatto di parte l'abitare che io uso familiarmente e quello che mancha, cholla gratia di ddio e chol tenpo, forniremo"; *Cat.* 801, fol. 957*v*.

[63] La detta chasa murò Benedetto nostro padre, che disfece cinque chasette, tre poste in sulla piazza detta e dua nella via della fongnia, e fecie la sopradetta chasa nonistannte uno pezzo di detta chasa è anchora inbastita"; *Cat.* 1004, fol. 131*r*.

[64] "[Piazza] di S. Croce [che vi stanno] Cocchi, Corsi, Galilei et altri"; in Romby (ed.), *Descrizioni e rappresentazioni della città di Firenze*, p. 56.

he did not manage to finish the building, it did bring him the distinction which I contend was his motivation for initiating the project in the first place.

By 1478 Benedetto had fathered a total of six children, but when he started building he had only one daughter, which hardly justified the scale of the enterprise he undertook. It is equally unlikely that the typology of his household had any influence on the style in which he built, although this cannot be established for sure, as the necessary evidence has been absorbed into later buildings. In any case, as we saw in Chapter Two, Florentines tended to move around and adapt their existing houses rather than build new ones when faced with problems of restricted living space. We must look elsewhere for clues to Benedetto's motivation and I believe the best indication is provided by the palace's location. The execution of his father's will had effectively barred Benedetto from the familial home. Yet he was able to turn this to his advantage by moving to and building on a site which was better placed to enhance the reception of an innovative building. Thus, Benedetto found a fresh site on which to construct a new identity for himself and his progeny and although we do not know what the palace looked like, his choice for its site suggests that he would have capitalised on the potential it offered for conspicuous construction.

The Cocchi-Donati Palace

A stone's throw across the piazza from Benedetto's uncompleted house stands another which also remains unfinished: the Cocchi-Donati. Unlike the former, the façade {26} (but precious little else) of the Cocchi-Donati Palace does survive. Yet as the building does not readily yield up the secrets of its origins, the startling originality of its façade has proven misleading to those armed only with critical faculties and they have proceeded to attribute its design to a progression of unlikely architects from whose *oeuvres* its construction date has been deduced[65]. I have little to add to the debate concerning the architect's identity, which in any case lies beyond the bounds of this study[66]. However, there is still much to be said concerning the genesis of the palace which can be of wider use to architectural historians of the fifteenth century.

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[65] A further example of secondary literature produced by the conviction that innovative buildings can only have been produced by the famous is Giampaolo Trotta's *Palazzo Cocchi Serristori*, which shows a disdain for the known evidence matched only by an ability for inventing the improbable. It also includes a catalogue of the guesswork, '*fortuna critica*', which has had to serve as this building's architectural history, pp. 22-26.

[66] Both Marchini in "Aggiunte a Giuliano da Sangallo" and Sanpaolesi in "Le prospettive architettoniche", make interesting contributions to the stylistic understanding of the palace, but it was the article by Iodoco del Badia in *Raccolta delle migliori fabbriche* which first established some of the salient facts concerning the palace's origin.

To understand the palace's origins it is necessary to go back to the 1420s and the two brothers, Giovanni and Niccolò di Cocco Donati. Niccolò's family house was in Via de' Vagellai[67], but from 1427 he actually lived in a property belonging to the heirs of Benvenuto di Niccolò Benvenuti, which he held as security for a loan[68]. By 1447 Niccolò was dead and his sons had moved to a nearby Peruzzi property which was also held in lieu of an outstanding loan. Throughout this period however, they hung onto the ownership of their little family house[69]. It was separated from the domicile of Niccolò's elder brother Giovanni by a stable, which the two had held in common[70]. In time, Giovanni's property passed to his son Niccolò, known as Lioncino, and it appears that after 1458 Lioncino also bought out his cousins' shares in the stable[71]. He, however died childless, and the house and stable were bequeathed to all the male Donati, who then awarded their inheritance collectively to Niccolò di Donato[72]. By 1469 Niccolò di Donato and his uncle, Jacopo, held Niccolò di Cocco's erstwhile house in common[73] and had plans to convert both the houses and the stable into a new property running along the south side of Via de' Vagellai[74], or as the street came to be called, 'la via de' Chochi'[75].

In 1463 a second Cocchi-Donati building project was initiated when Niccolò di Cocco's younger sons Francesco and Borghino jointly bought a property from the Badia Fiesolana for *f* 300[76]. It stood between Via de' Vagellai and Via dell'Anguillara on the site of the Roman amphitheatre and the 1175 city walls. More significantly, it faced onto Piazza Santa Croce[77]. It was clearly purchased for the purpose of renovation and I propose that

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[67] This is the present Via Torta and not the Via de' Vagellai which runs from Via de' Benci to Piazza Mentana.

[68] *Cat.* 69, fol. 281*r*. In 1430 Niccolò explained that he had "una chasa dove ò mie masserizie che, per non chapervi, non l'abito"; *Cat.* 353, fol. 285*r*.

[69] As can be seen in the sons' joint *portata* of 1447; Cat. 662, fol. 908*v*.

[70] "Uno mezzo chasolare per non diviso chon Niccholò di Chocco…il quale tenghono per i stale"; *Cat.* 399, fol. 297*r*.

[71] The stable was still held in common in 1458; *Cat.* 809, fol. 321*r*. However, an agreement between Lioncino's heirs also mentions property which he "acquisiverit ab aliis consortibus"; *NA* 14715, fol. 7*r*. This can only refer to the stable, as the property in Lioncino's estate is subsequently always dealt with as one physical unit; see *Cat.* 912, fol. 392*r*.

[72] See footnotes 74 and 80 below. This Niccolò was the eldest grandson of Niccolò di Cocco. See page 196.

[73] See footnote 82 on page 142 below.

[74] "$^{6}/_{7}$ d'1ª chasa…nel '58 per Nicholò di Giovanni di Chocho [Lioncino] e per testamento del detto Nicholò fu lasciata a tutta la chasa e lle ragoni di ciaschuno e a t<utt>° Jac° sono suto data Nicholò [di Donato] perchè insieme cholla sopra detta si possi achonciare per loro abitazione"; *Cat.* 912, fol. 392*r*.

[75] *Dec. Rep.* 13, fol. 61*r*. Entry 38 in the *Stradario storico* erroneously attributes this name to Via dell'Anguillara.

[76] *NA* 5046, *busta* 1463, fols. 40*r*.-41*r*. The contract is printed in Trotta, *Palazzo Cocchi Serristori*, pp. 87-88.

[77] An ground plan of the house dating from before its late-nineteenth-century rebuild is presented as plate 27 in Montigny and Famin, *Architecture Toscane*.

Francesco and Borghino started building shortly after. Although they were living *a comune*, as Borghino had died by the time the next *portate* were collated in 1469, his estate is filed separately from his brother's. Both their tax returns from that year show a determination to see the project finished and this has usually been interpreted as signifying that building work was yet to begin[78]. However, there is nothing in the wording to imply that construction was not already in progress and in his will of 12 March 1469 (which antedates the *portate* by five months) Borghino makes it clear that work had indeed already commenced and that it was still on-going[79]. Thus the late 1460s saw not one, but two construction projects by the Cocchi-Donati on this island of land at the west end of Piazza Santa Croce.

As mentioned above, in 1469 Francesco di Niccolò passed his share of the physical property of Lioncino's estate to his nephew Niccolò di Donato. The actual cash equivalent of this gift was so low that two of the other co-heirs simply presented their share to Niccolò gratis[80]. Significantly however, Francesco's portion was offset against a debt of *f* 90, a figure way above the value of the entire *casolare*. Moreover, Borghino also had debts with Niccolò di Donato which were taken into account when he transferred his share of the property to him[81]. By 1469 Borghino and Francesco had also assigned Niccolò di Donato their share of their original family house[82]. No reason is given for the gift, but it would certainly have simplified the logistics of Niccolò's own building project. The gift also indicates that Francesco and Borghino had cut their ties with their ancestral home. Even though neither of them had ever really lived there, it should not be thought that this move was undertaken lightly and the brothers must have expected some advantage from it. Of greater interest is the possibility that these gifts were actually made in lieu of monies already advanced to Francesco and Borghino for building work undertaken on their own palace between 1463

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[78] Del Badia surmised from the *portate* that the building was constructed between 1469 and 1474; *Raccolta delle migliori fabbriche*, p. 3. Francesco's *portata* of 1469 reads, "½ chasa per non divisa chol Borghino p<ost>° in sulla piaza di Santa Croce, la quale chomperai da' monaci della Badia di Fiesole p<er> achonciari per mia abitazione quando <a> dio piacia"; *Cat.* 913, fol. 393*v*. The *portata* for Borghino's estate mentions that it was hoped to "...achonciarla per loro abitazione quando si potrà"; *Cat.* 913, fol. 1025*r*.

[79] "Item considerans et animadvertens idem testator quod iamdiu ipse et Francischus eius frater familiariter et insimul habitaverunt et insimul et comuniter emerunt quandam domum magnam positam supra platea Sancte Crucis quam etiam hedificari fecerunt et faciunt comunibus expensis..."; *NA* 14714, fol. 164*r*. He also notes that the two had promised one another, "quod supervivens ex eis habeat integre domum"; *ibid.*

[80] In February 1468 Matteo di Zanobi gave his share for free; *NA* 14714, fols. 85*v*.-86*r*. A few days later his brother Bartolomeo sold Niccolò his part, but for a mere *f* 8; *ibid.*, fol. 87*r*. Barone di Niccolò presented Niccolò with his portion in August of that year; *ibid.*, fol. 125*v*.

[81] *NA* 14714, fol. 144*v*.

[82] "Nel catasto del '58 fu portata per Franc° e Borghino, la quale i detti ànno data a Nicholò di messer Donat° perchè se l'achonci, è per sua inabititi"; *Cat.* 912, fol. 392*r*.

and 1469. Such support would be understandable, for if the venture were successful, it would reflect well on all involved[83]. Indeed, it would not have been surprising if the support the Cocchi-Donati offered to one another extended to financial help, not only because of the importance of completing what had been started, but also because Borghino and Francesco seem to have been financially drained by the late 1460s, probably as a result of their architectural patronage.

The sapping of the brothers' finances provides a good indication of the extent of the work achieved by 1469. Following Borghino's death in 1469, his brother Jacopo and nephew Antonio di Donato refused their share of his estate[84]. This need not have been the snub it appears, for it may have enabled the other heirs to receive a more manageable estate[85]. Nevertheless, it does indicate that the overall value of the inheritance was unlikely to be substantial. Francesco di Niccolò was also impoverished by the undertaking and in a division between the various heirs of Niccolò di Donato in 1474, it was agreed that possession of the palace would pass to three of his nephews, messer Antonio, Giovanni and Zanobi di Donato[86]. Thus after a mere decade of ownership, the still incomplete palace passed from his hands[87].

A *compromissum inter frates* from October 1489 indicates that there were four parties to the 1474 *lodo*: Francesco and his three nephews. It also shows that the palace was then valued at *f* 1750[88]. Each of the three nephews had a share of *f* 400, but the eldest, messer Antonio, had additionally raised an extra *f* 550 to recompense Francesco directly[89]. However, because the 1474 *lodo* split the ownership of the palace unequally between the three nephews, Antonio had the 1489 agreement drawn up, 'to remove any possible points

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[83] See the numerous examples cited in F. W. Kent, "Più superba de quello di Lorenzo", *passim*.

[84] Jacopo and Antonio's repudiations date from December 1476; *Ripudie* 20, fols. 171*v*. and 193*r*. respectively.

[85] Kuehn, "Law, Death and Heirs in the Renaissance", pp. 499-500.

[86] The division is mentioned in the nephews' joint *portata* of 1480; "...la detta [casa] ci fu agiudicata per lodo dato tra noi e Franc° [di Niccolò] Cocchi nostro zio, carta per Nastagio Vespucci sotto dì . . . . 1474, e a detto Franc° pagamo *f* 550 come troverete per detto lodo, noi essergli obrighati dare per resto di detta casa"; *Cat.* 1003, fol. 77*r*. The full text of the agreement is unfortunately not to be found in the cartularies of Nastagio Vespucci.

[87] Its cornice consequently remains unfinished to this day. As Alberti knowingly pointed out, "scarcely any large building is ever completed by the same man as begins it"; *On the Art of Building*, book nine, chapter eleven.

[88] "...Item considerantes qualiter domus habitationis dictorum fratrum [Francesco and Borghino], posita in civitate Florentie super platea Sancte Crucis, ad dictum dominum Antonium et fratres pervenit pro extimatione et valuta florenorum mille septingentorum quinquaginta de sigillo..."; *NA* 14723, fol. 220*v*.

[89] Del Badia thought that the nephews had acted collectively and that there were thus only two parties to the agreement; *Raccolta delle migliori fabbriche*, p. 3. This led him to conclude that the property was valued at only *f* 1100, whereas the true figure is *f* 1750; an increase of *f* 1450 on its purchase price a mere decade earlier.

of disagreement' concerning the apportionment of these three shares and in particular to hinder his brother Giovanni from claiming more than his fair share (a third) of the *f* 1200 which they had collectively raised to compensate Francesco[90].

One issue not explained by the 1489 agreement is to whom the money for the three shares of *f* 400 went. My guess is that as the contract was not an *emptio* but a *laudum*, the transfer of ownership rights it deals with were not actually being offered for sale, but merely reallocated. This suggests that the palace was in reality awarded to the three in lieu of debts which Francesco had made with their father during the 1460s. If these debts had totalled *f* 1200 the sum of *f* 550 mentioned in the text would merely have been the difference between the valuation of the palace and the total owed. *f* 550 was therefore simply the amount of cash which changed hands as a result of the contract. However, none of this can be established for sure without further documentation.

When Francesco di Niccolò came to write his will in March 1479, he made no mention of his erstwhile palace. Indeed, he is one of the few Florentines of the period to make his daughters his universal heirs[91]. It should also be noted that he added provisions stipulating to whom the estate should pass if his daughters were to refuse it[92]. This combination of testamentary provisions is unusual and suggests that he was aware that his legacy was of little value. It seems therefore that although the brothers had managed to start and nearly finish a palace on a new and prominent site, it cost them not only much of their wealth, but eventually the building itself, to advance the project as far as they did[93].

There is no simple equation by which the amount spent on construction can be calculated from the valuation of a palace, but it is fair to assume that by the time the building passed to their nephews in 1474, Borghino and Francesco had invested considerably more than the

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[90] "...et ad tollendum lites que oriri possent et ex iustis causis moti, laudamus et declaramus quod dictus Iohannes dictam tertiam partem possit petere super dictam domum ad rationem et extimationem florenorum milleducentorum de sigillo et inde supra in eo quod plus valeret domus ipsa ad dictum dominum Antonium pertinere..."; *NA* 14723, fol. 220*v*.

[91] *NA* 14719, fol. 47*r*. The will describes Francesco as "corpore languens" and as he was dead by the time new *portate* were drawn up in July 1480, it is likely to have been his last testament.

[92] He named four religious institutions in order of preference as alternative heirs; *NA* 14719, fol. 47*v*.

[93] Other patrons who also had to surrender their new palaces were Bono Boni, Lorenzo de' Larioni and even Niccolò di Donato Donati, who was constrained to sell his new construction in Via de' Vagellai to Donato di Giovanni de' Benci in 1489 for *f* 1200 *larghi*, *f* 400 *larghi* of which was advanced by the Medici bank; *NA* 14723, fols. 206*v*.-207*r*.

f 1750 at which it was then valued[94]. This suggests that the bulk of the construction work took place during the 1460s. Yet can this be reconciled with the current appearance of the building ? It is of course possible that the present façade dates from a later rebuild. However, if it does, we can be sure that it was not erected in the fifteenth century, for the subsequent management of the property was thoroughly inconducive to the undertaking of any further building work.

After 1474 the three new co-owners of the palace, Antonio, Giovanni and Zanobi di Donato Cocchi-Donati pledged the house as collateral for the dowry of their mother, Agostina. Before marrying messer Donato di Niccolò, Agostina had borne a son, Piero, to her previous husband, Danielo degli Alberti. Agostina's dowry was not restituted at the time of messer Donato's death in 1465[95] and was still outstanding in 1492[96]. Agostina then passed the right to her dowry to Piero, for Giovanni di messer Donato is subsequently noted as owing him *f* 400, which was the value of his share in the palace established in the 1474 *lodo* and confirmed in the agreement of 1489. This money was actually paid to Piero by Adovardo di Carlo Rucellai, who was the father-in-law of Giovanni's brother, messer Antonio[97]. In return Rucellai took over the palace, leasing it out from November 1494 for *f* 30 *larghi* a year to an Aretine, Michele di messer Benedetto. By this time messer Antonio was dead and his widow, Pippa and their children had moved into her father's house. In the meantime Giovanni di messer Donato rented a house near Ponte Vecchio and his brother Zanobi went to live in the parish of San Felicità[98]. Ironically enough, as we saw in the previous chapter, the lease Adovardo drew up forbade the tenant from claiming any building expenses on the palace from the lessor; he clearly thought that enough money had already been spent on the property[99].

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[94] See footnote 30 on page 158 for a further discussion of the cost and valuation of domestic architecture.

[95] Although no such clause appears in messer Donato's will (*NA* 14713, fols. 20*r*.-21*r*.), it was common to bequeath an annuity to one's widow if she did not reclaim her dowry and remained in the testator's home. One particularly detailed example comes from Lorenzo di Spinello Spinelli's will of 1382; "Item reliquit dictus testator dictae dominae Filippae uxori suae dominam usufructuaria omnium et singularum bonorum ipsius testatoris et stantia et habitationem domum et in domibus ipsius testatoris existenten tam in civitate quam in comitatu Florentie donec et quocusque domina Filippa vixerit et steterit vidua et honesta in domus ipsius testatoris cum ipsius domine Filippe et dicti testatoris filiis et dotes suas non petierat"; *NA* 18945, fol. 36*r*. See also footnote 163 on page 90.

[96] *NA* 14725, fol. 19*r*.

[97] This is all recorded in Giovanni's 1495 portata; *Dec. Rep.* 12, fol. 537*v*.

[98] *Dec. Rep.* 13, fol. 323*r*., *NA* 2446, fol. 97*v*. and *Dec. Rep* 13, fol. 511*r*. respectively.

[99] See footnote 7 on page 104.

The vicissitudes of the palace from the mid-1470s until the end of the century must discount the possibility of any further building work being undertaken in this period. It could still be argued that the façade is a product of the *cinquecento*. However, it lacks the monumentality characteristic of buildings from the period of the *Palazzo* Bartolini-Salimbeni or the *Palazzo* Corsini in Borgo Santa Croce. Moreover, why use stylistic criteria to reduce it to being a conservative building from the sixteenth-century when it can perfectly well be documented as an outstanding example of mid-fifteenth century architecture ?

The priorities shown by the construction of the Galilei and Cocchi-Donati palaces highlight the innovative features of building in the *quattrocento*. Both were started by the younger brothers of families whose surname was still in the process of being established[100]. This underlines the degree to which their social identity was still being forged – a fact which emphasises their need for the social benefits afforded by the patronage of domestic architecture. As these men had been denied the chance to build on their 'home site' and were thus unable to draw on its *genius loci*, they had to impose their identity onto a new location which lacked links with their past. In itself, the act of settling on a new site necessitated building work to graft a new identity onto it and to erase the legacy of its previous occupants. Yet, more significant than the use of fresh sites was their position in relation to the existing settlement area of the respective clans. Neither Benedetto Galilei nor the Cocchi-Donati brothers moved far from their enclave, but once 'freed' from any of the physical restrictions imposed by their ancestral territory, they headed for prestigious sites in open spaces, which best enabled them to reflect the new priorities of *quattrocento* architecture. Both sets of patrons thus made a virtue of necessity by building houses facing onto Piazza Santa Croce. This was the result of the high priority set on the conspicuous display of civic identity in the fifteenth century. The benefits derived from the architectural unity of the new *all'antica* style were also most effective when employed in an environment in which they would be clearly visible. *All'antica* domestic architecture is characterised by its various features being harmonically related to one another to create a unified whole. This quality in itself had little to do with the building's functionality, but everything to do with its appearance and public perception. This contrasted it with the generic, repetitive typology of *trecento* domestic architecture and further heightened its conspicuousness. As this harmony was also primarily a visual quality, it was best served by being employed in a context in

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[100] In documents, Benedetto's father was generally referred to just as 'magister Galileo' and the surname of Francesco and Borghino was a combination of their grandfather and great-grandfather's first names.

which it could be most effective. Thus these and many other patrons commissioned houses to be built on prominent sites in a new, regularised manner which maximised the visual potential offered by the position of their site[101]. Moreover, as houses in this period were rebuilt with internal fittings, their façades were freed from functional, but obtrusive encumbrances. This enabled the upper stories of the façade also to incorporate new stylistic features. The Cocchi-Donati Palace demonstrates this perfectly. Its ground floor retains unchanged the physical material of the Peruzzi *botteghe* (and probably the 1175 city walls), yet its upper stories were entirely refashioned to demonstrate its patrons' architectural discernment.

Conclusion

In the only article to deal seriously with the issue of style and function in Florentine domestic architecture of the period, Richard Goldthwaite maintains that the *all'antica* palaces of the *quattrocento* were designed to follow the specifications of a new patrician family type which was then emerging[102]. However, as we saw in Chapter One, there was a general continuity of family typology throughout this period. Goldthwaite's data was largely drawn from account books and thus his ideas on the dissolution of clans might have been inferred from a loosening of the links of financial collectivity which had occurred between the families of certain wealthy mercantile clans in the *trecento*. This, however, had little impact on residential arrangements, for since the *dugento*, even in instances in which property remained collectively owned, each family group had still possessed its own individual domicile[103]. Admittedly, the fluctuations between the various household types were frequent, but they did not indicate a fundamental shift in the overall shape of the process of family evolution. Changes in Florentine family structure were like the march of the seasons; inevitable and indeed necessary. If judged from too short a time frame these changes appear mono-directional, even irrevocable. Yet when they are viewed over a longer period their cyclical nature can be clearly seen. Richard Goldthwaite simply had too narrow

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[101] The importance of the perceptibility of palaces was first suggested to me by Brenda Preyer. It is also manifest in the Antinori, Gianfigliazzi, Gondi, Pazzi, Strozzi and Tornabuoni palaces, which were all built on broad streets which had replaced the pre-1175 city walls. The Busini-Bardi, Corsi-Horne, Medici and Ricasoli were all positioned on the site of the 1175 walls, the Pitti was constructed on the main road south to Rome, the Lenzi in a sizeable piazza and the Rucellai at the end of a long street. The Medici, Antinori and Bardi-Busini were also all built with viewing-points which are further enhanced by the presence of slight curves in the street in which they stand, which enables them not only to be seen in their entirety, but also from a considerable distance.

[102] Goldthwaite, "The Florentine Palace as Domestic Architecture", *passim*.

[103] In the late *dugento*, "even when residential property was held jointly, it was allocated as separate housing units"; Lansing, *The Florentine Magnates*, p. 102.

a view of this process and therefore exaggerated the significance of each swing. The fundamental stability of household typology throughout this period suggests that it was not responsible for any changes in domestic architectural style. Indeed, each household phase was simply too short-lived for it to have been the basis on which a palace could be designed.

Most of the families living in *all'antica* palaces were largely similar to the city's other patrician households. When there were differences between them, it was more likely for the former to tend towards a more compound typology. This was because the motivation to create conspicuous buildings also tended to make them larger and thus they could accommodate more, rather than fewer clan members[104]. The various apartments in the Strozzi Palace were all clearly separate from one another; each family had its own entrance. Yet to see this as an indication of independence is to overlook the fact that the palace was built at a time when most other patrician families would have resided in and been the outright owners of entire houses of their own[105]. Numerous examples in Chapter Two show us that accommodation patterns were both fluid and generally pragmatic; families fitted into their houses rather than constructing houses which fitted around them. The architectural innovations of the period can be explained neither as the result nor the cause of any development in household typology and should therefore be interpreted in the light of what they actually are: stylistic changes.

Another aspect of continuity in these new palaces is demonstrated by the types of rooms and spaces which they contained. When compared with other houses, there was little or no difference in the overall number, descriptions or the uses to which rooms were put. Some palaces might have had separate suites of rooms, but this was more a product of their size than of their design. The reason for the relative lack of innovation in this respect when compared with the striking changes which the façades underwent is that room typology was simply not one of the priorities driving new palatial construction. There is therefore an understandably close parallel between the overall stability of the household process in this period and the constancy of the type of rooms to be found in patrician houses. The interiors of *all'antica* palaces were characterised by greater regularity than was to be found in the older patrician houses, but this in itself did not make them any more 'suitable' for habitation

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[104] Tommaso Spinelli's palace housed a broader spread of clan members than had his previous house; see page 92.

[105] Other examples of palaces with multiple residences built in this period are noted in Goldthwaite, "The Florentine Palace as Domestic Architecture", p. 998, footnote 58.

by a particular type of household. Symmetry, harmony and regularity had long been aims of urban legislation and planning[106]. Admittedly *Palazzo* Strozzi takes the predilection for symmetry to its ultimate goal, but our appreciation of this is helped by the fact that it has retained its original appearance. A large degree of the irregularity of medieval houses is a result of the frequency and ease with which they have been reconfigured over the centuries without needing to be entirely rebuilt. Such alterations may have made these buildings less aesthetically pleasing to modern architectural historians, but they greatly increased their utility to medieval Florentines and it shows the fundamental flexibility of their design. This does not mean that their original appearance was entirely devoid of order, merely that it has frequently failed to survive. The *all'antica* houses of the period however were far less easy to integrate into their neighbourhood, as they were so conspicuously different from the houses around them. Yet of course it was intended that they should stand out and their conspicuous regularity both distinguished them from earlier residential buildings and made it difficult to integrate them into an existing clan enclave. The rigorous application of all this symmetry was itself just a means of creating a conspicuous building and not an end in itself. Most of the architectural innovations present in early renaissance palaces had the primary goal of boosting the building's prominence within the city and consequently the innovations in their configuration were concentrated in their façades, their most public feature.

Large-scale rebuilding work was generally motivated by the desire to celebrate the site and to commemorate the family's habitation of it in as conspicuous and honourable manner as possible. Site was the *sine qua non* of prestigious construction. The house standing upon it could be old, crumbling or small, but the site itself could never be seen as fundamentally unworthy of occupation by its owners. The site provided both the justification for its habitation and for any reconstruction work to be undertaken. No symbol as instrumental as a house in the creation of a family's civic persona could become 'inappropriate'; it remained *the* most fundamental aspect of the family's perceivable identity. The cost to Giovanni Rucellai and Filippo Strozzi of buying up houses prior to building their palaces may have been extortionate[107], but for those who had access to it, only building on their ancestral site could justify building at all. This is shown in Lorenzo Strozzi's biography of his father, for

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[106] Various documents in Pampaloni's *Firenze al tempo di Dante* show how regularity was valued during the thirteenth century in the building of walls (document 63), streets (documents 5 and 64) and *piazze* (document 43). For other Tuscan examples, see Braunfels, *Mittelalterliche Stadtbaukunst*, pp. 116 *ff.*

[107] Giovanni Rucellai found the acquisition of his site both difficult and expensive "perchè m'è chonvenuto dare s. 30 per lira, oltre alla faticha del disporre i venditori a vendere (e quasi è stata chosa inpossibile)…"; *Giovanni Rucellai ed il suo Zibaldone*, vol. 1, p. 121.

he stressed that Filippo had wished to build "nel più comodo e più bel sito della città, nel mezzo degli altri suoi Strozzi"[108]. The positioning of the Cocchi-Donati and Galilei palaces on a new site does not contradict this rule, for their construction shows how the link by which a family became identified with a site first came to be established.

The type of building work characterised by the Cocchi-Donati and Galilei palaces was probably the exception, yet it has usually been the sole focus of historians studying architecture in this period. The reason for this is the same for which they were built: their prominence. Indeed, the alleged growth in architectural activity in this period was probably no more than the increased use of a new, more easily-perceivable architectural style. This has probably led to a misinterpretation of the broader nature of construction in the period, for building work which was merely functional, inconspicuous and of little architectural merit has been largely ignored. It is likely that a considerable proportion of reconstruction work in the *quattrocento* did not in fact employ the new *all'antica* style, but rather involved the impromptu reconfiguration of existing buildings in the prevailing manner inherited from the *trecento*. This type of work would have been infrequently documented, and given the difficulty of stylistically differentiating it from that which preceded and followed it, it is difficult to characterise and its very existence even harder to prove. Its origin lay in the desire to enhance a house by increasing its utility, rather than its visibility. It was the type of reconstruction work described by Lionardo di Alamanno Castellani in 1447 as being 'necessary for my comfort'. It cost around *f* 6 and could have constituted more or less anything[109]. Such work only ever involved minor adjustments to a building, but it was probably undertaken quite frequently. Moreover, it underlined the desire of its patron to remain living in his family house. It is preserved in scars buried in walls all around the city and must await more thorough archaeological work before it can be properly characterised and analysed.

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[108] *Vita di Filippo Strozzi il Vecchio scritta da Lorenzo suo figlio*, p. 26. Lorenzo added that Filippo had spent more buying up properties in the area than he would have if the palace had been built elsewhere, *ibid.*

[109] "Ò bisogna d'achonciare in detta chasa per mea chomodità debitare spendere circha di *f* vi o circha"; *Cat.* 666, fol. 391*v*. (pencil pagination). The *ricordanze* of several of those studied here contain references to such work. For an example from the 1440s by Lorenzo di Bartolo Guidi see Archivio degli Innocenti, *Estranei* 591, fol. 2*v*. For Giuliano di Antonio Bartoli's rebuilding work in the 1450s see *Compagnie Religiose soppresse da Pietro Leopoldo* 1385 ins. 5, fol. 11*r*., and 13*r*. Domenico di Giovanni Giugni's expenses from the 1460s are listed in BL, *Acquisti e Doni* 103, fol. 19*v*. (pencil pagination) and Giulianmaria di Jacopo Rinuccini's from between 1480 and 1488 in *Ginori Conti - Rinuccini* 207, fols. 60*r*., 63*r*., 97*r*., 187*r*. Lastly, Lorenzo di Matteo Morelli's expenditure on two properties, from 1478 and 1497 are entered in *GPA* 139, fol. 12*r*. and *GPA* 75/4, fol. 34*v*. respectively.

At the start of this chapter I aimed to identify which physical features made clan residences indispensable to their residents. The answer is probably that they all collectively contributed to the notion of a house which embodied, signified and publicly conveyed the image of its residents. Giovanni di Paolo Morelli wanted his house to remain the same because of the role it played in his memorialisation. To change it would threaten this. By the same token reconstructing a house constituted the conscious manipulation of the civic persona of its patron and would also have been seen in that light. Houses were thus more than mere residences, they were the manifestation of a lineage's past and consequently, when an established family site was reconfigured with a new and honourable house, it brought numerous rewards. It was with an eye to these benefits that the Pope's chief banker, Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli, decided to rebuild his house in Borgo Santa Croce when he returned from Rome in the 1450s and it is to this project that we now turn.

Chapter Five

The Palace of Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli[1]

Tommaso Spinelli's Patronage in Leon Nero

We have seen in Chapter Two that by 1427 the Spinelli had been settled in the *gonfalone* of Leon Nero for at least two generations. Tommaso Spinelli, however was himself seldom resident in the city, as his banking ventures often kept him in Rome and even when he was in Florence, he tended not to occupy his own house (no. 38). Whilst visiting in 1447 he resided in the more spacious dwelling opposite[2] and in the 1450s he stayed in the large palace on the corner of the modern Via de' Benci and Piazza Santa Croce (no. 12), which belonged to his father-in-law, Luigi di Giovanni Peruzzi[3]. Nevertheless, his attachment to his ancestors' neighbourhood remained strong and showed itself in patronage of the local friary of Santa Croce. Tommaso's first recorded gift comes from 1440, when he paid for the area in front of the *Porta del Martello* to be paved, a small roof to be added above it and a fresco of Christ and Saint Thomas to be painted onto the wall nearby[4]. In his *Ricordi* Spinelli emphasised that this gate led into the main cloister from Borgo Santa Croce – the street in which all the Spinelli lived. Indeed it would have been visible from their enclave of

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[1] There exists a small body of work on Tommaso Spinelli's patronage, the extent of which was first brought to light by F. Moisé in *Santa Croce di Firenze*. Gunther and Christel Thiem's analysis concerned both his ecclesiastical and secular architectural activity, but is concerned only with its external decoration; *Toskanische Fassaden-Dekoration*. Howard Saalman's article on Spinelli's patronage covers a broad swathe of issues from a stylistic viewpoint; "Tommaso Spinelli, Michelozzo, Manetti and Rossellino". Lando Bartoli, who restored the palace after the 1966 flood, subsequently produced a pamphlet which provides useful information on the material of the building and a less credible thesis on its design. Some of Bartoli's ideas were adopted by Charles Randall Mack in "Building a Florentine Palace", which contributes little new to the debate despite being dedicated to the building. Lastly, Philip Jacks' recent article makes extensive use of the Spinelli family archive now at Yale University and brings a number of new documents to light; "Michelozzo di Bartolomeo and the *Domus Pulcra*". However, none of the above articles places the palace within its physical context as a constituent part of the Spinelli clan's property in Borgo Santa Croce and they are thus unable to convey the full implications of the various architectural choices shown in its construction. Both Mack and Jacks produce maps of the environs of the palace, which are discussed in Appendix Three below.

[2] In that year Lionardo di Cipriano Spinelli reported house no. 38 as being occupied by "Domenicho di Gheradino Rotini in chonpesizione d'una sua chasa (no. 17) à achomodato Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli mio zio"; *Cat.* 664, fol. 783*r*.

[3] Tommaso had married Milia Peruzzi in 1445; BN, *Carte Passerini* 191 (Spinelli), fol. 19*r*.

[4] "Nell'anno 1440 io feci un tetto fuori la porta del Martello che viene dal lato del Borgo, e lastricata la via dinanzi colla Storia di S. Tommaso quando mette la mano nel costato di Cristo con più altre storie"; Moisé, *Santa Croce*, p. 480. See also The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, Spinelli Archive (hereafter *Spinelli Archive*) box 27, folder 614. The *Porta del Martello* now forms the modern entrance to the cloisters.

houses[5]. The significance of this link is further underlined by the presence just inside this cloister of some tombs of the Spinelli[6]. To commemorate them, Tommaso also built the two-storey *loggia* that stands above this entrance and the portico which extends alongside the northern wall of the refectory {27}[7]. In this same period he also secured himself the patronage of a prestigiously-positioned chapel immediately to the north of the *Cappella Maggiore* at Santa Croce, which had belonged to the Tolosini[8]. In the years that followed he maintained a flow of patronage to the church which he records as costing in total the huge sum of *f* 6820[9]. Gifts, such as missals, plate and vestments were intended for liturgical use, while others enhanced the fabric of the church. Among these are the architecturally-conceived cupboards and benches (*cassapanche*) which are still present in the sacristy {28}. These too date from the 1440s and are decorated with *intarsia* motifs showing the Spinelli family devices.

The summit of this conspicuous charity was surely the second (originally third) cloister, which Tommaso had built in the 1450s {24, 29 & 30}[10]. This structure was a magnificent and large-scale addition to the church complex which Paatz describes as "der zarteste und kühnste, der reichste und heiterste aller Klosterhöfe der Renaissance"[11]. Aside from its striking grace, it is also important for presaging the architectural membering and style of the later Spinelli Palace. There was an extensive use of *sgraffito* decoration in the ground floor arcade, for the base of each spandrel incorporated a foliated design of oak leaves or thistles, the latter being a visible play on the *spini* in the patron's name[12]. Each spandrel also contains

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[5] The friary grounds to the west and south of the Spinelli cloister were severely truncated by the construction of Via Magliabecchi and the Biblioteca Nazionale from 1911-1935; Fanelli, *Firenze: architettura e città*, vol. 1, p. 458. This development however has not changed the relationship of the palace to the *Porta del Martello*. Map no. 1 on page 96 shows how the area was laid out shortly before work on the Biblioteca Nazionale was begun.

[6] "Sepolture che sono rimpetto la porta del Martello dentro…dua sono di tutta la famiglia degli Spinelli del Borgo di Santa Croce"; *Manoscritti* 618, fol. 43*r*.

[7] Moisé, *Santa Croce*, p. 482. This was perhaps to protect the "più altre storie" mentioned in footnote 4 which Tommaso had had painted there. Vasari, who attributes all the painting work to Lorenzo di Bicci (instead of his son Bicci), claims the subject matter inside the cloister was a crucifix with attendant figures; *Lives of the Artists*, vol. 1, p. 196. Both the *loggia* and the portico have since been thoroughly restored. A recent analysis of the early building history of the Santa Croce cloisters can be found in Saalman, *Brunelleschi. The Buildings*, pp. 260-272.

[8] The 1439 *sepoltuario* makes no mention of a Spinelli chapel inside Santa Croce, but the version from 1596, referring to another intermediate document, includes the following entry: "La cap<ell>^{a} dell'Annuntiata è di la fam<igli>^{a} de' Tolosini: appartiene, dice il libro del 1441 a Tom^{o} di Lionardo Spinelli"; *Manoscritti* 618, fol. 1*r*.

[9] Moisé, *Santa Croce*, p. 482. This is more than twice the sum that Spinelli was to stipulate should be set aside for the construction of his palace, see footnote 28 on page 157 below.

[10] No specific year is mentioned in the sources, but 1452/3 has come to be the generally accepted date of construction. For a discussion of the literature see Thiem, *Toskanische Fassaden-Dekoration*, pp. 63-64.

[11] Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz*, vol. 1, p. 542.

[12] All trace of this decoration has since been plastered over.

a *tondo* carved in deep relief. In all they present a number of motives {29}, the most magnificent of which is surely the lion's head {30}, a direct allusion to Tommaso's father, Lionardo and to the Spinelli family arms in general. This stone work was originally decorated in bright red, blue, brown and sea green[13]. The attention to detail and the standard of carving in the cloister are both consistently high, a further feature shared with the palace[14]. Around this time Tommaso was able to reap the rewards of his extensive generosity by being allowed to 'sign' his works. On 20 May 1453 he won permission to replace the arms of the Viviani, the previous benefactors of this cloister, with his own[15]. In that same year Tommaso created himself a tomb {31} within the church at the foot of the stairs of his new chapel. This secured him a more prestigious resting place than that of his ancestors who lay in the cloister, for he would now be buried not only inside the church, but close to the high altar itself[16]. Spinelli was not alone in establishing his credentials as a discerning architectural patron through ecclesiastical patronage, but the scale of his intervention here is surpassed in the *quattrocento* only by Cosimo de' Medici at San Marco and San Lorenzo. Lastly, it is tempting to think that Spinelli's cloister and palace are also linked by the fact that the completion of the former only whetted Tommaso's appetite to build the latter[17].

This steady patronage of the Franciscans demonstrates Tommaso's piety and confirmed that his affinity to the neighbourhood was not diminished by his infrequent habitation there. It can also be seen as a surrogate means by which he guaranteed his presence in the city even when absent. It is thus no coincidence that in addition to the fresco of Christ with Saint Thomas – his own patron saint, Tommaso also had another painted next to it in which the

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[13] Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz*, vol. 1, p. 542. Nearly all trace of these colours has now disappeared.

[14] See however, the comments of Howard Saalman in "Tommaso Spinelli, Michelozzo, Manetti and Rossellino", p. 154.

[15] Moisé, *Santa Croce*, p. 483. Spinelli's copy of this act is in the *Spinelli Archive* box 27, folder 614.

[16] The tomb itself cost him *f* 97 s. 16 d. 2; Moisé, p. 481. Its first inscription reads, "Thomas Spinellus Leonardi Francisci filius apud Romana Curia in mercatura diù laudabiliter versatus vivens sibi fecit et suis posteris omnibus 1453", *Manoscritti* 618, fol. 63*r*. In May 1472, three months after Tommaso's death, the stonecutter Bartolomeo di Niccolò added "le lettere del dì e dell'anno della morte della buona memoria di Tommaso alla sua sepoltura"; *Spinelli Archive* box 55, folder 1182, fol. 9*v*.

[17] Giovanni Rucellai was of the opinion "che si debbe hedifichare più per neciessità che per voluntà, perchè hedifichando, la voluntà non mancha ma crescie"; Preyer, "The Rucellai Palace", p. 184, footnote 3. This idea is drawn from the *Epistola di S. Bernardo a Raimondo*, which had been widely disseminated by the fifteenth century; see *Giovanni Rucellai ed il suo Zibaldone*, vol. 1, pp. 173-174, footnote 28.

apostle received the Virgin's girdle on her assumption[18]. The figure of Saint Thomas was also embroidered on a piece of brocade destined to be an altar cloth and on others pieces presented to the chapter house on his death[19]. Spinelli thus used patronage of his local church to bolster his identification with his home area until such a time when he would be able to perform the task with his own presence in the city.

Each time Tommaso returned to Florence he showed concern that his accommodation there should match the scale of his on-going patronage. Thus, it is no surprise that he was also keen to have a permanent residence of comparable conspicuousness with his ecclesiastical patronage when he returned to the city for good. Already by the 1450s the extent of Tommaso's wealth would have enabled him to purchase a prestigious property, such as the above-mentioned *Palazzo* Peruzzi, for it was sold in 1461 for *f* 2500. If Luigi Peruzzi had already been considering selling it in the 1450s, it is likely that he would have offered it to his prominent son-in-law, especially given that Tommaso was residing there when he wrote the will in which he first expressed his desire to have a palace worthy of his family[20]. However, given Tommaso's previous care to cultivate his identification with his forefather's neighbourhood, I feel it is significant that he eventually chose to build in Borgo Santa Croce. This was a decision which specifically emphasised his commitment to the street, rather than merely being the result of convenience. It was, I feel, primarily a sense of clan territoriality which led Tommaso to anchor his palace on the site of the family house in which neither he nor most of his brothers had ever lived as adults[21]. The nature of the location had a notable impact on both the typology and scale of the building he was able to create, for it caused him to forego certain advantageous architectural possibilities. However,

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[18] Moisé, *Santa Croce*, p. 481. Three images are visible in the engraving in Giuseppe Richa's *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine*, vol. 1, p. 34, {32}. One is clearly the over-sized Saint Christopher mentioned by Vasari; *Lives of the Artists*, vol. 1, p. 195. One can assume the others to be the two above-mentioned representations of Saint Thomas. They are also visible on a painting from 1718 of the whole building complex now in the *Museo dell'Opera di Santa Croce* {33}. The family chapel is dedicated to the Annunciation, yet it is the Assumption that is depicted in the fresco painted on the wall above it {34}.

[19] Moisé, *Santa Croce*, pp. 480-483. It is tempting to think that Spinelli's continued identification with his titular saint would have been reinforced by the fact that Saint Thomas was considered skilled in architecture and that he even built a palace "in the Roman style"; Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, p. 40.

[20] That the palace was eventually sold to the heirs of Bartolo Corsi shows that its purchase by Spinelli would not have been prevented by an existing fideicommissum, nor by the fact that any 'consors a muro comune' wished to exercise the right to buy the palace before it was offered for sale to the broader public. See page 67 for the communal definition of this legal term and page 73 for the sale itself.

[21] By 1427 the brothers were already scattered around Italy: Tommaso was in Rome, Bonsignore and Rubaconte in Mantua and Niccodemo in Venice, leaving only the eldest, Cipriano in house no. 38. He died in 1430 and it was subsequently leased to a kinsman (see footnote 52 below). In the early 1440s Tommaso exchanged residences with the owner of the property opposite (see footnote 2 above). Otherwise the house was inhabited by his two aunts, when they were not in the nunnery of San Jacopo in Via Ghibellina; *Cat.* 664, fol. 783*r*.

the site should not be viewed primarily in terms of the architectural limitations it created, but rather in the positive light which led Tommaso to build his palace upon it, for the restrictions it imposed were a consequence and not a determinant of his choice of site and thus the background to this decision merits attention.

Like Benedetto Galilei and the Cocchi-Donati brothers mentioned in Chapter Four, Tommaso was a younger brother, the youngest of five in fact, but in contrast to them, he had inherited his father's house. Possession of any site enabled a patron with sufficient funds to undertake construction work, but the ownership of this particular location effectively determined Tommaso's choice, for it alone could validate his construction of a palace to consolidate his primacy within the clan. Given the infrequency of his habitation in the area, he needed all the more to draw on the *genius loci* of his forefathers and only this site, positioned between his kinsmen's houses, could justify the construction of a Spinelli palace which would also underline his leadership of the clan.

Tommaso's assumption of a position of moral and financial prominence among the Spinelli dates from at least 1437, when his sister, monna Venna, had instituted him as her sole universal heir[22]. His construction of a palace in the midst of their enclave in Borgo Santa Croce would naturally have reinforced this position. However, given the necessity of expanding the site beyond the walls of his existing, rather narrow house in order to create a new and striking edifice, Tommaso also ran the risk of evicting some of the very kinsmen he aspired to lead. Although a new palace might bring prestige to a clan as a whole[23], the distinction would have been rather less marked for those families which lost their homes to enable its construction, than for those who would actually inhabit it.

Richard Goldthwaite has argued that the palaces constructed in the *quattrocento* were less motivated by a sense of clan than a new spirit of individualism characterised by separation from one's kin[24]. I have addressed the broader implications of this issue in Chapters One and Four and also hope to have shown that not only was there no tangible perception of such a phenomenon by Florentines in this period, but also that there was no actual change in

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[22] In an act of 11 November 1439, confirming her previous testamentary bequest of July 1437; *NA* 4420, fol. 188*v*.

[23] For example, the honour which the construction of the Strozzi Palace brought that clan extended as far as its members who were living in Ferrara; F. W. Kent, "Più superba de quello di Lorenzo", p. 320.

[24] "The privacy of a man's home meant not only withdrawal from public life but also detachment from most relatives who were not members of his immediate family"; "The Florentine Palace", p. 998.

household formation which could have produced demand for such a change in domestic architecture. Moreover, if individualism really was the driving force behind the construction of new palaces, they would have been built regardless of the opinions of the rest of the clan; and the incursions which these buildings often made into the residences of fellow kinsmen would likewise have been of little concern to the builder. If Florentines really shared no more than their name with their predecessors and relatives, there would have been no reason for them to retain any physical proximity with their broader clan. Yet in fact, whenever it was feasible to build among the clan's existing housing, few patrons from established families ever built elsewhere. Despite the legal complications of accumulating an occupied site, the tactical need to obtain building permission from one's neighbours[25], and the sheer disturbance which construction caused[26], most patrons still chose to build in the crowded streets of central Florence[27]. This created difficulties for patrons such as Tommaso Spinelli, for they wished to exploit the advantages of *locus* offered by a family site, but also necessarily ran the risk of damaging relations with those from whose long-term neighbouring presence they derived the initial justification to build. Spinelli recognised this problem and carefully managed to exploit and enhance his family site through the creation of a new and prestigious palace whilst not aggravating the other Spinelli by displacing them from their homes. Such a policy took time and perhaps explains the long period of gestation which preceded the completion of his palace.

As we shall see below, Tommaso implicitly showed his intentions to build from the early 1450s. However, the first documentary indication of the project dates only from his will of 12 March 1456, in which he expressly set aside up to *f* 3000 for the realisation of a suitably honourable palace on the site of three houses which he had by then already purchased[28]. Two of the properties faced onto the street (nos. 38 and 39), the third (no. 40) and its stable (*d*) were positioned to the rear. Behind them lay a garden. The western of the two

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[25] See the example of the Galilei and the associated literature in footnote 61 on page 139.

[26] See Luca Landucci's remarks on the construction of the Strozzi Palace; *Diario fiorentino*, p. 58. For examples of statutes governing building in this period, see Zupko and Laures, *Straws in the Wind*, pp. 51 and 53.

[27] Of the major *quattrocento* Florentine palaces only Bartolomeo Scala's was positioned on virgin territory and the fact that he was a non-Florentine and the first of his family to achieve a notable reputation meant that he had no strong territorial ties in the city. See his own remarks on his rise in Alison Brown, *Bartolomeo Scala*, p. 217.

[28] "...voluit et iuxit dictus testator quod in casu in quo ipse non emisset eam tempore sue vite et tempore sue mortis eius hereditas esset sufficiens per modum quod familia dicti testatoris posset vivere honorabiliter, quod per executores presentis testamenti fiat unam pulcram domum in via di Borgho di Santa Croce de tribus domibus quas ibidem habet, expendendo usque in quantitatem florenorum trium milium auri prout ipsis executoribus videbitur"; *NA* 172, fol. 90*r*.

front houses (no. 38) was Tommaso's own and all the other property had formerly belonged to Riccardo di Niccolò Spinelli. At some subsequent point (unlikely on stylistic grounds to have been before the late sixteenth century) house no. 37 was clumsily joined to the western side of the palace. However, throughout the fifteenth century this building was not part of Tommaso's palace, but was the residence of another family, that of Domenico di Francesco Spinelli and his heirs[29].

It is unlikely that Tommaso ever aspired to build a larger palace than that which he did in fact create, despite his extensive budget[30]. The *f* 3000 he envisaged spending would have been entirely dedicated to construction, as by the time he drew up his will of 1456 he had possession of the entire site on which he intended to build. The amount he stipulated was primarily intended to indicate to his heirs the importance which he attached to the project and to encourage them to lay aside sufficient funds to avoid cash-flow problems once building work was underway. This was a wise precaution, for other fifteenth-century examples show that the palaces most likely to be finished were those built quickly. The intended scale of the palace is also indicated by the fact that, following his recent acquisition of house no. 39, there were no further Spinelli properties with street frontages which Tommaso could acquire without displacing fellow clansmen. The stylistic articulation of the palace also argues against him having plans for a larger building, since the façade was not suited to the subsequent addition of duplicate bays, as can be seen at the Rucellai Palace. Any further enlargement to the east would have disrupted the central position of the main door and the subsequent expansion to the west has displaced the centrality of the *cortile*, which is now no longer adjacent to all the building's major rooms. Furthermore, to the west of the site lived the other Spinelli families, who in turn were pressed up against the large palace and gardens created by Antonio di Salvestro Serristori in the 1430s[31].

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[29] The slight displacement of the palace's main door to the east is the result of the previous configuration of the buildings, but otherwise the façade was originally symmetrical. That house no. 37 was not initially part of Tommaso's palace is supported by the fact that it lacks the *sgraffito* decoration of the main block and that the level of its first floor is at least 18 inches below that of the rooms to the east (in house no. 38) throughout the entire depth of the palace {35}. Furthermore, the *confini* of the surrounding houses reported in the *Catasto* would simply be irreconcilable with the physical layout of the buildings on the ground if the property had already been part of Tommaso's palace in the fifteenth century.

[30] Construction costs of *f* 3000 would have made the palace less expensive than many others in Florence. Howard Saalman reckoned that the *f* 6247 which Lorenzo de' Larioni received for his palace was "probably well under the original building costs"; "The Authorship of the Pazzi Palace", p. 391, footnote 9. Richard Goldthwaite has estimated that an 'average palace' cost its patron between five and ten thousand florins to build; "The economic value of a Renaissance palace", p. 2. Filippo Strozzi's however cost him *f* 35000, *ibid.*, p. 4, footnote 8.

[31] See footnote 42 on page 64.

The disadvantages of having richer and more powerful neighbours in this period were recognised[32] and in this particular case the recent expansion of Serristori's dwelling meant that the Spinelli families living on the southern side of the street now had a fixed border to the west. Serristori had 'mopped up' a total of sixteen hovels in the area and there was simply very little space left for other would-be building patrons to expand their sites. As a result, the Spinelli were unable to modify their living space by 'shuffling down' Borgo Santa Croce as had the Morelli and Corsi families on the northern side of the street[33]. In fact Tommaso did not purchase any non-clan property for the construction of his palace, but once the building was finished, the area between the Serristori and Spinelli palaces, which also constituted the Spinelli clan's territory, became rigidly defined in a way which was relatively uncommon elsewhere to the south of Piazza Santa Croce.

To the east of Tommaso's site lay a house which was continuously occupied throughout the entire period by the family and heirs of Lorenzo di Luca Salvucci. Although Lorenzo's trade was only that of barber, his continued occupation of the property lent it credibility as a family residence and decreased the chances that it would be readily vacated. Thus, as the physical limits to both sides of the building plot were already fixed when Tommaso initiated his project, it is likely that he accepted them as such. This makes the role of territoriality in his choice of site even more pronounced.

The Acquisition of the Site

Tommaso's first recorded step to enlarge his ownership of the site on which he was to build the palace comes from October 1452, when he purchased the *casetta* (house no. 40) behind his own house (no. 38)[34]. At the start of the period under examination both this property and the larger house next to it (no. 39) had been in the possession of Riccardo di Niccolò Spinelli. In six of Riccardo's wills spanning the years 1423 to 1427, the *casetta* had at various times been bequeathed to different members of the Spinelli clan[35]. However, when Riccardo drew up his last testament in November 1434, he left it to Giovanni di Lorenzo

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[32] "Quando vuoli chomperare alchuna posesione, no la torre alato a più posente di te; e se tu ài vicino a le tue posesioni lo quale sia men posente di te, sostiello pacifichamente e sta' bene cho lui aciò ch'elgli per tuo dispetto non vendese la sua posesione ad alchuno huomo malvagio e più posente di te"; *Epistola di S. Bernardo a Raimondo*, Biblioteca Riccardiana, *Manoscritti* 1383, fol. 6*v*.

[33] See the examples of the clan settlement of the Corsi and Morelli in Chapter Two.

[34] *Spinelli Archive* box 2, folder 6a.

[35] In the wills from 1423 to 1425 it was bequeathed to Carlo di Jacopo Spinelli; *NA* 17402, fols. 212*r*., 232*r*., 242*r*. and 282*r*. and in the two from 1426 and 1427 to Bartolomeo di Bonsignore Spinelli; *ibid*., fols. 332*r*. and 340*r*.

Spinelli's three daughters, Filippa, Zenobia and Alessandra. In 1427 these girls were living with Lorenzo di Antonio Spinelli and had probably been with him since their father's recent death, for he had made Lorenzo responsible for arranging their marriages. Ignoring the notable impetuosity of Riccardo's bequests[36], it is significant that he ultimately gave the property directly to the girls and not to Lorenzo, for it suggests that Riccardo somehow intended it to pertain to the provision of their dowries. Indeed in a testament from 1423 he had wanted the income from the posthumous lease of his home to help raise dowries for the poor, so it is no surprise that he should finally have used the property to endow girls from his own clan[37]. The most plausible explanation for his action is that he wished to compensate Lorenzo for the financial disbursement he would have to make in the provision of these three dowries[38].

After 1434 this *casetta* (no. 40) is not mentioned in the *portate* as being either owned or adjacent to any Spinelli property until 1458, when Tommaso reports having bought it from Niccolò di Bartolomeo Spinelli. One reason for this could be that, although it nominally remained the common property of the three daughters, it had in fact been annexed to one of the adjacent Spinelli properties, most probably that of Lorenzo di Antonio himself (house no. 36). Social conditions would not have allowed these young women to live there alone[39] and in any case, once married they would live in their husbands' houses. The terms of Riccardo's will forbade its owners from leasing the property for a long period[40], thus

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[36] Riccardo often changed his mind as to whom he would leave his goods whilst actually dictating his will. When the choice of a beneficiary was altered, the name in the text was cancelled and the substitute written in above it. However, these amendments are confined to the first few sentences of a clause and the subsequent appearances of the substitute name are always incorporated in the text, which suggests an impromptu change. If the choice of beneficiary had been changed later, the name of the initial beneficiary would appear consistently throughout the entire text. See the examples in *NA* 17402, fols. 232*r*. and 242*r*.

[37] If the Spinelli died out the house was to pass to the *Calimala*, the consuls of which "teneantur de pensione dicte domus maritare puellas pauperes, seu ipsas pensiones dare pro auxilio dotium pauperum puellarum"; *NA* 17402, fol. 212*r*. Riccardo's legacy to his three cousins need not however be seen as the result of a close personal bond; he failed to remember correctly the names of two of the girls as is shown by the alterations to the text of his will.

[38] In his *portata* Lorenzo wrote, "dette tre fanciulle ò a maritare perchè sono loro chugino e rede di loro padre"; *Cat.* 72, fol. 157*v*. Giovanni di Lorenzo's exact testamentary provisions are unknown as I was unable to locate his will, but Lorenzo's comment cited above suggests that his position as Giovanni's heir obliged him to endow the girls. However, if the means left by Giovanni were insufficient to endow his daughters, his agnatic kin (Riccardo included) might have chosen to help them. Indeed, if there was no dowry or if it was inappropriate to the standing of the family, they were legally obliged to do so; Kirshner, "Pursuing honor while avoiding sin", p. 179. In 1432 the eldest daughter, Filippa di Giovanni Spinelli married Antonio di Lodovico de' Borromei; BN, *Carte Passerini* 191 (Spinelli), fol. 18*v*. Zenobia married Alberto di Giovanni di ser Benedetto Tempi. Her dowry constituted *f* 1700 of shares in the *Monte Comune*, but no property; *Cat.* 624, fol. 581*r*. I have found no subsequent record of the third daughter, Alessandra.

[39] See the comment of Palla Strozzi mentioned in footnote 29 on page 35.

[40] For the relevant passage of the will see footnote 46 below.

incorporating it into another Spinelli property was the only feasible use to which it could be put. Riccardo included another clause to guarantee that the clan retained the *casetta* in the long-term by only leaving it *a vita* to Giovanni's daughters; after their deaths it was to pass to Niccolò di Bartolomeo. This provision is somewhat strange, since Niccolò's branch of the clan lived across the road (in house no. 19), had no contiguous property with the site and at the time of the will's redaction, Niccolò himself was only eight and his father was still alive[41]. The clause may have been an attempt to reduce the difficulties associated with property transmission by side-stepping a generation, but it still remains exceptional.

In October 1452 the *casetta* was acquired by Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli from monna Zenobia, whose *mundualdo* (her husband Alberto Tempi) acted on behalf of all three sisters. The contract also cites the consent of Niccolò di Bartolomeo, to whom it would otherwise eventually have passed[42]. No reason is given for the sale, but in his 1458 *portata*, Tommaso notes that it had occurred 'about five years ago'[43]. One plausible motive for Niccolò agreeing to the sale was the price of *f* 150 which Tommaso paid, for it clearly exceeded the market value of such a small property. The *Catasto* gauged that a house's capitalised value could be calculable from it earning 7% of its value when rented. In 1427 the property had been leased for *f* 6 and in 1430 for *f* 4, so Tommaso can be said to have paid over twice the market price[44]. Nonetheless, the value of the building lay neither in its size nor its condition. The reason both he, and others who built in the area of their family houses paid so handsomely for neighbouring properties was that they were valued more for the ground on which they stood than for their commercial potential.

Insofar as a building honoured the site, its significance was primarily derived from and defined by that site. As this was widely recognised, it was also reflected in the prices asked and paid for the plots bought by patrons like Tommaso Spinelli, Giovanni Rucellai and

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[41] "Post mortem vero dicte Pippe, Zenobie et Alessandre et ipsis et qualibet ipsarum mortuis, dictam domum esse voluit Nicholai filii Bartolomei Bonsignoris de Spinellis..."; *Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova* (hereafter *SMN*) 70, fol. 147*r*.

[42] Niccolò's permission was only granted "cum consensu, licentia et autoritate dicti Bartolomei sui patris", as he was not emancipated until nine days later; *Emancipazione* 6, fol. 55*r*. If he had already been an *homo sui iuris* such a contract would not have been necessary. This, along with actual date on the parchment and other pieces of circumstantial evidence date the contract to 1452 and not 1456 as claimed by Philip Jacks; "Michelozzo di Bartolomeo and the *Domus Pulcra*", p. 58.

[43] *Cat.* 806, fol. 13*r*. Five years earlier in 1453, Tommaso's slave Caterina had born Niccolò a daughter; *Cat.* 806, fol. 250*v*. Pregnancy was considered detrimental to the value of a slave, so it is at least possible that Tommaso exploited Niccolò's transgression to compel him to consent to the sale. See also footnote 21 on page 188.

[44] *Cat.* 72, fol. 221*v*. and *Cat.* 401, fol. 312*r*.

Filippo Strozzi. Tommaso would have been content simply to be able to acquire the site; the fact that he did not have to pay too exorbitantly for it was merely a bonus. Any notion that he wanted the land for any other reason than to build on can be immediately dismissed, as the price he paid would have been difficult to match had he wished to sell it on profitably. He needed the space more than the money, especially as the site was both adjacent to his own house and incorporated a garden. Furthermore, given the Spinelli clan's modestly-sized and constricted settlement area, Tommaso could not have afforded to squander any of it through alienation. The stringent terms of each of Riccardo di Niccolò's eight wills were a further hindrance to disposing of this property, for he consistently forbade his heirs to sell any part of it, or even to lease it outside the clan for an extended period[45]. In Riccardo's last testament, from November 1434, he even expressly demanded the disinheritance of any heir who contravened these conditions. Significantly, however, in this last will his own residence (no. 39) was bequeathed to the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. Thus his insistence that any beneficiary disregarding his stipulations should be disinherited must have resulted from the belief that the hospital might manage his house less advantageously for the Spinelli than if it were to pass directly to another clan member[46]. Equally important is the fact that the effectiveness of prohibitory clauses in any will are reliant on the willingness of others to see them implemented. Thus, though house no. 39 was now to be lost to the Spinelli, Riccardo would have known that if the hospital contravened any of his stipulations, his fellow clansmen would bring attention to the fact, as they could have stood to benefit if it was proved that the estate was being managed in an inappropriate manner.

The fact that Riccardo made Santa Maria Nuova his universal heir and bequeathed it his residence rather complicates the story of houses nos. 39 and 40, but equally, the litigation and arbitration which ended the hospital's ownership some twenty years later does provide

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[45] In one from October 1423, Riccardo stated that if the line of his direct heirs died out, "dictam domum remanere voluit proximiori masculo de dicta familia de Spinellis tunc existenti. Et quia dicta domus esse voluit semper in dicta familia de Spinellis et pro comuni moratio ipse testator prohibuit et interdixit omnibus dictis legatariis alienationem aut longi temporis locationem vel obligationem ipsius domus cum orto vel alicuius ipsius partis..."; *NA* 17402, fols. 211*v*.-212*r*. The archival references for six of the eight wills are given above in footnote 35. The other two are to found in *NA* 17402, fol. 276*r*. and *NA* 10464, bundle no. 37.

[46] "Hospitali Sancte M^{e} Nove de Florentia amore dei reliquit unam domum dicti testatoris in qua idem testator habitat cum orto et stabulo deretro...cum condictione quod dicta domus vel dictus ortus seu stabulum vel aliquid eorum in totum vel pro parte non possint ullo unquam tempore inperpetuum vendi vel alienari seu ad longum tempus locari, seu ipsam domum et dictum ortum et stabulum ab invicem separari vel seperartim locari vel teneri et in casu quo aliquo modo contra fierit tacite vel espresse, tunc et in dictis casibus et quolibet vel altero eorum evenienti dictam domum reliquit et leghavit arti merchatorem kalismale de Florentie cum prohibitione predicta. Et in casu quo dicta ars modo aliquo consentiret prohibitionibus superscriptis vel aliqui earum tunc et in dicto casu dictam domum reliquit comune Florentie ..."; *SMN* 70, fol. 147*r*.

us with documents which shed light on the genesis of Tommaso's palace. The actual reason for Riccardo's bequest was that since at least June 1430 the hospital had been both arranging him credits and paying his taxes[47]. He had previously bequeathed his houses to his kinsmen as he had no offspring of his own and his late decision to leave his domicile to the hospital was less likely to have been the result of wishing to disinherit his cousins, than the sheer size of the debts he had run up with Santa Maria Nuova by 1434.

Although little honour would have been conferred on either Riccardo's memory or his clan by this alienation or the house clearance sale which the hospital organised after his death[48], it was more significant that the property was lost to the Spinelli, for its management became detached from the influence which clan families could exert upon one another to administer it in a mutually beneficial manner[49]. Shortly after Riccardo's death in 1435 the hospital leased house no. 39. Initially, there were no problems since the administrators followed his stipulations and let the house and garden to Francesco di Fruosino Spinelli for five years[50]. Francesco later extended the lease, for he was still in the house in 1444[51]. However, by 1447 he was living elsewhere and noted only that he owed the hospital the equivalent of two year's rent[52]. The boundary descriptions of neighbouring properties show that the hospital retained possession of the house in this period, but how they subsequently managed it is not clear. It is however certain that it was no longer occupied by a member of the Spinelli clan and therefore if the hospital was leasing it, this would have been in contravention of Riccardo's testamentary stipulations. Indeed it is difficult to see how the hospital could have

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[47] The hospital's *quaderni di cassa* from 1430 to 1434 list many such advances; *SMN* 5054, fol. 161*v*.; *SMN* 5055, fols. 45*v*. and 119*r*.; *SMN* 5056, fols. 7*v*., 38*v*., 47*r*., 60*v*., 73*v*., 87*v*. and 104*r*. By the time of his death he owed the hospital nearly *f* 500; *SMN* 5057, fol. 20*v*. An example clarifying this type of credit can be found in Francesco di Giovanni Zati's *portata* from 1433: "A Michele spedalingho di Santo Maria Nuova, hovero allo spedale, ho a dare insino a questo dì *f* novantanove lire 3 s 6 i quali m'hanno prestati per paghare i mie chatasti e per mie bisogni, de' quali denari per loro sichurità ho hobrighato loro le paghe di *f* 996 e s [blank] di monte chomune per anni 5…"; *Cat*. 452, fol. 273*v*.

[48] Riccardo's goods, ranging from candlesticks to "1 finestra inpanata" were either kept by the hospital or sold off. His neighbours, the Salvucci bought a few items, but the majority was taken by Sano di Filippo, *rigattiere*; *SMN* 80, fols. 237*v*.-238*v*. The total value of the goods was £ 392 s. 14, a sum somewhat in contrast to Riccardo's assertion in his 1427 *portata* that he had only "poche maserizie e di pocha valuta"; *Cat*. 35, fol. 1320*r*.

[49] See the examples starting on page 65 which show how families in the Corsi clan living at the eastern end of Piazza Santa Croce managed their property in a co-operative manner over a prolonged period.

[50] The lease, which made no mention of the stable, ran from September 1435. Francesco was to pay *f* 10 rent a year and he and the hospital were to share the orange crop from the garden; *SMN* 36, fol. 312*v*.

[51] As is shown by his 1442 *portata*: "Tengho uno chasa a pigione di ser Michele di Santa Maria Nuova, do nne l'anno *f* 10 di pigione, è nel borgho di Santa Croce"; *Cat*. 617, fol. 346*r*.

[52] By then Francesco also owed Tommaso Spinelli *f* 14 rent; *Cat*. 664, fol. 640*v*. Tommaso's only house at this time was no. 38, which had last been leased, to Domenico di Francesco Spinelli, for *f* 9 in 1430; *Cat*. 354, fol. 389*r*. This suggests that Francesco had probably lived there (no. 38) for about two years after vacating no. 39 in late 1444. This tallies with the entry in the hospital's accounts for his tenancy, which is dated December 1444.

managed the property within Riccardo's restrictions without the co-operation of some Spinelli who were prepared to lease it from them.

Perhaps because of the violation of the terms of Riccardo's will members of the Spinelli clan initiated litigation against the hospital to have Riccardo's property returned to them. The first such successful action was completed by Lorenzo di Antonio Spinelli on 21 November 1452. He had turned to the *Curia Arcivescovile* for clarification concerning the ownership of the stable (marked *d* on Map no. 3 on page 98) which stood behind Riccardo's residence[53]. In each of Riccardo's wills this property had always been an integral part of his house and there is no reason for it not to have been passed to Santa Maria Nuova; indeed, it is explicitly included in the text of his last will cited in footnote 46 above. However, in the same will, because "volens dictus testator materiam scandali in totum proposse tollere et rimovere", Riccardo confessed a subterfuge committed by Lorenzo di Antonio Spinelli. At some unspecified date, probably in the mid-1420s while Riccardo was in Venice, Lorenzo had ser Giovanni di Matteo da Radda draw up a contract stating that Lorenzo had bought this stable from Riccardo. The fact that ser Giovanni was both Lorenzo's tenant and creditor may explain why he was chosen as the notary[54]. The reason for the fictitious sale was to facilitate Lorenzo's purchase of a house belonging to the heirs of Piero di Cacciatino Gherardini, which was adjacent to the stable. The first choice of refusal in any sale of property was always given to those who shared a common wall with the property[55] and this contract would have enabled Lorenzo to acquire the house as if he were really the Gherardini's neighbour[56]. The hospital knew about the scheme, as Riccardo's confession was also copied into their ledger of benefactors' wills[57]. Riccardo received no money for the sale and claimed to have retained *de facto* ownership of the stable. Thus, it seems likely that the property had indeed passed to Santa Maria Nuova, as in December 1446, Lorenzo di Antonio bought himself a new property opposite his house which he used as a stable[58]. Nevertheless, the situation remained sufficiently ambiguous to justify Lorenzo's petition, which eventually saw him awarded the property.

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[53] I have been unable to find the ruling itself, but it is referred to in the text of the acts mentioned in footnote 61.

[54] In 1427 Lorenzo reports in his *portata* that he was leasing ser Giovanni a house in Via delle Pinzochere, for which the notary had already paid an advance of *f* 100; *Cat.* 35, fol. 871*r*.

[55] F. W. Kent, *Household and Lineage*, p. 125, footnotes 12 and 13.

[56] "...ut acquireret ius emendi dictam domum tanquam consors ipsius domus"; *NA* 10464, bundle no. 37, fol. 2*r*. See page 67 for the text of the communal statute concerning 'consors'.

[57] *SMN* 70, fol. 147*r*.

[58] See the text of his *portata* declaration in footnote 54 on page 66.

Following the success of this plea, in April 1453 Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli petitioned the *Consiglio del Popolo* to award him Riccardo's erstwhile domicile (no. 39)[59]. He failed, but the request does at least suggest that the idea and even the scale of the palace which Tommaso intended to build was already well developed in his mind, even if he had not yet expressed this intention in writing. Undeterred by his failure to win the property, he turned his attentions once again to the patronage of Santa Croce[60].

Tommaso's next residential property acquisition was Riccardo's erstwhile stable (*d*). Lorenzo di Antonio's possession of this building had been confirmed in 1452. He had died shortly afterwards, but on 23 May 1454 his sons Antonio and Francesco redacted a *donatio inter vivos* at the *Curia Arcivescovile* in which they presented it to Tommaso[61]. The property stood behind Riccardo's residence and although it was only obliquely connected to Tommaso's two houses, it was nonetheless integral to the site he was accumulating. The precise reason for the *donatio* is not stated. Lorenzo di Antonio had died owing Tommaso at least *f* 51, but as the debt was still outstanding in 1458[62], it seems that the transfer was incidental to it. If the property was transferred without money changing hands it would suggest that Tommaso's construction project was openly supported by kinsmen beyond his own immediate family and this would echo the case of the Cocchi-Donati in Chapter Four[63].

Tommaso had to wait a further two years to gain possession of Riccardo's domicile (no. 39). This time his petition was heard not by the secular authorities, but in the *Curia Arcivescovile*, the body which had awarded Lorenzo di Antonio the house's stable. It was in fact due to the intervention of Archbishop Antoninus himself that Tommaso was eventually awarded the property in February 1456. This put the entire site he intended to use in the construction of his palace in his control, and the timing of the award probably explains the appearance of plans for 'a beautiful house' in the will he drew up a mere three weeks later[64].

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[59] The text is given in Saalman, "Tommaso Spinelli, Michelozzo, Manetti and Rossellino", p. 163.

[60] See page 154 above.

[61] *NA* 2557, fol. 379*r*. The third son, Jacopo presented his third four days later; *Spinelli Archive*, box 9, folder 106.

[62] Francesco di Lorenzo listed the debt in his 1458 *portata*: "Thomaso di Lionardo Spinelli restò avere da Lorenzo nostro padre quando morì *f* 51 de' quali ne tocha paghare a me per la ⅓ parte, *f* 17 e resto Ant° e Jachopo miei fratelli"; *Cat.* 806, fol. 217*r*. Tommaso reported the debt as being *f* 51 s. 27 d. 1; *Cat.* 806, fol. 15*r*.

[63] See page 143 above.

[64] For the relevant passage see footnote 28 above. In his subsequent *portata* Tommaso wrote that he had received the property by virtue of money owed him by Riccardo; "Un'altra chasa, la quale è allato alla sopradetta, che l'ebbi da Santa Maria Nuova perchè mi fu giudichata per la chorte dello Arciveschovo di Firenze per parte di d<enar>i ch'io dove<vo> a avere da Richardo Spinelli…"; *Cat.* 804, fol. 14*r*. Philip Jacks gives the sum paid by Tommaso as the rather odd amount of "92 *fl* 20 *so*."; "Michelozzo di Bartolomeo and the *Domus Pulcra*", p. 59.

The Reconstruction of the Site and the Appearance of the Palace

Although Tommaso had acquired his envisaged site by early 1456, he did not rush to build. His 1458 *portata* shows both of Riccardo's ex-properties to have been leased for *f* 8[65]. On All Saints' Day 1459 house no. 40 was re-let for five years to Guglielmo di Giovanni and his son, Simone. Significantly, the rent was increased to *f* 15 a year, which suggests that Tommaso had moved out of his own house prior to rebuilding it and had included it in the lease[66]. In the following May house no. 39 was also let for another three years[67]. However, Tommaso could terminate both tenancies at six months notice if he were ready to start building. It is not clear why construction did not commence in the 1450s, nor indeed when it was eventually begun, as none of the account books for the project has survived. It is tempting to think that Tommaso was influenced by Alberti's call for a 'cooling off period' before undertaking construction, once the plans were ready[68]. However, as he reported the building finished by 1469, it is clear that the work proceeded quickly once it was started. Perhaps mindful of the delays and subsequent humiliation of those who tried to build and failed, Tommaso first wished to accumulate the money he intended to spend on the palace before starting its construction.

Now that the origins, the size, the reason for using the site and its limitations have been established, we can examine just how fundamental was the restructuring involved in the creation of the palace. The area of Riccardo's domicile was used for the *androne* {36}, the *cortile*, the stairs and the lesser of the downstairs rooms. The site of the stable (*d*) became the portion of *loggia* {37} behind the *cortile*. Tommaso's own house was converted into the *sala grande principale*, the *camera principale di sala grande* and the *camera di sala grande* (*a*, *b* & *c* respectively) running back from the street to the east of the *androne*[69]. Finally the *casetta*, (no. 40) which lay directly behind, contributed a ground floor *antecamera* to this suite of rooms.

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[65] *Cat.* 808, fol. 14*r*.

[66] The 1458 *portata* refers to "una picchola chasa", while the lease of the following year describes the property as "una casa", which also offered access rights to the central courtyard which had never been a part of house no. 40. Access to the garden was also included, but Tommaso reserved the orange crop for himself; *Spinelli Archive* box 9, folder 109. The fact that house no. 38 had access rights to the *cortile* would have alleviated the practical difficulties arising from it being only 12 *braccia* wide.

[67] The annual cost of this lease was unchanged at *f* 8; *Spinelli Archive* box 9, folder 110.

[68] *On the Art of Building*, book two, chapter one.

[69] These are the names given to these rooms in a household inventory compiled in May 1490; *Spinelli Archive* box 44, folder 959. An earlier inventory from 1472 also refers to the first of them as "la sala terrena dove si mangia"; *Spinelli Archive* box 44, folder 956.

The main street portal of the palace is slightly displaced to the east, because the wall on the west of the *androne* was the original partition between houses nos. 38 and 39. Lando Bartoli, who restored the palace in the 1960s, maintained that the irregular distances between the corbels in the *androne* were somehow determined by perspectival considerations, but it is more likely that they were necessitated by the process in which the two houses were joined together[70]. Significantly, following this consolidation, Tommaso's own family house became the centre piece of the ground floor. It now constitutes three beautifully harmonious rooms articulated with a finely-carved array of Corinthian corbels {38-43}[71]. The layout of these rooms is reflected in the cellars below them, which follow both their dimensions and the positioning of their dividing walls[72]. There are no further subterranean chambers either to the south or the east of these cellars and those under house no. 37 are neither as deep nor as substantial. Thus, both the *confini* and the configuration of these rooms indicate that they replaced Tommaso's family home in its entirety. The fact that the breadth of these rooms is twelve *braccia* (about seven metres) adds credence to this theory, for this was a common measurement for the width of *casolaria*.

This regularity also suggests that the three rooms were created anew for the palace, even though they are not particularly well integrated into the building as a whole. The alignment of the wall between the two *camere* (*b* and *c*) corresponds to neither the layout of the *cortile* nor the rooms directly above. In fact its position was determined by the proportions of these two *camere* themselves. Harmony between external membering in *quattrocento* architecture was a priority wherever possible, but it was usually determined by the more important requirement of internal regularity. In the Medici Palace, the first of the great Florentine *all'antica* palaces, the windows of the *piano nobile* overlooking Via Larga are irregularly aligned with respect to the main portals beneath them, a feature which has

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[70] Bartoli's thesis presented in *Un restauro e un problema di prospettiva* was reproduced more lucidly, but equally misguidedly by Charles Randall Mack in "Building a Florentine Palace". The corbels certainly are more irregularly spaced than would at first appear necessary, but this need not be ascribed to some breakthrough in fifteenth-century optics, as there is no such thing as fixed-point perspective for three-dimensional objects.

[71] The variation in the details of these corbels is reminiscent of the Albertian concept of *varietas*; *On the Art of Building*, book one, chapter eight. The Spinelli and Alberti clans were both resident in Borgo Santa Croce and Tommaso had even worked in the Alberti bank. Both Tommaso and Leon Battista Alberti were also living in Rome in the 1440s, when the latter was writing his architectural treatise; Grayson, "The Composition of L. B Alberti's Decem Libri De Re Aedificatoria", p. 156. It is tempting to think that the two met and even exchanged ideas on building.

[72] The requirements of a house built for the Del Bene in the mid-*trecento* show that great care was taken over the construction of cellars; Sanpaolesi, "Un progetto di costruzione per una casa del secolo XIV", pp. 259-260.

attracted some criticism[73]. The disposition of these windows in fact reflects the desire to have them regularly spaced along the inside wall of the *sala grande*, not along the street frontage[74]. Similarly, the position of the dividing wall between rooms *b* and *c* in the Spinelli palace was determined by the overriding importance of making these two rooms identical in size[75]. This concern also determined both the positioning of the windows in the *cortile* and of the *sgraffito* decoration on the external wall to either side of them {44}.

The junction with the *antecamera* behind these three rooms is awkward. Even so, it is notable that before the doorways were blocked up, there was a direct and open passage from the front east window of the *sala grande* (room *a*) right through the house, leading to the garden. This would have let light into the palace from the south, for Borgo Santa Croce itself is a typically narrow and dim street. However, it was probably also done with an eye to creating a view of the garden, especially considering Tommaso's treasured orange grove.

The only ground-floor room on the site of Riccardo's residence (house no. 39) lacks the articulation to be found in the *sale* and *camere* to the west. In fact the room is small, dark and of little significance. It can only be entered from the landing on the main stairs. The rest of Riccardo's house was demolished to create the *cortile*, which clearly emphasises Tommaso's wish to centre the palace on the site of his own family house.

The courtyard capitals show the same subtle variations on a Corinthian theme as those in rooms *a*, *b* and *c* and between them they encompass virtually the entirety of the fine carving to be found in the building {46}. Very few palaces from this period had vaulting on the upper stories and the ground floor therefore presented the main opportunity for a patron to demonstrate his appreciation of *all'antica* stonework[76]. As the area was also the most public in the building, such details could be shown here to their best effect. Richard Goldthwaite has suggested that the closing of many private *loggie* in this period was motivated by the desire for increased privacy[77]. Yet, it is equally possible that the internalisation of a *loggia* within a palace through its incorporation into the *cortile* actually represented an opening-up

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[73] Murray, *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*, p. 69. For a similar example of windows being arranged according to a house's internal requirements, see Saalman, "The Authorship of the Pazzi Palace", pp. 393-394.

[74] See Bulst, "Uso e trasformazione del palazzo mediceo fino ai Riccardi", illustrations nos. 133-140.

[75] Both rooms have a diagonal measurement of 9.25m. and a height of 5.4m.

[76] Alberti recommended that vaulting should only be used on the ground floor and, for reason of hygiene, that timber ceilings be employed on the upper stories; *On the Art of Building*, book five, chapter eighteen.

[77] "The Florentine Palace as Domestic Architecture", p. 988.

of these buildings, by making the ground floor more public. Indeed, Alberti suggests that the 'corridors, yard, atrium and salon' of a palace were for use by more than just the people who lived in the building[78]. If the ground floor and the *cortile* did form the public centre of the palace, this would explain Tommaso's great attention to their articulation.

The pleasing aspect of harmony and *concinnitas* which is so notable on the ground floor is equally remarkable by its absence on the upper stories, for here the integration of Riccardo and Tommaso's houses is much less graceful. In short, Tommaso made do with what he found. This is exemplified by his treatment of the old staircase from house no. 39. Between the ground and first floors he built a new vaulted stairwell which rose grandly from the *androne*. Yet rather than demolish the old stairs which probably had started in what is now the *cortile*, he merely left their steps exposed at the point at which they broke through the level of the first floor and as they approached the second floor he simply had them closed off behind a door {47}[79].

Tommaso's palace echoes his patronage of Santa Croce in that it also shows a clear concern that his identity should be closely bound into its decoration. The use of *sgraffito* was again central to this aim. The façade and courtyard abound in motives of spiky acanthus and roses as well as fictive *tondi* {45 & 50}. The Nemean lion on the west wall of the *cortile* is as prominent as its adversary Hercules and as far-removed as possible from the vanquished creature common in the iconography of the period. Indeed, its posture is clearly heraldic, for it closely resembles the rampant beast in the Spinelli coat of arms, which was also placed prominently on the façade of the palace. Such extensive use of pictorial *sgraffito* in this period was not only novel, it was less expensive to produce and more politically neutral than a palace clad in rustication. Moreover, its use did not involve the sacrifice of fashionable classicising details, which could usually be incorporated only in the main cornice of a palace with rusticated walls. Like the *Palazzo* Gerini in Via Ginori, the ground floor of the street façade of the Spinelli Palace was covered in fictive ashlar and the *piano nobile* was decorated with a full entablature. *Sgraffito* offered a medium which was not only more suitable to the scale of the building, but one which was also easier to 'read' close up in the dim and narrow street of Borgo Santa Croce. Thus Tommaso built in a manner designed to

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[78] *On the Art of Building*, book five, chapter two.

[79] The other upstairs rooms have either been too extensively changed to be instructive or else are not accessible.

demonstrate modish erudition in a novel and sophisticated style while also making it very clear that he was to be identified as its progenitor.

Conclusion

The public nature of a family's main residence made its architectural articulation highly significant and a palace would thus have been carefully interpreted by contemporaries. Its external features were the most permanent and public demonstration of the patron's virtues. It could even be thought to represent him personally and to immortalise in stone his origins, affiliations and even his aspirations. Nevertheless, despite the visual potency of the new *all'antica* style of palace, the analysis of these buildings should not be made at the expense of other features which contributed to their genesis and appearance, important among which are the issues raised by location. *Palazzo* Spinelli provides one such case, because of the constraints created by its position. It stands on the site of just two street-facing *casolaria* and when compared with the palaces of messer Benedetto degli Alberti (no. 30) {3} and Giovanni di Paolo Morelli (nos. 1 and 2) {48} at either end of Borgo Santa Croce, it can hardly be described as large[80]. This modest scale in turn affected the articulation which Tommaso could judiciously employ in its conversion. In itself, this does not deny the resultant building architectural significance, but it does require that any analysis of it should also consider the overriding non-aesthetic preferences Tommaso made in choosing this site.

The main difference between *Palazzo* Spinelli and others built in this period lies in its very location; the issue on which Tommaso seems to have been so adamant. By choosing to build in Borgo Santa Croce he placed the decorum of a clan-based location above the need for ostentation which the site of say, the Peruzzi Palace (no. 12) would have offered. This made the palace almost unique among constructions of this period, in that it has no beneficial viewing point from an open street or *piazza*[81]. In making this choice Tommaso renounced the advantage inherent in a conspicuous location and also abandoned the chance to maximise the visual impact of his house. This required him to find another method by which to ensure that its ornamentation sufficiently honoured the site on which it stood. His solution was to cover the building's façade with novel geometric and pictorial *sgraffito* {49 & 50}. His choice of location already demonstrated that he placed the priority of decorum

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[80] Even after the later incorporation of house no. 37 into the Spinelli Palace, its ground space was still only 2560 *braccia* square, (ca. 860 m^2) as compared with the 2607 *braccia* square (ca. 877 m^2) extent of messer Benedetto degli Alberti's palace; *Catasto Generale della Toscana*, Firenze, T. I. 1, Section A, fols. 181*v*. and 182*r*.

[81] For a list of palaces with good viewing points, see footnote 101 on page 147.

above that of ostentation, so it was merely consistent that he also should have avoided the use of bombastic articulation in the building, desiring instead to suit its decoration to both its scale and position[82].

The site on which Tommaso built was uniquely positioned to offer advantages which he could not find elsewhere. Only this particular location could offer the justification to create a palace which could both bring him personal credit and consolidate his primacy within his clan. The building's architectural articulation would naturally have influenced its reception by the public, but so would the idea of its *locus* and this should be as central to our modern understanding of this building as it was to the patron himself. I believe that we can only benefit in our understanding of the appearance of this palace and many others throughout the city, if we attune ourselves more to the criteria with which they were built. We must not let our esteem of the palace as pure architecture blind us to the fact that it was just an implement – albeit a central one – in the continuous process by which Tommaso sought to consolidate his pre-eminence among the Spinelli.

The impact of Tommaso's new palace would have been felt beyond the immediate neighbourhood of the Spinelli. Indeed integral to its construction was the hope that it would be known throughout the city. Along with his ecclesiastical patronage, the palace constituted part of the process by which Tommaso sought to promote his civic image. The clause in his will stipulating that the palace should even be built posthumously if necessary shows that his desire to construct it was not subject to the temporal restrictions of his own longevity. It is clear that the building which he created was actually intended more for the hereafter than for his own immediate use. As Giovanni Rucellai confirmed, Tommaso and the other patrons of new domiciles in this period built more for the sake of their own commemoration than for such short-term considerations as a desire for greater material comfort for their families[83]. At the time he began building Tommaso's house accommodated his wife and two daughters. More significantly, however, it had become clear since the death of his only son in 1455 that he was unlikely to have a direct heir to whom he could

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[82] Writing in the 1430s, Matteo Palmieri stressed the importance of decorum in citizens' palaces; "la conveniente compositione et attissima belleza de' privati habituri pe' quali la degnità dell'uomo appaia meritamente ornata et non in tutto dalla casa cerca, però che non il signore per la casa, ma la casa pel signore si vuole et debbe honorare; et infamia sarebbe se da chi passa si dicesse: «O degna casa, quanto se' da indegno signore habitata». Chi seguitasse et volesse assimigliare le magnifiche case de' nobili cittadini merita biasimo se prima non ha agiunte o superate le loro virtù"; *Vita Civile*, book four, sentences nos. 215 and 216 on pages 194 and 195.

[83] In his *Zibaldone* Giovanni Rucellai claimed to have built "in parte all'onore di Dio e all'onore della città e a memoria di me"; *Giovanni Rucellai ed il suo Zibaldone*, vol. 1, p. 121.

bequeath his new palace. This did not discourage him; indeed it might even have increased his resolve to build, for faced with biological extinction, the creation of the palace became increasingly central to his memorialisation.

It was integral to any patron's ability to achieve this goal of memorialisation for him to invoke the widest possible justification for his actions. Thus by choosing a clan site, Tommaso consciously re-inserted himself into the stream of his clan's past through the use of its territory – the land from which he had personally so often been absent in the recent past. His building work enhanced the clan's tradition and by legally binding his palace to the future generations of the Spinelli, he also enhanced the public perception of the clan. This act also benefited him personally, for these descendants would guarantee the perpetuation of his own memory through *their* residence in *his* home. Thus, the bricks and mortar of this palace formed not only the house in which Tommaso hoped to live, they were also the embodiment of his stake in his future commemoration.

Conclusion: *pro commemoratione ipsius testoris*

Each of the preceding chapters has dealt with a different aspect of house and household in this period, yet collectively they all demonstrate the various methods by which Florentines preserved and enhanced the close, reciprocal relationship which bound family and domicile together. Whether through realigning the boundaries of a property to insure that all the members of a patrimonial unit lived in one house, or by reconfiguring a property to stress its inhabitants' presence in the area, the management of the house and the household was a constantly active process. This concern for the appearance and occupation of one's house did not end at death. Indeed, it is arguable that the idealism which guided property management only reached its peak in the numerous stipulations concerning property usage which appear in so many of the wills of those studied here. Trends and preferences which are often only implicit in the practice of property management, clan settlement or reconstruction work reach an effusive climax as Florentines considered their domiciles in the light of their own mortality. Yet, what drove this disproportionate attention to the fate of one's home and what was to be gained by it ?

To conclude, I shall deal with how Florentines themselves settled their relationship with the house in which they passed their lives, by examining the testamentary provisions for the disposal of these properties. We saw in the Introduction how carefully testaments must be used if they are to be beneficial to the historian, as they often tend towards the idealistic. However, it is just this aspect which is of most interest here, as a testator's stipulations for the subsequent use of his house can also show what posthumous benefits he himself hoped to derive from the procedure.

The means by which the link between house or place and identity was established can perhaps best be illustrated with an example from the Morelli clan. When researching his own family history at the end of the *trecento*, Giovanni di Paolo Morelli found many more notarial documents concerning one particular ancestor called Morello than for this man's predecessors. The primary cause of this was Morello's wealth and the need for notarial

services to which it had given rise[1]. In the Middle Ages the law was used almost exclusively by the propertied classes and the need to be able to specify those individuals mentioned in legal documents necessitated that they should be easily identifiable. In fact, these acts themselves may have contributed to the way in which an individual's patronym became a surname; the Latin genitive of Morello is Morelli, which, given time and frequent use, became his successors' family surname. Yet this Morello gave his lineage not only a surname, for by moving from the parish of San Simone to San Jacopo tra le Fosse, he also established their presence in Corso dei Tintori, most probably in houses nos. 31 to 33[2]. Given this contribution, what better recognition could he receive than for his descendants to bear his name and live in his house ?

In this period Florentines practised partible inheritance, which meant that an individual's assets would usually be divided fairly equally among his sons. Ensuring that these heirs would actually be present to inherit the estate on an individual's death had long been one of the central aims of preserving patrimonial cohesion. This policy was to a large extent successful because of the unificatory pressure which the patrimony exerted. Sons who felt that they could inherit a worthwhile estate were more likely to remain within their father's household than those who knew that they stood to gain nothing[3]. The expectation of inheritance would have discouraged any son from distancing himself from his father and moreover, the father would generally have been keen to maintain a close relationship with his heirs in order to guarantee a future for his patrimony. Thus, in itself, the mere possession of wealth, and especially of property, was conducive to the development of a deeper sense of family and lineage.

On the other hand, the poor lacked the permanence lent by the ownership of inheritable property and were thus unable to establish a corporate identity based on family or clan, as they had no vehicle on which to base their perception by society at large. They lived in rented accommodation, which was found when and wherever landlords were disposed to

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[1] "E queste iscritture si truovano più in lui che ne' suoi passati perché egli era già venuto in buono istato d'avere"; Giovanni di Paolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, p. 119.

[2] Giovanni di Paolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, p. 120.

[3] It should again be reiterated that this does not mean that familial unity was merely a by-product of inheritance expectations. Yet, the fragmentary nature of poorer Florentine households shown by Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber in Figure 29 on page 477 of *Les Toscans* does suggest that poverty failed to unite families as effectively as wealth. Jacopo da Voragine, the thirteenth-century Archbishop of Genoa accepted as much when he said that children loved their father more than their mother because they expected to inherit more from him; Epstein, *Wills and Wealth in Medieval Genoa*, p. 68.

lease it, and we have already seen the random manner in which the twelve clans made such property available. Lacking an established home, the poor would also have been unable to benefit from the degree to which 'place' helped to establish familial identity[4].

The patrimonial imperative of the clan families studied here can also be seen in the role of the women who married into them. Wives played no economic part in these households and both their previous identities and dowries were generally subsumed into their husbands' families. The main demand placed upon them was that they be fertile[5]. This did not preclude (or guarantee) the chances for marital affection[6], but it did mean that the vertical relationship between a man and his heirs was probably more pivotal than that with his wife. The ownership and eventual passage of property served further to underline this vertical bond. The place of property was so central within a patrimony as to create a reproductive imperative to guarantee that there would be heirs to inherit it, which in turn required the purchase of yet more property in which to accommodate these heirs. As the example of the expansion of the Morelli clan shown in Chapter Two clearly demonstrates, merely standing still was not an option. At the centre of this process of fission lay the bequest of property, from which each clan derived its unity. Of course not every family achieved this goal – by 1498 the Guidi clan had entirely disappeared from the Quarter of Santa Croce – but nonetheless it was an aim which shaped each clan's residential and patrimonial strategies.

Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli's disappointment that he had no male heir to whom he could bequeath his estate is abundantly clear in the wording of his last will – as is the blame he places squarely on the shoulders of his estranged wife[7]. His comments illustrate how the concepts of property ownership and fertility were closely bound together. Indeed in several cases the link between the two was actually explicit and legally binding, for a number of wills forbade any beneficiary who subsequently failed to produce a male heir from passing

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[4] This also meant that the poor would have been untouched by much that constituted the notion of 'neighbourhood' (*vicinanza*) in this period.

[5] "El principale utile che dalla donna s'aspecta sono i figliuoli et le successive famiglie…La moglie è in luogo della feconda terra, la quale il seme ricevuto nutrica e multiplica in abondante et buono fructo"; Matteo Palmieri, *Vita Civile*, book IV, sentences nos. 42 and 43 on page 157.

[6] Both the terms and the expression of Andrea di Francesco Zati's will, partially cited above in footnote 54 on page 114, show the depth of his affection for his 'beloved' wife, Alessandra. Giovanni di Paolo Morelli however was scathing after his wife left him: "…'Drea mia donna, partita da mme circa d'anni 6, per suo difetto e malizia, volontariamente messòmi colla mia familglia in pericolo di morte ingiustamente"; *Cat.* 34, fol. 708*r*.

[7] "…la sig[a] Lisabetta, figlia del già Guido Magalotti e moglie di esso testatore, habita nella casa dell'habitatione paterna et è separata da esso testatore…la sua conditione non fu, né è conforme alla conditione di dicto testatore…ché da essa non ha havuto mai figli, né spera haverne"; *Spinelli Archive* box 12, folder 198, fol. 5*v*.

on inherited clan property in his own right. One such case in point is Jacopo di messer Francesco Rinuccini, who died childless. His will of 1431 is only four paragraphs long and makes no mention of the house in which he lived, or indeed of any other property, as his father's will of 1381 effectively disqualified him from bequeathing it. On Jacopo's death his property would return to the lineage of his more potent male kin[8]. Thus, in so far as a person could become identified with his property, Jacopo di Francesco was denied the means to memorialise his residence in his house, which would also have diminished his chances of using the property as a vehicle on which to base his commemoration. Although the fertile heirs of messer Francesco Rinuccini were still bound to leave the property they had inherited under the fideicommissum to their sons, the existence of these children often necessitated the inclusion of specific clauses in testaments in which the testator could attempt to re-fashion an existing fideicommissum to his own taste.

The huge majority of Florentines however, died intestate and of those that did leave a valid will, most simply bequeathed their goods to their offspring. In wills from the Castellani, Cocchi-Donati, Giugni, Rinuccini, Spinelli and Zati clans there are examples in which property is left free of legal encumbrances. Indeed the testators' domiciles are often not even specifically mentioned, but merely included among the "aliis bonis immobilibus". It may of course be the case that the property of these testators was already covered by prior fideicommissums, but no allusion to extant provisions is made in any of the types of will consulted here. If no will was made, it was implicit that the estate would pass to the testator's nearest relatives and it can be presumed that this was to the satisfaction of most, as I found only one example in which a Florentine man instituted a universal heir who was not a member of his own clan[9].

Nonetheless, there was a narrow band of Florentines whose wills not only included binding stipulations on the future of their residential property, but even punitive sanctions aimed to guarantee their enforcement. These clauses reflect the greater significance which they set on

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[8] Jacopo's will is to be found in *Ginori Conti - Rinuccini* 147, *terzo inserto* and his father's in *Ginori Conti - Rinuccini* 149, *primo inserto*. When messer Francesco di Cino's great-grandson Giulianmaria di Jacopo Rinuccini came to write his will in 1508, these same clauses reappear: "in modo che lo effecto sia che morendo uno di dicto figliuoli di dicto testatore sanza figliuoli maschi legiptimi et naturali, quello che sopravive et rimane succeda a dicto testatore"; *Ginori Conti - Rinuccini* 149, *quarto inserto*, fol. 4*r*.

[9] In 1479 Giovanni di Renzo Salterelli, who had already lost his patrimony once, bequeathed whatever he had left to messer Domenico Bonsi: "In omnibus autem aliis suis bonis mobilibus et immobilibus iuribus nominibus et actionibus sibi suum heredem universalem instituit, fecit et esse voluit excelentisimum utriusque iuris doctorem dominum Dominicum olim Baldassaris de Bonsis civem et advocatem florentinum"; *NA* 2874, fol. 14*r*.

this property and echo the degree to which they identified themselves with it. In his will of August 1457 messer Bernardo di Filippo Giugni stipulated that his domicile could not be alienated, even if his heirs petitioned the *Comune*[10]. It is clear that such petitions were made, for in 1549 Filippo Spinelli received permission from Duke Cosimo I for a temporary reprieve from the conditions laid out in Tommaso's will of 1468 against leasing *Palazzo* Spinelli[11]. Similarly, in his will of 1491 Alamanno di Filippo Rinuccini insisted that whichever of his heirs contravened his testamentary provisions should be disinherited to the benefit of the Ospedale degli Innocenti and Santa Maria Nuova[12]. In 1422 Niccolò di Domenico Giugni asserted that if his heirs were to sell his house, the money raised would have to be forfeited to the *Camera Apostolica*[13]. Similar provisions also appear in the wills of messer Francesco di Cino and Giulianmaria di Jacopo Rinuccini mentioned above in footnote 8 and of Girolamo di Matteo Morelli[14].

It seems therefore that the sense of 'house' and 'place' which these provisions illustrate was so strong that those to whom property was passed often had their own contradictory preferences as to how it should be managed. The fideicommissum clauses mentioned above were not born in a vacuum and both their pedantic nature and more frequent usage in this period show that testators were increasingly trying to anticipate and block any loopholes

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[10] I shall cite the passage *in extenso*, as it provides a good example of the lengths to which testators would go to prevent the subsequent alienation of their home: "Et voluit dictus testator quod dicti et infrascripti sui heredes instituiti et substituti nec eius descendentes et quilibet eorum nullo modo possint alienare dictam domum et apotechas et alia supradicta etiam ex causa necessitatis vel cuiuscumque debiti hereditarii vel proprii. Et hoc ideo fecit dictus testator quia voluit dictas domus et apotechas et alia supradicta perpetuo remanere apud suos heredes et consortes et apud illos de domo sua in perpetuum. Et ideo pro maiori validitate huis prohibitionis dictus testator reliquit et legavit dictas domum et apotechas post mortem dictorum suorum heredum institutorum et substitutorum consortibus suis de domu sua qui reperiuntur propinquioribus dicto testatori post mortem dictorum heredum institutorum et substitutorum et illis consortibus postea manentibus sine filiis reliquit dictas domum et apotechas et alia supra scripta aliis consortibus propinquiores subcessive infinitum quia mens et intentio dicti testatoris est quod dicta domus et apotecha et alia supra scripta semper remaneant in dicta domo et consorteria sua et quia plerumque solit accidere quod bona que habent tales prohibitiones vendantur // habita dispensatione per consilia populi et comunis Florentie, ex nunc dictus testator declarat et disponit quod si aliquo unquam tempore dicta bona venderentur vel alienarentur auctoritate consiliorum populi et comunis Florentie, talis alienatio censeatur facta ad fraudandam volumptatem dicti testatoris et in dicto casu talis alienationis dictus testator reliquit dicta bona abbatie Sancte Marie de Florentia"; *NA* 21154, fols. 7*v*.-8*r*.

[11] Just two months later his co-heir and younger sister Maria lodged a complaint and the permission was duly rescinded; Jacks, "Michelozzo di Bartolomeo and the *Domus Pulcra*", pp. 81-82. Tommaso Spinelli's last will declared void any contract leasing or selling his palace and disinherited whoever authorised it to the benefit of whichever heirs objected to the sale. If none did, the property would pass, with the same conditions, first to Santa Maria Nuova and then, if the hospital broke these same terms, to the *Calimala*. If the consuls of the guild were similarly incontinent, the palace would pass to the *Comune*; *Spinelli Archive* box 12, folder 198, fols. 7*r*.-8*r*.

[12] *NA* 1740, clause 24 on fol. 398*v*.

[13] NA 17392, *ultima busta*, fol. 260*v*.

[14] *NA* 21063, *quarta busta*, fol. 192*v*. Giovanni di Paolo Morelli wished merely to fine his heirs if they contravened his testamentary provisions; *NA* 18000, fol. 44*r*. A similarly punitive clause appears in footnote 79 on page 52.

which their heirs might use to evade or modify testamentary stipulations[15]. The threats in these clauses were all dependent for their actual effectiveness on the intervention of a third party and this led testators to add a number of substitute heirs whose inclusion, it was hoped, would encourage the primary heirs to follow the testamentary provisions. These alternative heirs were usually increasingly removed from the testator's emotional sphere, but were also increasingly powerful[16] and as such, more likely to be able to prosecute the testator's will effectively, if they so chose. However, the irony of this strategy was that it sanctioned the disinheritance of close family members to the benefit of more distant relatives or even institutions in the name of the preservation of 'family' property.

Furthermore, the fact that some heirs of estates already covered by a fideicommissum tried to manipulate these provisions by including their own hierarchy of beneficiaries in their wills established a precedent by which their own stipulations could also eventually be adjusted by their heirs. Such anomalies show that the legal system governing inheritance was far from perfect, yet given the significance and value of the property which it covered, such contradictions and modifications were more or less inevitable as each generation tried to institute its own preferences.

The fundamental stability of real estate in the period was recognised and valued[17]. Clan property carried an even higher premium in the minds of its owners because of the posthumous function it could fulfil. Alienation could therefore not be allowed to dilute the purity of the link between such property and its erstwhile inhabitants. As a clan domicile was cherished as a reminder of its owner's corporeal life, it is understandable why a testator could ultimately sanction the disinheritance of any heir who compromised his property's integrity through alienation, for by so doing the miscreant threatened the testator's memorialisation. This sentiment was behind Riccardo di Niccolò Spinelli's insistence that his home should neither be leased nor sold in whole or in part after his death, since he explicitly intended the house itself to commemorate him[18].

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[15] The various fideicommissiary clauses in the early sixteenth-century will of Giulianmaria di Jacopo Rinuccini's son Domenico take up more lines than the actual bequests; Biblioteca Riccardiana, *Moreni* 30, fols. 295*v*.-299*r*.

[16] The list of alternative heirs in Tommaso Spinelli's will mentioned in footnote 11 above illustrates this well. It starts with other clansmen, passes through religious and civic institutions before ending with the *Comune* itself.

[17] To put it another way, I have found no example of liquid assets being used to finance a long-term testamentary bequest, as it was clear that they could not be relied upon to make regular disbursements.

[18] "Et quia dicta domus esse voluit pro commemoratione ipsius testoris, prohibuit et interdixit dictis ollim legatariis alienationem aut longi temporis locationem ipsius domus vel alicuis eius partis"; *NA* 17402, fol. 212*v*.

A further clue to the role clan housing played in representing its owner is found in the testaments of two men who have figured prominently in this study: Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli and Giovanni di Paolo Morelli. A common feature of their wills is the insistence that if their families should die out, their houses would pass to their respective guilds. However, if this did occur, both of them also insisted that the family arms on the façades of their respective buildings could not be touched[19]. Again, this illustrates the basic symbolic function of property as a representation, an embodiment even, of its owner's identity and as a means by which to perpetuate it.

A number of wills also specified that the testator's domicile should be used as the venue for other commemorative events. In wills from 1415 and 1417 Giovanni di Paolo Morelli commanded that a meal should be given in his house for five poor people on Saint John the Baptist's Day for at least ten years after his death[20]. Likewise, in 1405 Jacopo di Giovanni Giugni stipulated that a meal for at least ten paupers should be given in perpetuity in his house each Saint Anthony's Day[21]. Such provisions provided a different means of guaranteeing the perpetuation of the link between the decedent and his erstwhile house.

Furthermore, given the efficacy of the link between place and identity, it is no surprise that a standard punishment for treachery in Florence was to have one's house demolished. After the destruction the site was not cleared, but left to serve as a metaphorical reminder of the annihilation of that individual's potency. By denying him his house, the city also intended to deprive him of the ability to use the building in the manipulation of his memorialisation[22].

Naturally, this concern with identity and the desire to 'leave one's mark' is not restricted to the manner in which Florentines managed their property; it pervades the entire society. For

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[19] If Morelli's house passed to the Arte della lana, "...dicti Consules possint in dicta domo apponere insignia dicte Artis, sine mutatione vel lesione aliquorum insignium dicti testatoris"; *NA* 18000, fol. 44*r*. Likewise, Tommaso wrote that if the Spinelli died out his palace would pass to the "Arti Calismale civitatis Florentie, cum hoc, quod semper arma dicti testatoris debeant ~~esse semper~~ esse in dictis domibus"; *NA* 172, fol. 90*r*.

[20] The will from 1415 specified that food should be given to "cinque poveri mendicanti, e danari dodici a ongni uno de' detti"; BN, *Fondo Principale* II, IV, 52, fol. 110*v*. Two years later Morelli decided that the commemorative meal should be for the benefit of "quinque pauperibus Christi"; *NA* 11423, ca. fol. 372*v*.

[21] "Et voluit, iuxit et mandavit quod dicti eius heredes perpetuis temporibus quolibet anno in die festi Sancti Antonii dent et retineant in domo eorum habitationis ad prandium et ad prandendum saltem decem pauperes homines egenos et eiusdem dare prandum bene ed honorifice et prout est consuetudinis, in quo prandio spendi voluit, iuxit et mandavit florenos auri duos quolibet anno"; *NA* 17392, fol. 264*r*.

[22] This practice had existed since at least 1260, when over 250 Guelf buildings in the city had been demolished; Fanelli, *Firenze: architettura e città*, vol. 1, p. 54. Likewise the house of Lorenzaccio de' Medici in Via Larga was destroyed in 1537; (Lapini, *Diario fiorentino*, p. 101) and the site was not entirely rebuilt until 1736; Corazzini, "Il Chiasso del Traditore e la casa di Lorenzino de' Medici", p. 182.

example, the hundreds of *ricordanze* which were created in this period resulted from precisely the same desire to record one's existence within society. In no other Italian city in this period did citizens produce such a number of written records as are found in the Florentine archives and it seems likely that these documents were also intended to create and transmit their authors' sense of identity down the lineage.

The various examples cited above illustrate just what was at stake for those with clan property to bequeath and they also show why most chose to entail it within their own family. Family members were not just the same flesh and blood, they were also the most likely to be amenable to observing a testator's demands. This arose both as a result of the strong bond between fathers and their sons and also from the fact that fulfilling the stipulations of an ancestor's will also created a sense of lineage from which a legatee himself expected to benefit one day[23]. We saw in the Introduction that some heirs deferred fulfilling bequests[24]. Many others, however, upheld them over an extended period, executing them faithfully as was originally intended. In 1480, Lorenzo di Matteo Morelli was paying for a *rinovale* to the benefit of his great-grandfather, Paolo di Bartolomeo Morelli, which had been instituted in his will of 1374[25]. This process established and maintained a method by which the dead could live on in their heirs, as Leon Battista Alberti had intended they should[26]. This desire to guarantee the perpetuation of one's memory also lay at the root of the management of the houses and households examined here. Naturally, Florentines also looked to other spheres such as politics, written records or pious artistic commissions to fulfil similar ends, but it seems that the whole conception and organisation of the family and the domicile was geared to the establishment and the preservation of its members' identity. By identifying and characterising various aspects of property usage it is hoped that this study has added a further dimension to the knowledge of families and buildings in late medieval Florence and that the two can now be investigated further in the light of the reciprocal bonds by which they were inextricably linked.

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[23] In *The Renaissance Man and his Children* (New York, 1998), Louis Haas rightly stresses the importance of familial affection in this period, yet I feel that his differentiation between it and Florentines' concern for the future of their patrimonies is somewhat artificial and ultimately unproven. On page 27 he cites Alberti's opinion that children "act as pledges and securities of marital love and kindness", but he omits the passage that follows it, which is given here in footnote 26. Affection and concern for the patrimony cannot be so easily disassociated.

[24] See footnote 46 on page 22.

[25] *Cat.* 1005, fol. 427*r*.

[26] "Sad, indeed, is the man who has labored to get wealth and power and lands, and then has no true heir and perpetuator of his memory...If a man leave such heirs [legitimate sons]...he need not consider himself wholly dead and gone"; *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, p. 113.

The Data of Medieval Florentine Family Structure

Analytical Procedure

The findings of Chapter One are based on an examination of the tax returns of twelve clans resident in the Quarter of Santa Croce from 1427 to 1480. Some details concerning the analysis of the sample are presented in the chapter itself, but the sheer volume of the material consulted presented several cases which could not immediately be reconciled with the priorities of patrimonial management. In this appendix I shall explain the simplifications necessary in distilling some 3163 individual samples. At the same time I shall provide some further information and graphs to illustrate the nature of fifteenth-century Florentine households.

The advantage of reconstructing household membership from a single source is that it renders the statistics readily commensurable. Furthermore, as the *Catasto* was created in order to tax patrimonial wealth, it contains clear information on every household's membership and assets, as they both contributed directly to the calculation of the levy. Because the *confini* of each house were less apposite to the fiscal workings of the tax they are often only cursorily presented in the *portate*. However, the division between each household indicated by its members' presentation of a single *portata* also reflects its physical unity with or separation from its neighbours, because the existence of individual *portate* provides a good indication of the practical degree of interaction between fiscally separate households. When a *confino* is given between two dwellings occupying separate apartments within the same physical house, they have been entered in the database as separate entities, for it is likely that the two households were not only financially separate, but also emotionally distant from one another – perhaps even as a result of their patrimonial separation. Likewise, when separate dwellings within one house are given as constituting a single patrimonial unit, they have been entered in the database as one household. On the rare occasions in which the shares in a patrimony were divided between physically separated residences, it would be absurd to describe them as having belonged to a unified dwelling and they have consequently been entered as two individual household units.

Strictly speaking the age of the men in each household was central to its fiscal evaluation, for those between eighteen and sixty paid a head tax in addition to the levy on their *sovrabbondante*[1]. However, be it either for reasons of evasion or mere ignorance, Florentines were often vague about their ages[2]. Nonetheless, I have consistently followed the information on age given in the *portate*[3]. In cases where none was entered, I extrapolated it from another *portata* in which it is given. This may have meant ignoring the touching Florentine custom by which men proceeded slowly to the age at which they incurred the head tax, only to then speed ahead to the age of political majority (30), after which they tended to age by increments rounded to the nearest five or ten years at a time. Some clearly aged faster than others, while for certain individuals time stood still. Yet no-one matched the feat of Checca, the widow of Spinello Castellani, who between 1427 and 1433 managed to regress from 46 to 44[4].

It was not just Florentines' ages which could be distorted by fiscal considerations, the calculation of their overall wealth was also subject to a number of influences. As mentioned in the Introduction, citizens were sometimes allowed a deduction of up to 5% for the upkeep of their leased buildings and a reduction for the capital depreciation of their farm animals[5]. More importantly, they were granted deductions of *ƒ* 200 for each member of their household[6]. These considerations could considerably distort the relative wealth of a patrimony, particularly if the household was large, and for that reason all the data on wealth used here has been entered gross[7].

Servants have not been included in the household total for the simple reason that they were not kin and had no chance of inheriting more than a token share of the patrimony. Lodgers have also been discounted. Those that did pay rent clearly lived from a different patrimony and although they lived in the house itself, the area they occupied constituted a separate

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[1] *Cat.* 2, fol. 7*v*.

[2] Few men were like Francesco di Amerigo Zati, who in 1430 declared that he was "nacque a dì primo d'aghosto 1359"; *Cat.* 390, fol. 940*r*. Another pedant was Galileo di Giovanni Galilei, who in 1442 was "72½"; *Cat.* 615, fol. 533*r*. Alessandra Strozzi also knew the exact age of all her children; *Lettere di una gentildonna*, p. 127.

[3] The age of any children under ten months has been rounded down to 0.5 years old.

[4] *Cat.* 27, fol. 365*v* and *Cat.* 491, fol. 84*r*. respectively.

[5] *Cat.* 2, fol. 62*v*. (pencil pagination) and Canestrini, *La scienza e l'arte di stato*, p. 113. See, for example, *Cat.* 912, fol. 154*r*.

[6] *Cat.* 2, fol. 65*v*. (pencil pagination).

[7] In 1469, Francesco di Lorenzo Spinelli's assets totalled *ƒ* 2023 s. 19 d. 9. Yet after a five percent discount for the upkeep of his leased property and a reduction for the fourteen *bocche* of his household he was technically insolvent to the sum of *ƒ* 876 s. 18 d. 3 and was awarded a negotiated (*composto*) tax levy; *Cat.* 914, fol. 379*r*.

dwelling, usually a particular floor[8]. On the whole lodgers can be presumed to have eaten from a different pot, which would have excluded them from this central part of the household ritual. There is only one case in which rent-paying tenants also paid *spese* (living costs which covered food), and this presents a slight, but not insurmountable problem, as the lodgers and the landlord were closely related[9]. Although a transfer of money shows that two patrimonies were present, communal eating would have bonded their members and created the atmosphere of a single dwelling. I have consequently classified these men as living in one physical household.

Given the high mortality rate in the medieval world, it was quite possible that the children of any one family would not all have the same mother[10]. Yet as long as these children were legitimately born, there was no impediment to them inheriting an equal share of their father's estate. Thus, from a patrimonial point-of-view there is no need to establish their maternity. In any case, as the documentation of the *Catasto* only rarely gives information enabling the identification of step-children/siblings, their status could not reliably be made a category in the database.

I have not excluded members of the clans who are known to have been living in the countryside around Florence, since I could not exclude those who may well have been living *in villa*, but whose *portate* leave their actual whereabouts ambiguous. As stated in Chapter One, the distinction between town and country dwellers was understood and was even charmingly defined in the rubric to the *Catasto* of 1487: peasants were those "che habitano nel contado et sono di natura contadini"[11]. This clearly distinguished them from city folk who lived on their estates as a result of choice or their economic circumstances. Also included in the household totals are those who were normally resident in Florence, but who were out of the city when the *portate* were compiled. From 1427 to 1458 the tax officers allowed a reduction for the *bocche* of those who were away, so their absence can be understood as being merely temporary. Their inclusion can also be defended on the grounds that although their absence may temporarily have changed the actual numbers resident in

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[8] Monna Mea let a floor of her house, no. 5, from 1427 (see footnote 63 on page 68) to 1433. She charged just *ƒ* 2 a year, from which it can be inferred that the lease could only have included shelter in the house.

[9] In 1427 Piero di Domenico and Giovanni di Bardo Corsi were living in Bartolo di Domenico Corsi's house. Giovanni wrote that he gave Bartolo "ongni anno per lle mie spese dalla boccha *ƒ* 25 d'oro"; *Cat.* 34, fol. 723*v*. See also page 66 above.

[10] Step-fathers however were much rarer, see Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "The *Cruel Mother*", p. 125.

[11] D. V. and F. W. Kent, "Two Vignettes of Florentine Society in the Fifteenth Century", p. 240.

their domicile, it was most unlikely to have already led to any long-term changes in the household's overall structure. In some cases it appears that travelling merchants took their families with them and those who no longer listed a Florentine domicile have been excluded from the sample altogether[12]. In the matter of exile however, I decided that those who were banished should not be counted in the household from which they were absent. The banished were denied the liberty to return to Florence and as their absence was not temporary, it was also more likely to have had a greater effect on the long-term constituency of their household.

If an individual died or moved out of his/her household while the *portate* were being compiled, or if a *portata* was later amended to show a member's departure, the change was not incorporated into the database. *Portate* were generally made on the same day throughout the whole quarter and thus give a uniform 'snap-shot' of the households on that one day. Naturally a death, or to a lesser extent the departure of a bride, may have had an impact on a household's structure and typology (as opposed to its mere head count), but it is unlikely that any further realignment would already have taken place and it would certainly not have been incorporated in the *portata* from which the nature of the household must be deduced. There is more chance that the household membership was in equilibrium before the departure/death than immediately after it, which means that the former state provides a better indication of the established nature of the household.

Household Types

The 3163 individual samples from the ten tax redactions came from a total of 575 patrimonies which together constituted 159 different family lineages. Naturally many families emerged from within others over the course of the fifty-three years of this sample. In each case I have simply dated their existence from the point at which they constituted a separate patrimony living in a separate residence. In Chapter One I extracted just five household types from the data. However, being mindful of the differing priorities of other historical disciplines, a more detailed analysis of the figures has also be made, in which their number is increased to ten, to enable a greater differentiation of household types. In characterising them I shall also be able to explain the assumptions I made in delineating them all from one another. Firstly, for the sake of clarity I shall list them:

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[12] For example, in 1427 Francesco di Giovanni Zati was living with his entire family in London and thus none of them have been included in the database; *Cat.* 73, fol. 378*r*.

1. Solitary
2. Conjugal
3. Augmented Conjugal
4. Sibling (Frérèche)
5. Joint Fraternal
6. Multiple
7. Patriarchal
8. Multiple Patriarchal
9. Avuncular
10. Household with cousins

The first group is the 'solitary' household and its definition is much the same as that given in Chapter One. Yet despite the implication of the title, there are in fact several solitary households which were home to more than one person. Single people who shared their dwelling with others from whom or to whom their estate could not pass are also classed as solitary householders. The most frequent circumstance in which this occurred was when a solitary householder shared his domicile with illegitimate offspring. Six of the 101 solitary householders lived with their bastard sons. For example, in 1469 Barone di Niccolò Cocchi-Donati resided with two illegitimate sons, as did Matteo di Matteo Corsi, who also shared the house with his mother and a female servant. Despite Matteo's house accommodating a total of five, as none of them could be significant beneficiaries of his estate, he is classified as a 'solitary' householder[13]. Another three solitary householders shared their dwellings with lodgers, but they too had no role in the households' patrimonies. Co-residency with *spurii* might be defined by demographers as constituting a mock-conjugal family, and if 'family' were defined exclusively by emotional ties, they would be right. Yet the success of a lineage in this period was also dependent on it consisting of families which were units of patrimonial conservation and because the law excluded bastards from the inheritance of this patrimony, they must also be barred from the nominal membership of their household.

The second generic type of household is the 'conjugal'. It was initiated by marriage, yet mortality levels meant that 26.7% of the conjugal households in the sample were actually single-parent families. If a mother died, the children remained under the father's *patria potestas*. However, when the father died, I decided that the mother was the nominal household head only until the eldest son attained the age of majority, i.e. twenty-five, at which point the household became a frérèche – as long as its members were still bachelors[14].

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[13] Barone Donati's sons were Lionardo and Cocco; *Cat.* 912, fol. 116*r*. – Lionardo's illegitimacy is acknowledged in *Cat.* 801, fol. 1349*r*. Matteo di Matteo Corsi's household membership is noted in *Cat.* 914, fol. 586*r*. A total of 57 bastard samples appear in the various *portate* of the twelve clans. All have been discounted here.

[14] In his will of 1461 Domenico di Giovanni Giugni stipulated that "la chasa di Firenze della nostra habitazione sia di tutti i miei figliuoli maschi ligittimi et naturali...et quella non possano né vendere né inpegnare per alchuno modo, et no lla possano dividere né vendere l'uno o ll'altro se non sono tutti d'età d'anni venticinque"; BL, *Acquisti e Doni* 103, fol. 23*v*. (pencil pagination). Until then, the trustees of his estate were instructed to co-operate fully with his widow, Margarita: "...sanza lei, nulla si possa fare"; *ibid.*, fol. 24*r*. (pencil pagination).

Household types are best defined through the transformations which their inhabitants brought upon them. Events such as death and exile may have caused changes in household typology, but those which were actively sought and undertaken by choice are always preferable as an indicator of the householders' intentions to those which were of a more serendipitous nature. Thus it is the act of marriage itself and not the procreation of children which signalled the start of a new conjugal cell. This means that a childless married couple can still be considered as an identifiable unit (but not a household), even if residing with others. As was shown in the Conclusion, fathers often needed to produce children to be able to bequeath the property which they had inherited and thus fertility within marriage was crucial. Only matrimony enabled the production of legitimate children and as a result the two are virtually interchangeable, the one the natural (and generally immediate) corollary of the other. However, as marriage and not the begetting of children was the moment in which a new familial identity was created, I date the commencement of the new unit from the consciously undertaken contractual obligation of matrimony.

Just as the absence of either of the 'founding' members of a conjugal household need not have affected its status, neither did the addition of others who were not offspring of either parent, so long as they played no role in the passage of the patrimony. These individuals were usually mothers, aunts or sisters from the husband's family. The head of the household's mother was the most frequent 'adjunct' to the conjugal group, accounting for over two thirds of the samples containing an extra member. Sisters were more uncommon and were usually present either because they were too young to have married[15] or else had returned to the house of their birth as widows and had little chance of marrying again[16]. In Chapter One all these examples were collected together in the conjugal group, although, for the sake of comparison I present them as a separate category in the graphs below[17].

The accepted definition of a fraternity is a household in which neither parent is present and which has at least one male member old enough to be legally responsible for his siblings. This responsibility did not constitute *patria potestas*, for legal rights would have been distributed equally between the eligible members of the household and this fact also

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[15] As was the case in 1433 with Lorenzo di Bartolo Guidi's twelve-year old step-sister, Nana; *Cat.* 492, fol. 103*r*.

[16] In 1427 Giovanni di Piero Guidi was housing his sixty-two-year-old widowed sister, Antonia; *Cat.* 73, fol. 584*r*.

[17] In all other household types, it is not the sex of the women present, but their relationship to the household head that determines the household's categorisation. This method is different from that used by demographers and historians of the family. It is not intended to be misogynistic, but is the result of this study's patrimonial basis.

distinguishes the type from a conjugal household. In Chapter One, I included fraternities with one married brother in the same group as the pure frérèches which had no conjugal cell. From a purely demographic standpoint this distinction would not be valid. However, marriage in itself did not change the rights of the various members of a household to a share in the father's estate and since the marriage of just one brother did not normally curtail the existence of the fraternity, I found that grouping the two units together added clarity without sacrificing accuracy. In the graphs which appear from page 191 below the two are entered as separate groups to show the relative distribution between them.

In practice even the membership of a pure frérèche was not just restricted to brothers. Sisters were also present in a quarter of the samples. However, the spread of their ages was much narrower than that of their brothers. As in the samples of the extended conjugal families examined above, these women were almost exclusively pre-nubile. More interestingly, of those who were older, none were widows[18]. Thus any sister over the age of twenty who was living with her brothers was most likely "non esse aptam ad matrimonium"[19]. There was one case in which the widow of a deceased brother was also present, but she had no children and left the household shortly after, leaving it to revert to a simple frérèche[20].

As we saw in Chapter One, the incorporation of a second conjugal cell into a fraternity often presaged its dissolution and consequently marriage was generally delayed in this household type. This did not enforce celibacy on the men living in them, but it did mean that any offspring that they fathered would have been illegitimate. A total of forty-one bastards for whom the household type at the time of their birth can be established were born into the

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[18] This fact may be a quirk of the sample, but the common testamentary stipulation that "heredi si deva bene et caritativamente trattare" single female relatives, suggests in fact that widows were not encouraged to return to the house of their birth or else were soon married off again. The quotation is from Tommaso di Lionardo Spinelli's will of 1468 and refers to his sister, suora Margarita; *Spinelli Archive* box 11a, item no. 198. Filippo di Cino di Rinuccini also included a clause in his will guaranteeing that his daughters Lisabetta and Maddalena should be housed and fed "in chaso che lle rimanessono vedove"; *NA* 10450, fol. 112*r*. (pencil pagination).

[19] Trexler, "Celibacy in the Renaissance", p. 22, footnote 68. In 1469, Isabella di Francesco Zati was forty-two, yet "non ebbe mai maritto perchè à i panni della Vergine Maria...per insino a ora sono tornatta in chasa mia parenti"; *MC* 44, fol. 457*r*. A clearer indication to the probable cause of her vocation is given in her father's *portata* of 1458: "Isabella, mia figliuola, ò in chasa...perchè non è sana..."; *Cat*. 808, fol. 404*v*.

[20] Galeotto di Bernardo Giugni, the husband of Lisabetta, the widow in question, had only just died, for his name was initially entered in the *portata*. However, the fact that arrangements had already been made for Lisabetta's departure imply that in such cases widows did not remain long in the house of their in-laws; *Cat*. 808, fol. 120*r*.

twelve clans between 1427 and 1480[21]. Although these bastards were usually brought up in their father's house, they were not eligible to inherit, and when the family property was subject to a fideicommissum, they were explicitly barred from being co-parceners[22]. The differing status of these children from their legitimate half-siblings was a potential source of contention within the household and may even have upset its equilibrium on occasion. Yet, it is unlikely that it caused a wide scale problem in the conjugal households, as just 0.8% of their membership was illegitimate. This was probably less the case in the fraternities, for seventeen of the forty-one bastards were born to bachelors living in fraternal households with no more than one conjugal cell. Even more striking is the fact that they accounted for 8.5% of the membership sample of these households. This high proportion was the direct outcome of the delayed marriages which enabled the continuation of fraternities. Thus in these households the problems associated with illegitimate offspring must have been much more acute. However, the fact that the continuation of the fraternity was generally preferred to early matrimony and the accompanying risk of household dissolution is further proof of the perceived advantages of maintaining a collective patrimony within a unified residence, despite these drawbacks.

There is just one single example of a sororal house in the whole sample, and it is surprising to find even one, for the nature of Florentine property tenure made their formation difficult. Whereas the fraternity developed naturally from the conjugal family, the sororal household could only be produced by the conscious decision of widows to co-habit. Daughters who were unmarried never became equal partners in a fraternity as their portion of the inheritance was usually given in the form of a dowry. The few who returned to the house of their birth on becoming widows had little chance of finding themselves its sole heirs, as they

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[21] There is often a difference between the type of household into which bastards were born and that in which they were registered in the *portate*. Naturally, it is the circumstances of their origins which are pertinent here. A large proportion of these children were born by the slaves of their respective households. Other people's slaves were generally off-limits because of the 'deterioration' which pregnancy caused them; Zanelli, *Le schiave orientali a Firenze*, p. 61. For example, Benedetto di Galileo Galilei won damages of *ƒ* 27 from a baker, Antonio di Piero, "per una schiava mia che gli mi ingravidò"; *Cat.* 801, fol. 958*r*. I found no case in which the parents of a bastard later married, thus enabling it to be legitimated "as if conceived within a legitimate marriage". For further discussion of this theme, see Kuehn, *Law, Family and Women*, pp. 157-193. Data for the household type into which a further sixteen bastards were born is lacking and they have therefore not been considered here.

[22] In 1419 Paolo di Morello Morelli had his son Giovanni (not the homonymic diarist) legitimated by Niccolò Albizzi "principis imperiale". However, the same act limits Giovanni to inherit only *ƒ* 50 from his father; *NA* 9039, fol. 173*r*. I found only two other bequests to bastards in all the testaments made by members of the twelve clans. In the first, Filippo di Cino Rinuccini left *ƒ* 500 to the illegitimate son of his son Alamanno to be used to purchase property; *NA* 10450, fol. 175*r*. (pencil pagination). The other was in a codicil to the will of (the other) Giovanni di Paolo Morelli, in which he left his bastard son Francesco *ƒ* 1000 in *Monte* shares and a house, with the proviso that the property would return to his legitimate lineage on Francesco's death; *NA* 18000, fol. 169*r*.

lacked the sufficient legal authority to guarantee its management[23]. Thus, only widows who did not live with any of their adult male kin and did not inhabit a clan domicile could form a sorority. Naturally these circumstances did not occur often. However, between 1430 and 1433 monna Caterina and monna Niccola di Giovanni Castellani stayed together in a house belonging to their father which he had assigned to them *a vita*[24]. The arrangement was probably only intended to be a stop-gap and a convenient use of a dilapidated property. Indeed by 1433 Caterina had remarried and moved out, leaving Niccola alone in the house[25]. One last observation on sibling households also stems from the legal inequality of brothers and sisters. A sibling household could only be created through the presence of two brothers, because only then did the characteristic division of authority occur. A brother living alone with his sister is therefore merely the remnant of a conjugal household, because the authority rests entirely with the male. However, this household type must remain hypothetical, as I have no clear example of one.

The sixth household type is the multiple household, a fraternity with more than one conjugal unit. In Chapter One it was classified with those in which cousins and nephews lived, which it could indeed become if its members remained united in the long run. Multiple households were created when at least two married brothers lived together from a common patrimony. This did not prevent other bachelor brothers from being part of the household, nor would the status of any of those present affect the rights of the others to inherit. The death of a father would turn some of the household's sons and daughters into being just nephews and nieces. However, this does not affect the categorisation of the household here, as the description of an avuncular household is reserved for households into which children were brought rather than born.

Despite its name, the defining member of a patriarchal household was really the daughter-in-law. Indeed the number of daughters-in-law who had married into the house created the only difference between a single and a multiple patriarchal household. That being the case, the daughter-in-law did not actually have to be present for the household to continue being

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[23] On the legal restrictions placed on women see Thomas Kuehn, "Cum consensu Mundualdi" in *Law, Family and Women*, pp. 212-237 and also "Understanding Gender Inequality in Renaissance Florence".

[24] *Cat.* 445, fol. 212*r*. The property could not be transferred to them outright as neither had been emancipated.

[25] By 1442 both the dwelling and a neighbouring property, which were described as 'ruined' had been used by Giovanni to settle his daughter-in-law Oretta's outstanding dowry; *Cat.* 614, fol. 467*r*. As neither of the houses are mentioned in Giovanni's will of 1438, it is likely that they had already been transferred to Orctta by then; *NA* 12126, fol. 93*v*.

classed as such. Indeed it was even possible for the husband to die without the household form changing, so long as his father remained alive. Again, as is the case in the definition of a conjugal family, the presence of the patriarch's grand-children was not essential. As it is therefore the marriage of the patriarch's son and not his success in fathering children that defines the type, I have avoided the term 'stem household' so often used by demographers. Furthermore, the stem household usually contains just one married son, whereas the multiple patriarchal household can contain any number of them.

The ninth household type is the avuncular. In Chapter One it was grouped together with the multiple households and those in which cousins co-habited. Although the fundamental difference between the latter types was merely dependent on how long their respective patrimonies had been united, avuncular households were not the product of inertia, but of the conscious choice by the head of the household to shelter his nephews and nieces. Without the historical background of a particular household, it is impossible to distinguish between the remnant of a multiple household (in which a nephew or a niece was present before his/her father had died) and a true avuncular household, into which orphans had been brought. In several cases from the 1420s and 1430s this history is missing and thus the definition of these households as avuncular is based on other evidence or on the belief that the nephews and nieces which they contained had been offered shelter. In fact, there is only one example in which an uncle can be proved as having willingly brought a nephew into his house and the fact that the uncle in question was childless might provide a reason for such a decision[26].

The final household type considered here is one in which cousins co-habited. Unlike the avuncular model, no inference has been made here on whether their members were either born or brought into the household. However, among all their examples, there are only four cases in which it can be shown that cousins were offered shelter and on the whole it should be presumed that this household type was the product of long-term cohesion rather than recent amalgamation. It is worth adding that of these four 'actively-created' examples, two had resulted from testamentary stipulations and were therefore based less on charity than on self-interest. Most orphans probably found themselves in the position of Giuliano and

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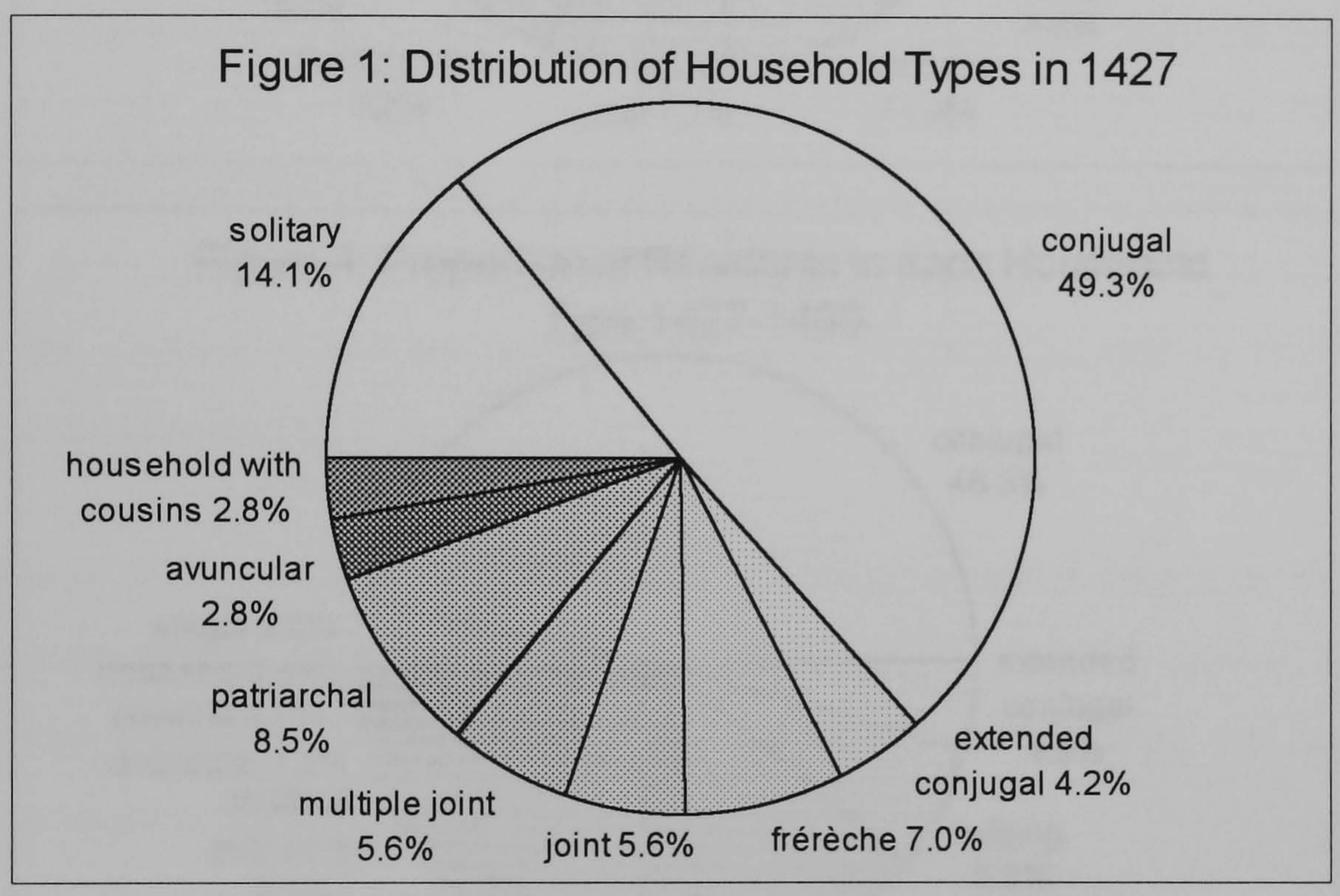
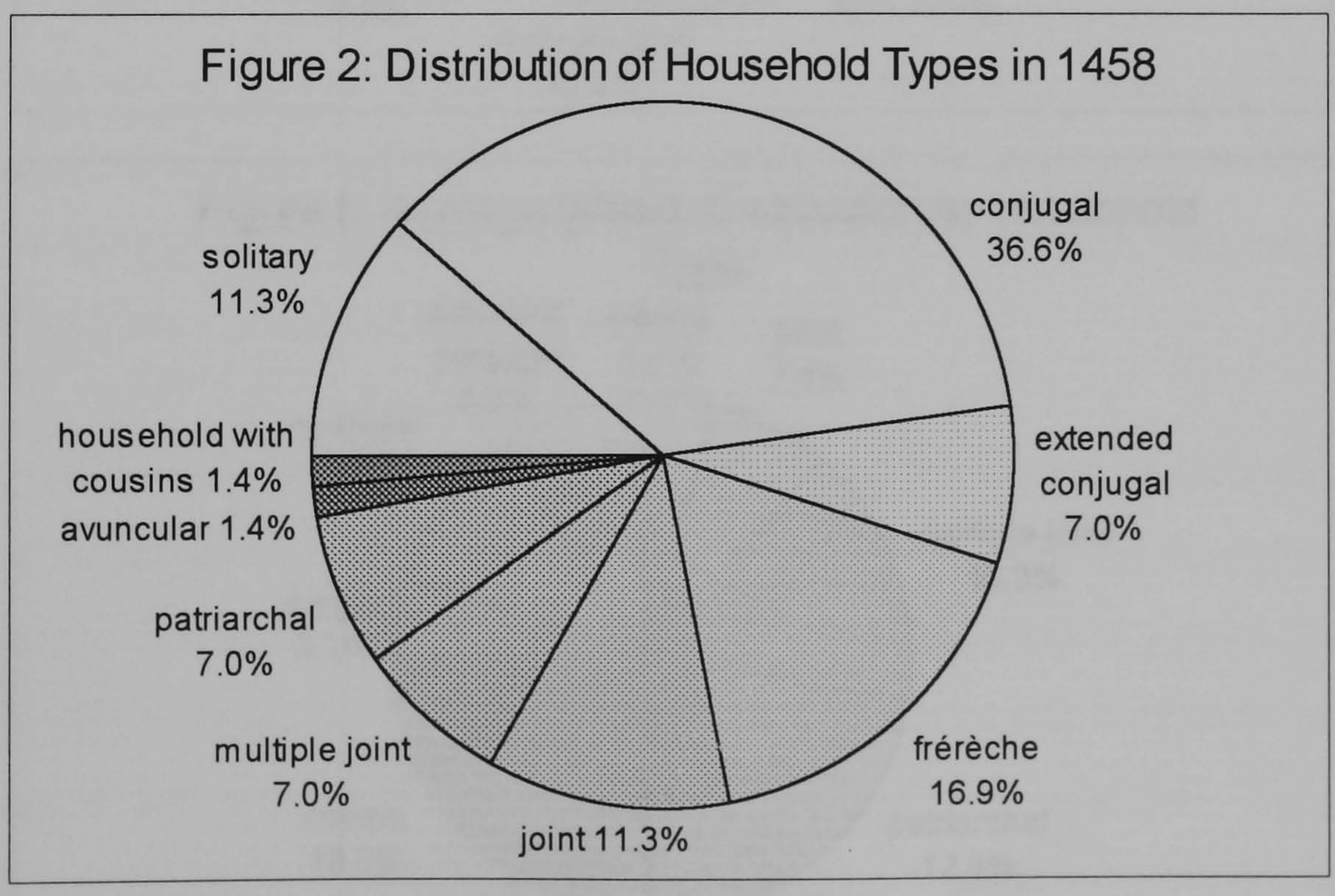
[26] In 1458 Tommaso di Lapo Corsi had his nephew Francesco living with him, "è mio nipote ma è stato già tenpo e sarà per l'aviene a mie spese"; *Cat.* 808, fol. 461*v*. The fact that the deduction for his *bocca* was still awarded to Francesco's father shows how unconventional this arrangement was.

Antonio Bartoli, who were required to pay for board and lodging in the houses of non-clan families[27].

The Charts

The pie charts presented below contain the same data as those in Chapter One, but here the number of sub-divisions has been increased to include each of the ten mentioned in this appendix. This enables some of the issues raised in the text of the chapter to be observed in greater detail.





[27] For some of the details of this case, see page 108.

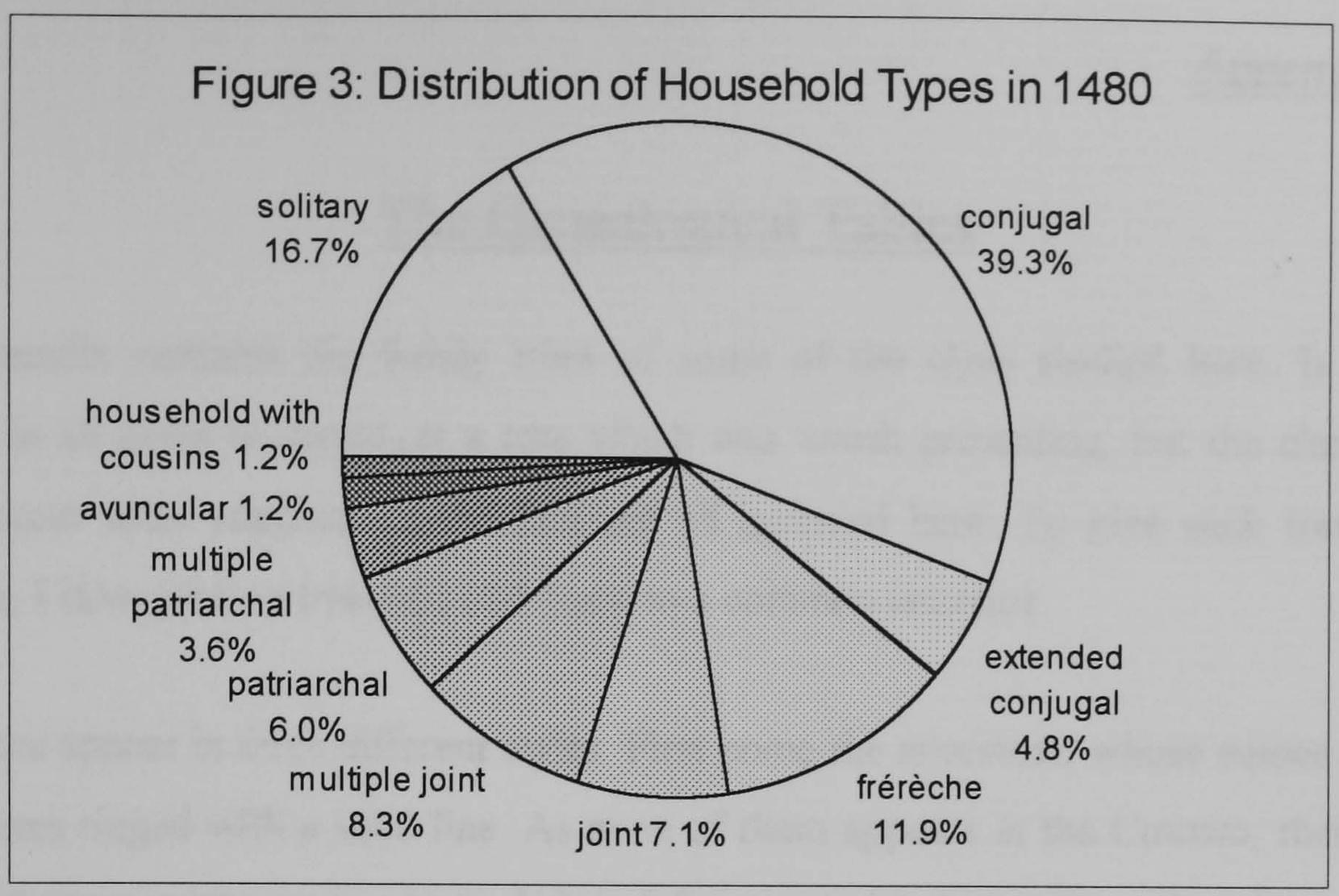


Figure 3: Distribution of Household Types in 1480
solitary 16.7%
conjugal 39.3%
household with cousins 1.2%
avuncular 1.2%
multiple patriarchal 3.6%
patriarchal 6.0%
multiple joint 8.3%
joint 7.1%
frérèche 11.9%
extended conjugal 4.8%

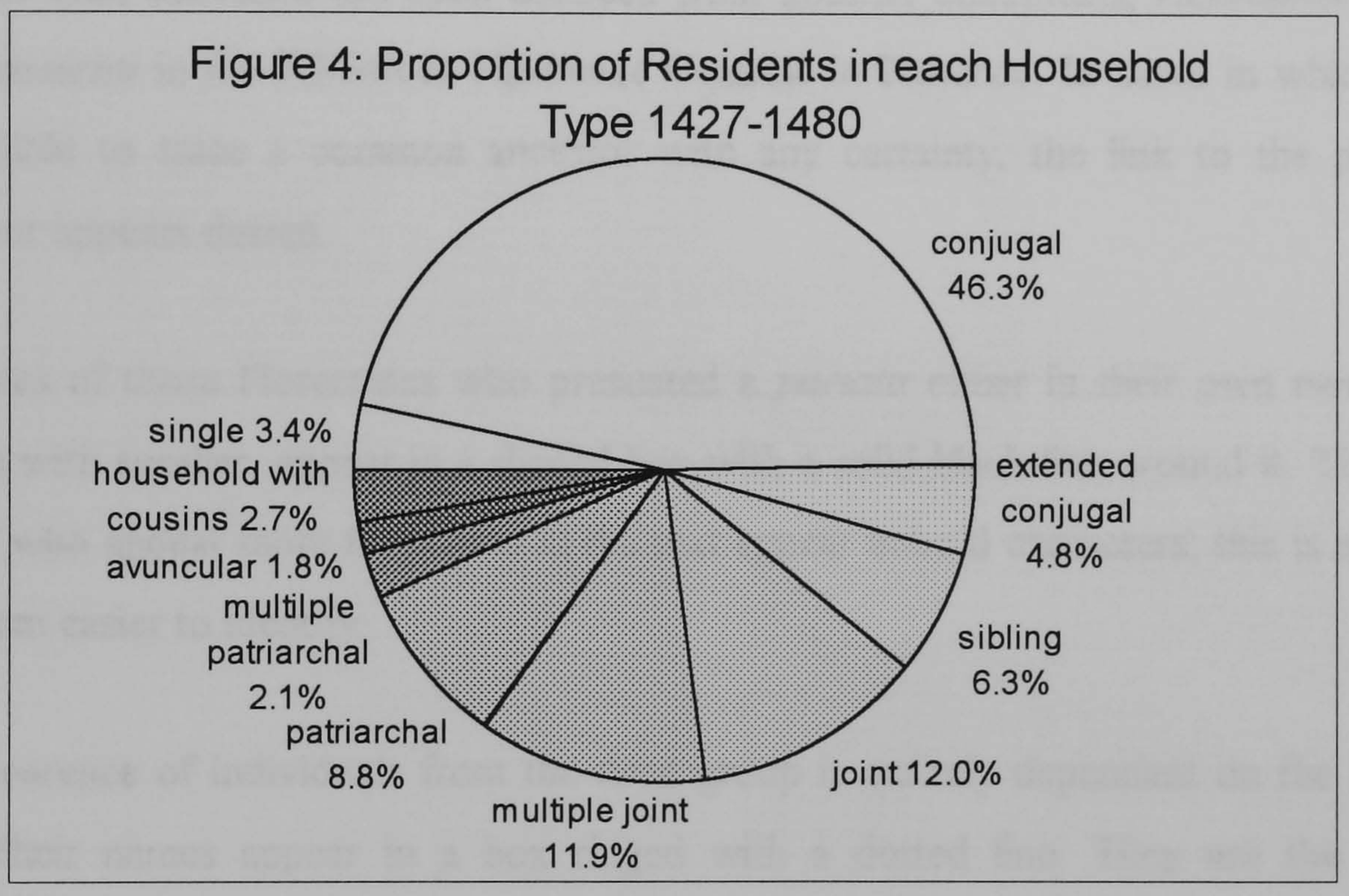


Figure 4: Proportion of Residents in each Household Type 1427-1480
conjugal 46.3%
single 3.4%
household with cousins 2.7%
avuncular 1.8%
multilple patriarchal 2.1%
patriarchal 8.8%
multiple joint 11.9%
joint 12.0%
sibling 6.3%
extended conjugal 4.8%

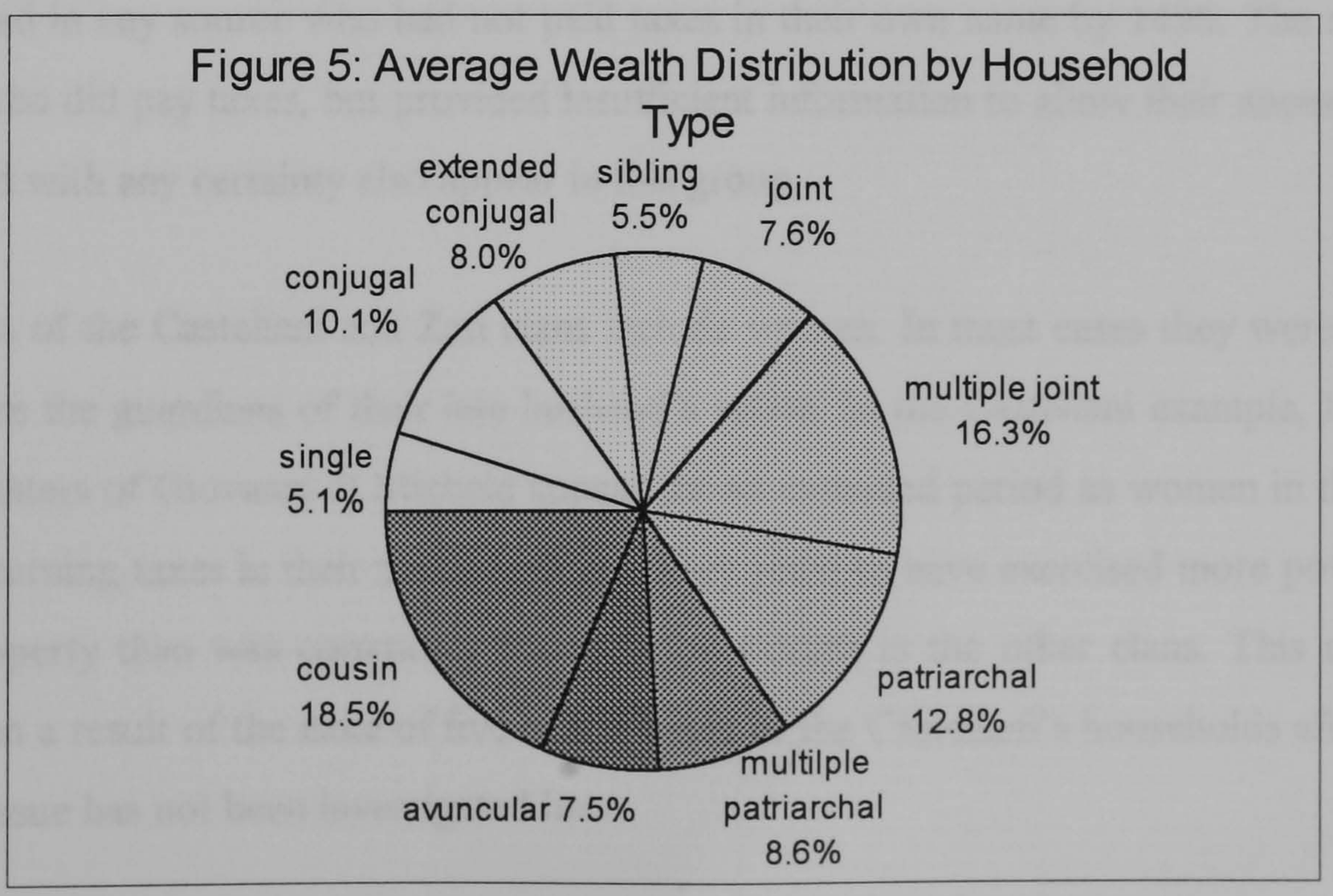


Figure 5: Average Wealth Distribution by Household Type
extended conjugal 8.0%
sibling 5.5%
joint 7.6%
conjugal 10.1%
multiple joint 16.3%
single 5.1%
patriarchal 12.8%
cousin 18.5%
multilple patriarchal 8.6%
avuncular 7.5%

The Genealogical Tables

This appendix contains the family trees of some of the clans studied here. It was not possible in all cases to construct a tree which was worth presenting, but the clans whose names occur most regularly in the text are all included here. To give each tree greater cohesion, I have tried to trace the clan back to a common ancestor.

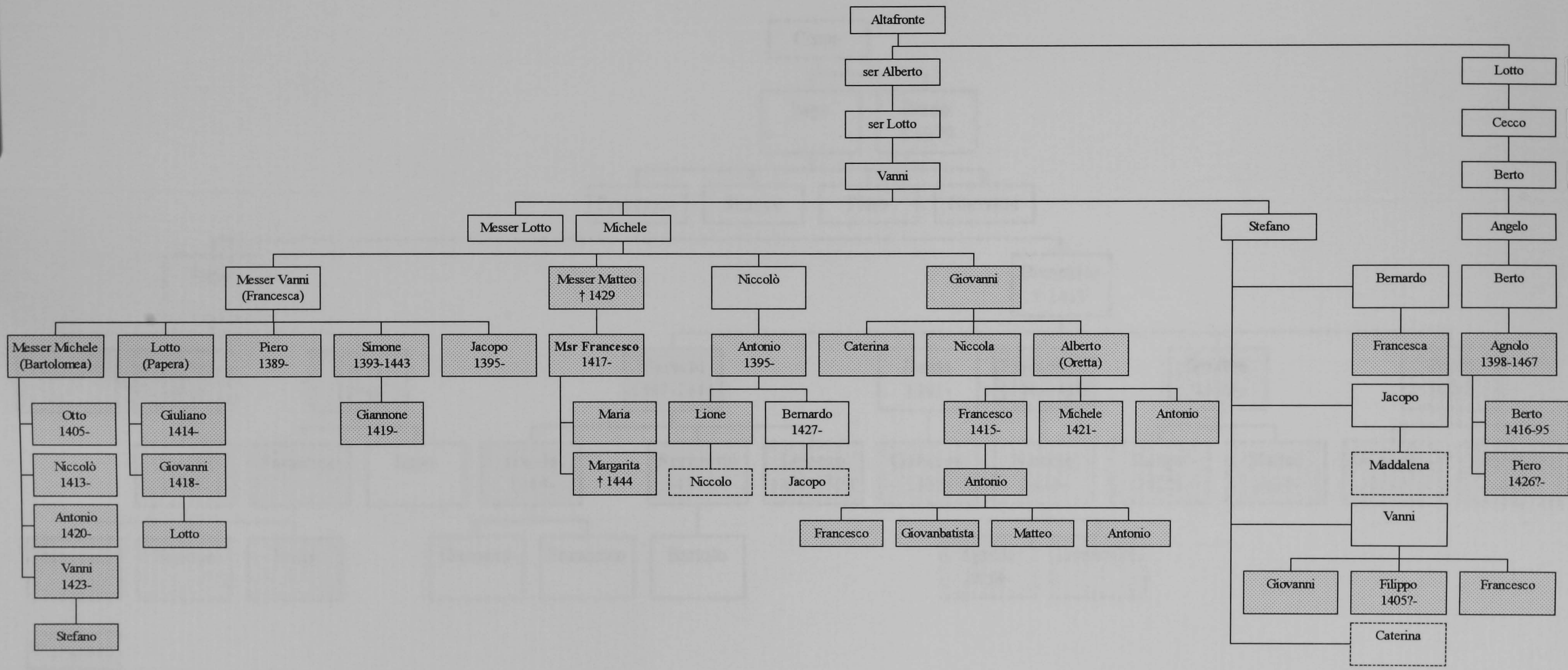
The names appear in three different styles. First come the ancestors, whose names are all in black boxes ringed with a solid line. As none of them appears in the *Catasto*, their names, dates and even existence has been deduced from notarial documents, *ricordanze* and the *Carte Passerini* in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence. In cases in which it was not possible to trace a common ancestor with any certainty, the link to the presumed progenitor appears dotted.

The names of those Florentines who presented a *portata* either in their own name, or in common with another, appear in a shaded box with a solid black line around it. The names of those who appear more frequently in the text appear in bold characters; this is merely to make them easier to identify.

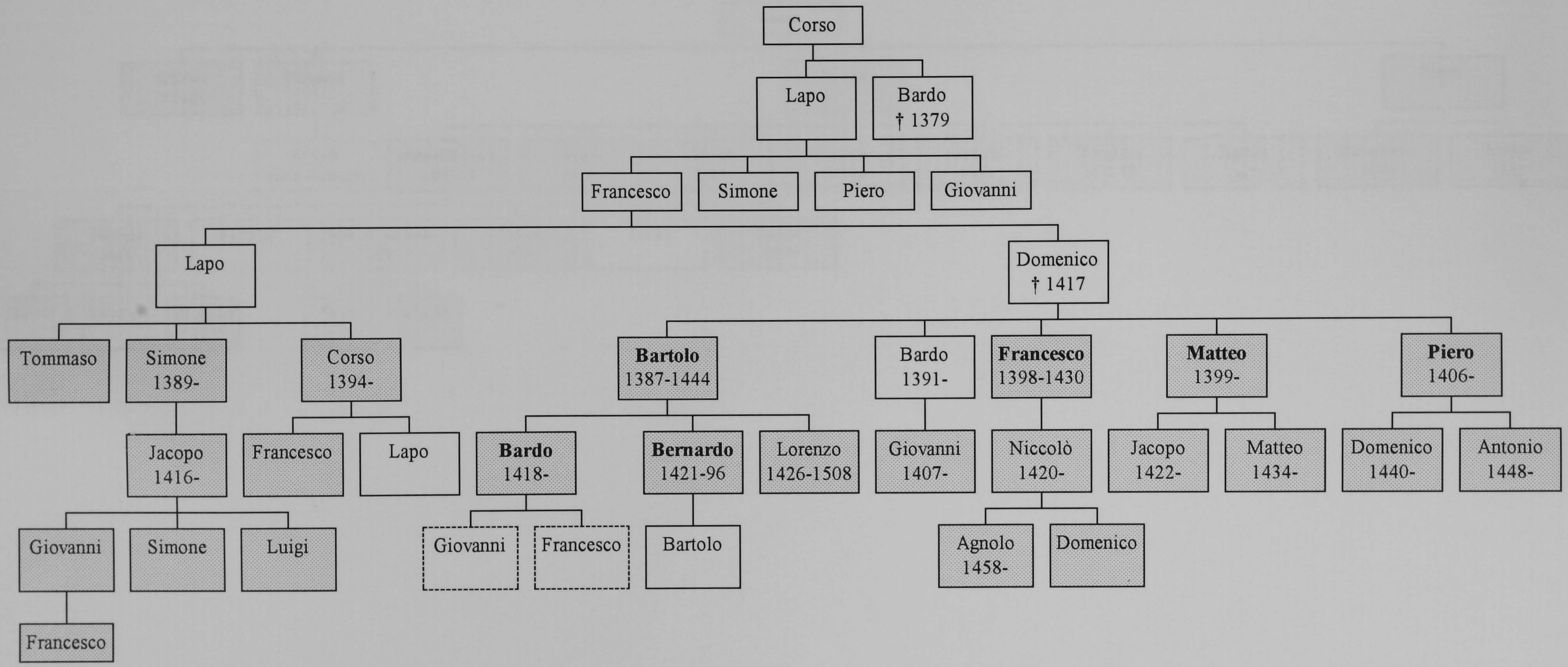
The appearance of individuals from the third group is entirely dependent on the available space. Their names appear in a box ringed with a dotted line. They are the children mentioned in any source who had not paid taxes in their own name by 1495. The names of others who did pay taxes, but provided insufficient information to allow their ancestry to be identified with any certainty also appear in this group.

The trees of the Castellani and Zati clans include women. In most cases they were widows who were the guardians of their late husband's estate. In the Castellani example, however, the daughters of Giovanni di Michele appear for an extended period as women in their own right, returning taxes in their maiden names. They seem to have exercised more power over their property than was commonly the case for women in the other clans. This may well have been a result of the exile of five of the heads of the Castellani's households after 1434, but the issue has not been investigated here.

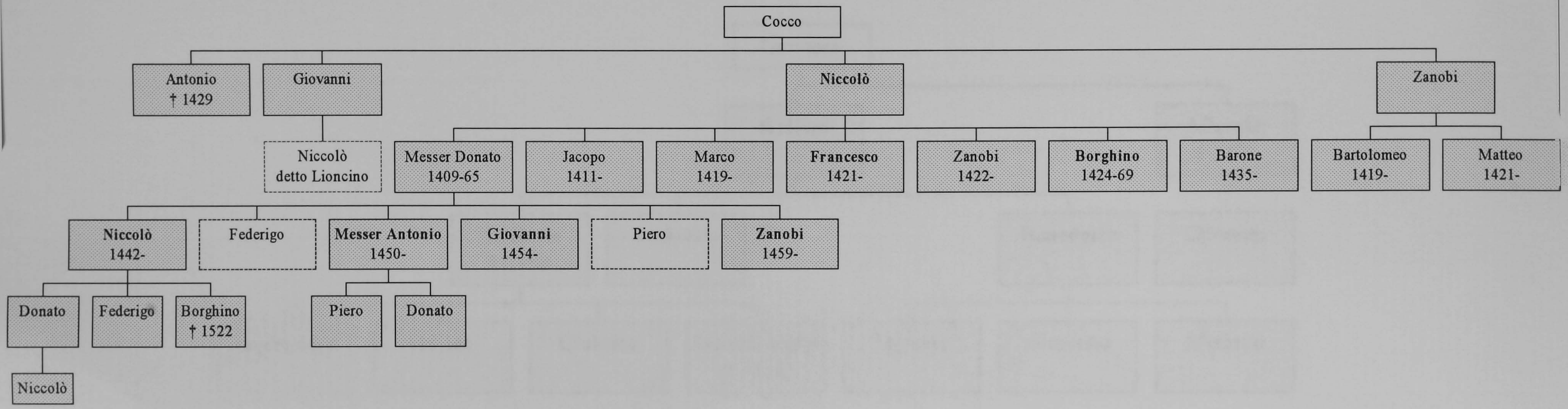
Castellani (main branch resident in the *Gonfalone* of Carro)



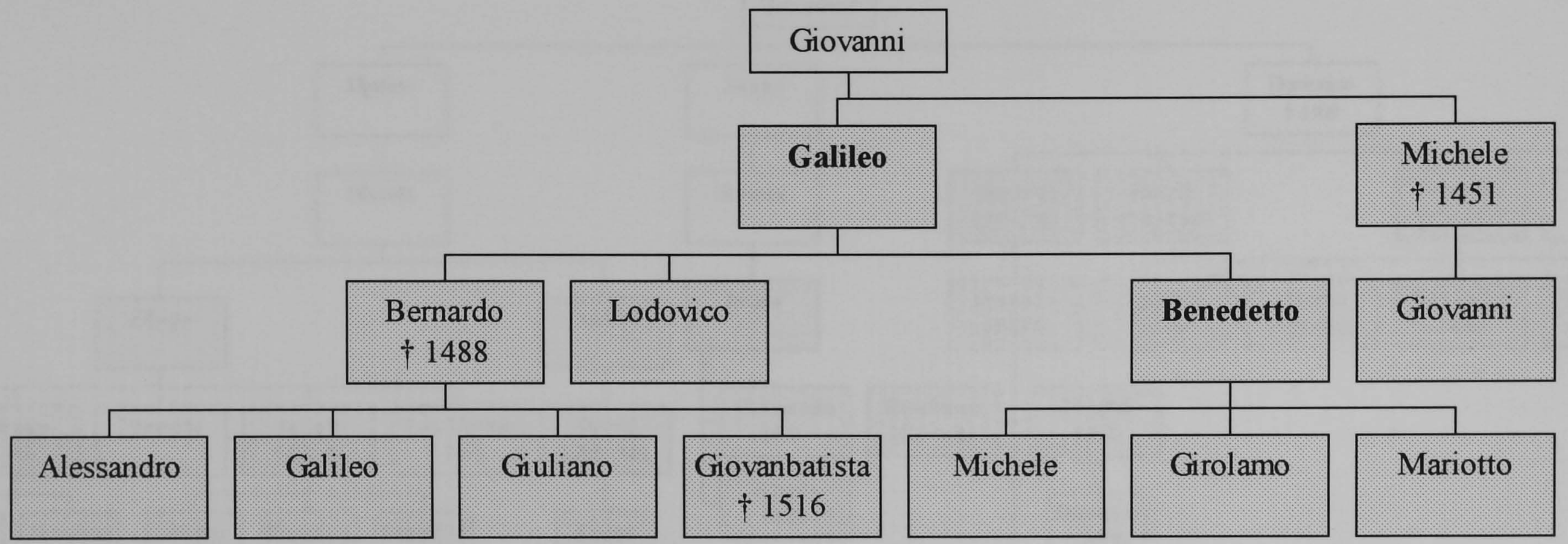
Corsi


Corso
Lapo
Bardo
† 1379
Francesco
Simone
Piero
Giovanni
Lapo
Domenico
† 1417
Tommaso
Simone
1389-
Corso
1394-
Bartolo
1387-1444
Bardo
1391-
Francesco
1398-1430
Matteo
1399-
Piero
1406-
Jacopo
1416-
Francesco
Lapo
Bardo
1418-
Bernardo
1421-96
Lorenzo
1426-1508
Giovanni
1407-
Niccolò
1420-
Jacopo
1422-
Matteo
1434-
Domenico
1440-
Antonio
1448-
Giovanni
Simone
Luigi
Giovanni
Francesco
Bartolo
Agnolo
1458-
Domenico
Francesco

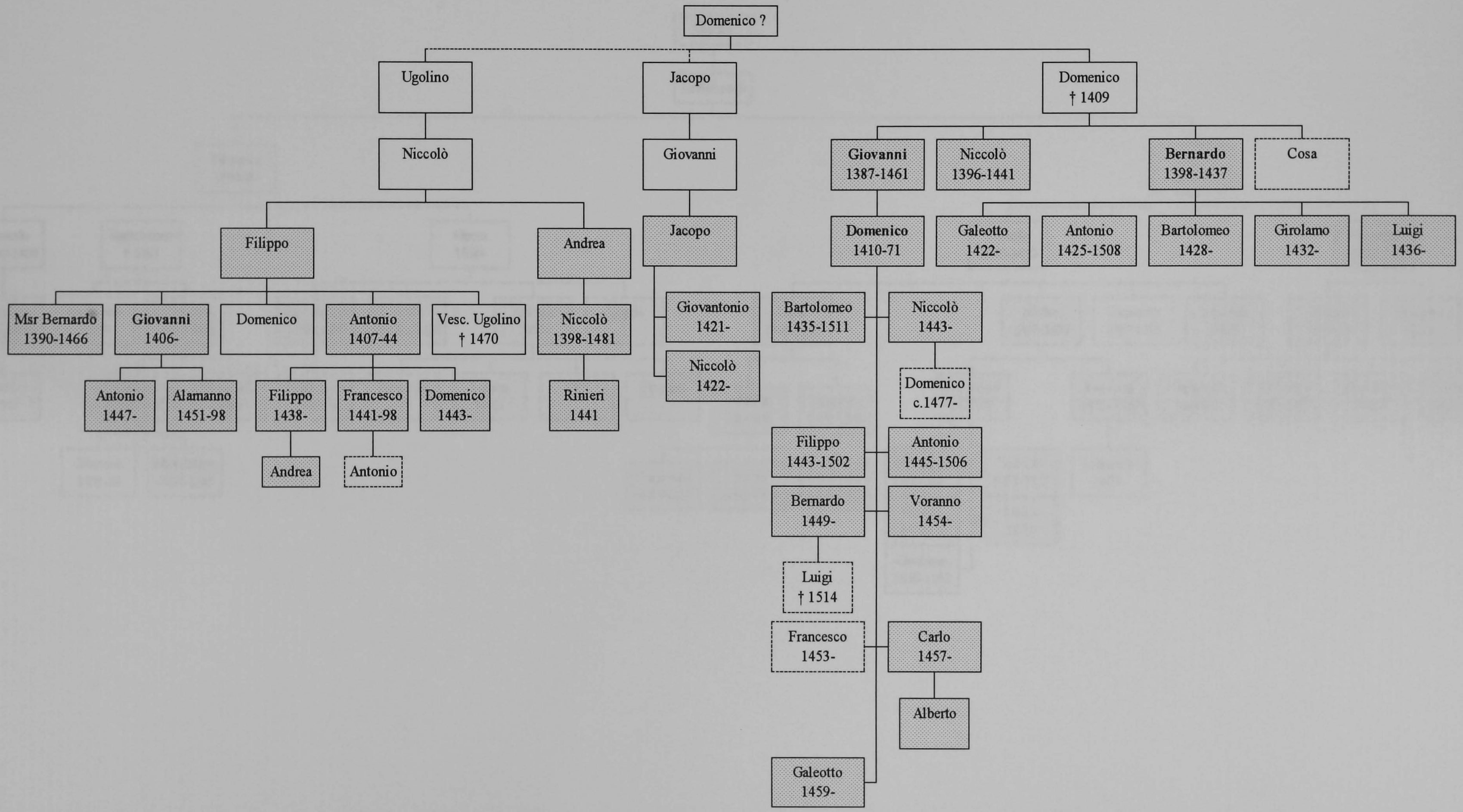
Cocchi-Donati



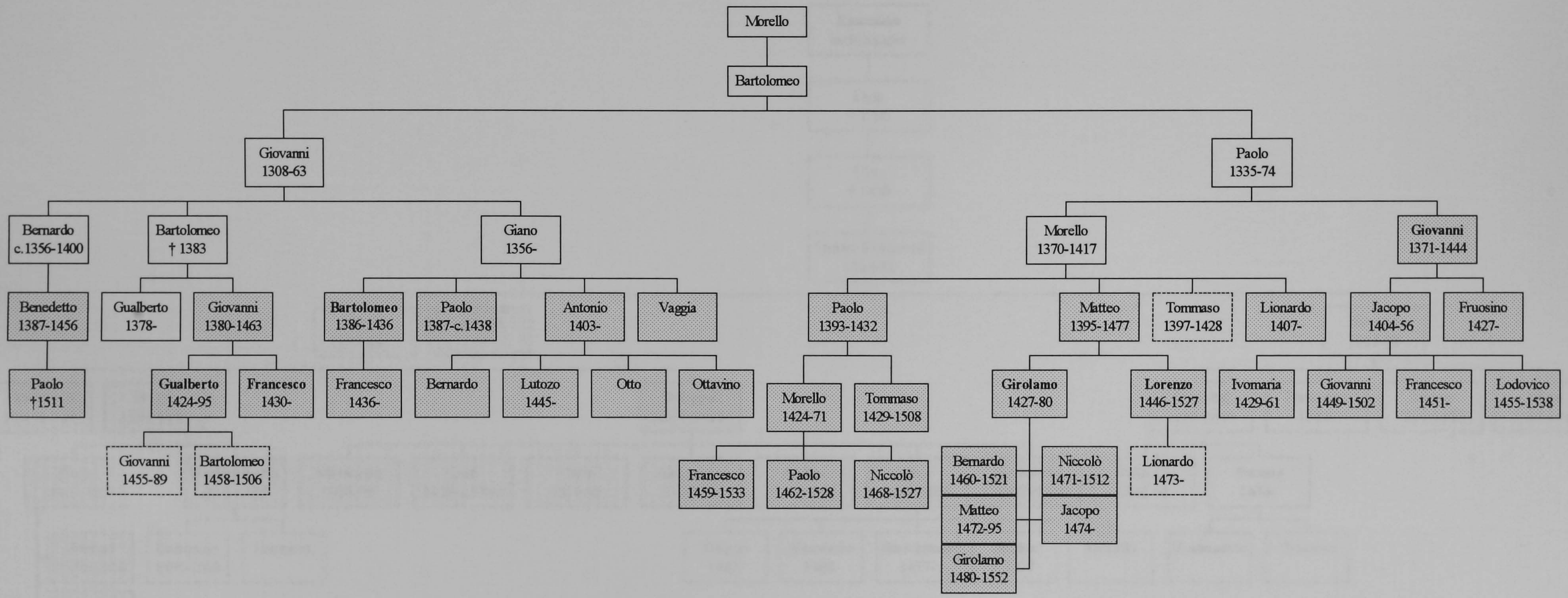
Galilei


Giovanni
Galileo
Michele
† 1451
Bernardo
† 1488
Lodovico
Benedetto
Giovanni
Alessandro
Galileo
Giuliano
Giovanbatista
† 1516
Michele
Girolamo
Mariotto

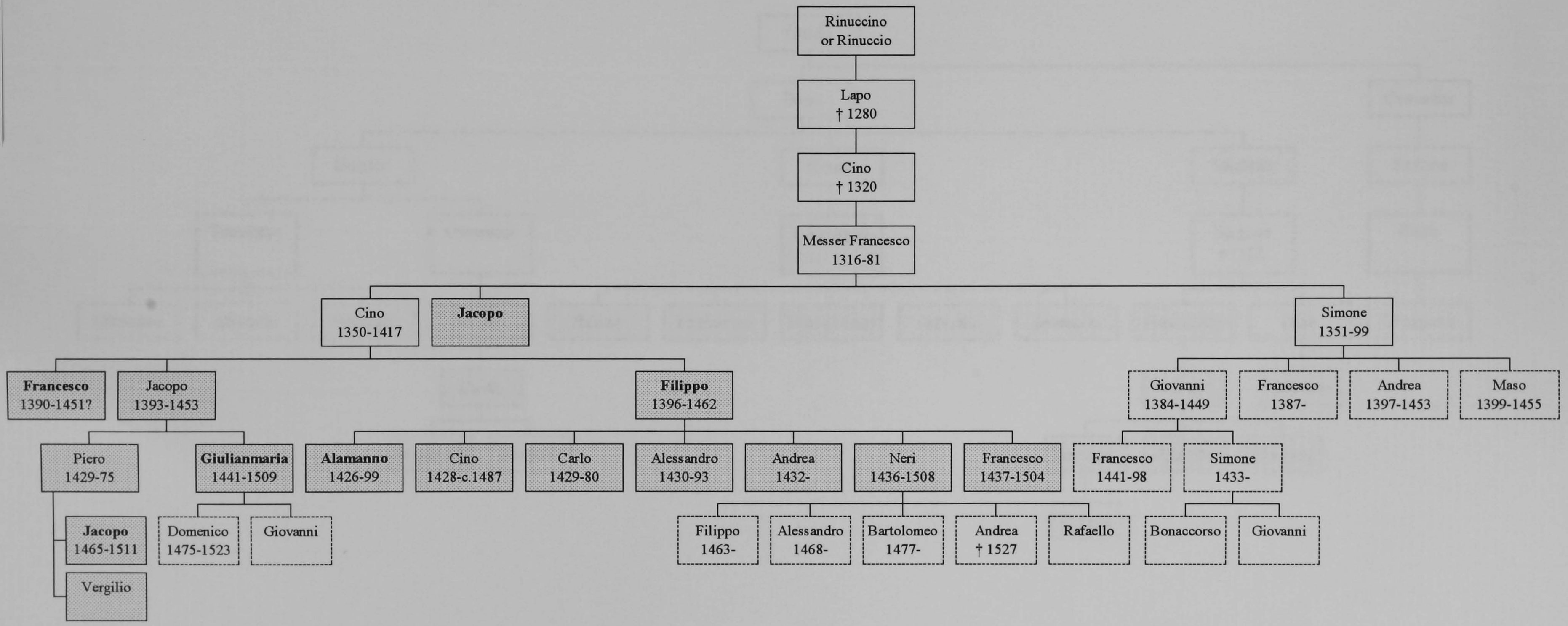
Giugni


Domenico ?
Ugolino
Jacopo
Domenico
† 1409
Niccolò
Giovanni
Giovanni
1387-1461
Niccolò
1396-1441
Bernardo
1398-1437
Cosa
Filippo
Andrea
Jacopo
Domenico
1410-71
Galeotto
1422-
Antonio
1425-1508
Bartolomeo
1428-
Girolamo
1432-
Luigi
1436-
Msr Bernardo
1390-1466
Giovanni
1406-
Domenico
Antonio
1407-44
Vesc. Ugolino
† 1470
Niccolò
1398-1481
Giovantonio
1421-
Bartolomeo
1435-1511
Niccolò
1443-
Niccolò
1422-
Domenico
c.1477-
Antonio
1447-
Alamanno
1451-98
Filippo
1438-
Francesco
1441-98
Domenico
1443-
Rinieri
1441
Filippo
1443-1502
Antonio
1445-1506
Andrea
Antonio
Bernardo
1449-
Voranno
1454-
Luigi
† 1514
Francesco
1453-
Carlo
1457-
Alberto
Galeotto
1459-

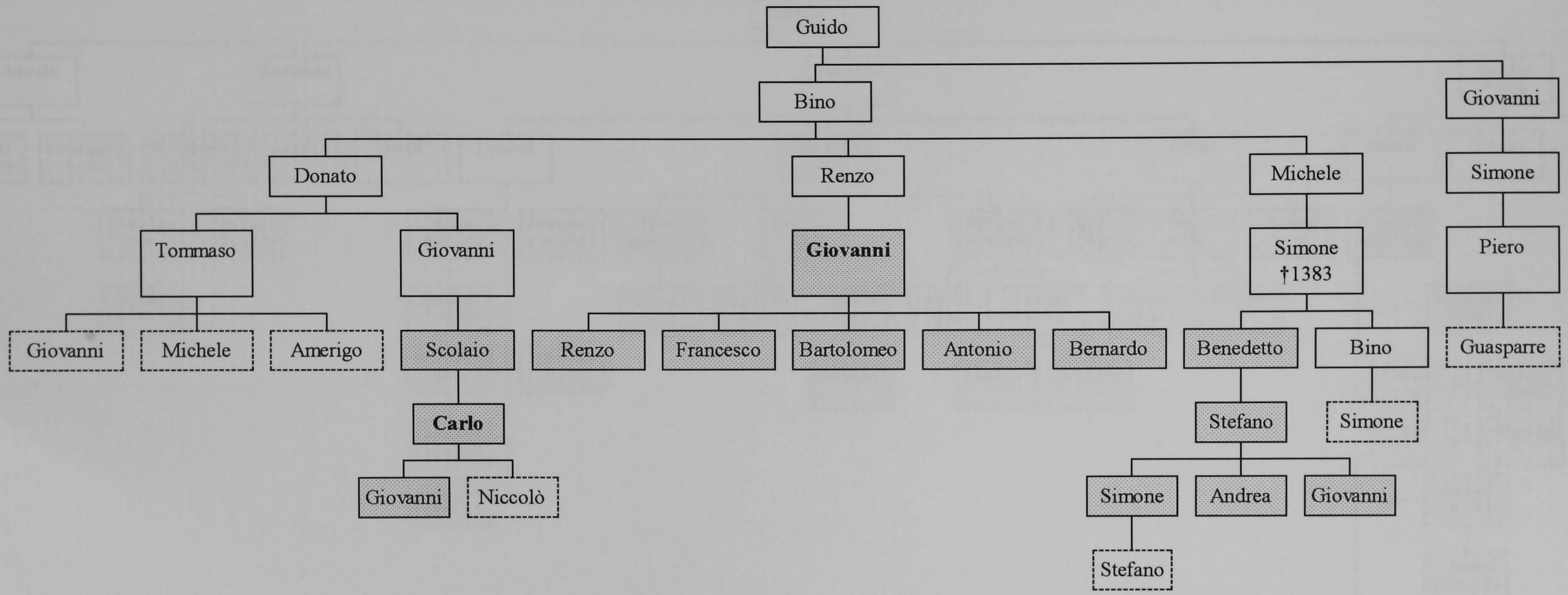
Morelli


Morello
Bartolomeo
Giovanni 1308-63
Paolo 1335-74
Bernardo c.1356-1400
Bartolomeo † 1383
Giano 1356-
Morello 1370-1417
Giovanni 1371-1444
Benedetto 1387-1456
Gualberto 1378-
Giovanni 1380-1463
Bartolomeo 1386-1436
Paolo 1387-c.1438
Antonio 1403-
Vaggia
Paolo 1393-1432
Matteo 1395-1477
Tommaso 1397-1428
Lionardo 1407-
Jacopo 1404-56
Fruosino 1427-
Paolo †1511
Gualberto 1424-95
Francesco 1430-
Francesco 1436-
Bernardo
Lutozo 1445-
Otto
Ottavino
Morello 1424-71
Tommaso 1429-1508
Girolamo 1427-80
Lorenzo 1446-1527
Ivomaria 1429-61
Giovanni 1449-1502
Francesco 1451-
Lodovico 1455-1538
Giovanni 1455-89
Bartolomeo 1458-1506
Francesco 1459-1533
Paolo 1462-1528
Niccolò 1468-1527
Bernardo 1460-1521
Niccolò 1471-1512
Lionardo 1473-
Matteo 1472-95
Jacopo 1474-
Girolamo 1480-1552

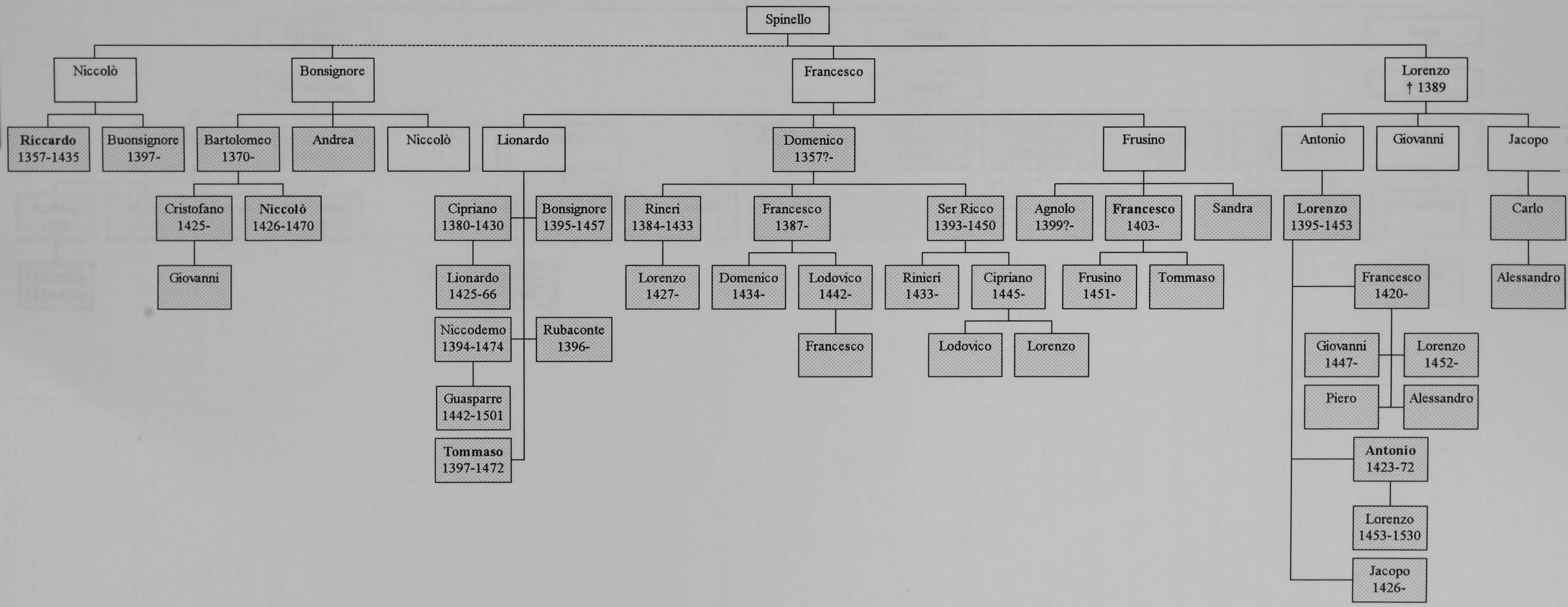
Rinuccini


Rinuccino or Rinuccio
Lapo † 1280
Cino † 1320
Messer Francesco 1316-81
Cino 1350-1417
Jacopo
Simone 1351-99
Francesco 1390-1451?
Jacopo 1393-1453
Filippo 1396-1462
Giovanni 1384-1449
Francesco 1387-
Andrea 1397-1453
Maso 1399-1455
Piero 1429-75
Giulianmaria 1441-1509
Alamanno 1426-99
Cino 1428-c.1487
Carlo 1429-80
Alessandro 1430-93
Andrea 1432-
Neri 1436-1508
Francesco 1437-1504
Francesco 1441-98
Simone 1433-
Jacopo 1465-1511
Vergilio
Domenico 1475-1523
Giovanni
Filippo 1463-
Alessandro 1468-
Bartolomeo 1477-
Andrea † 1527
Rafaello
Bonaccorso
Giovanni

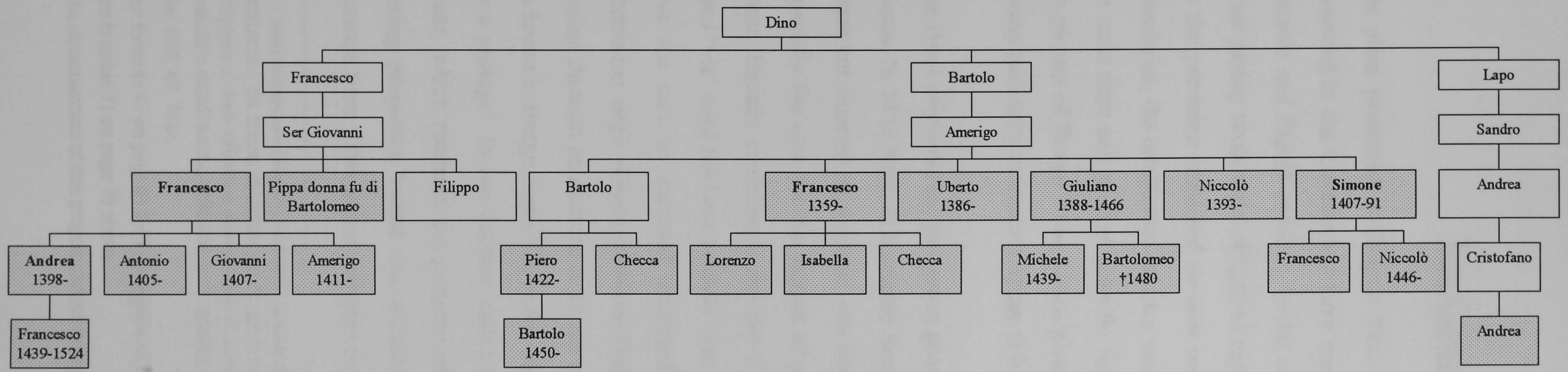
Salterelli


Guido
Bino
Giovanni
Donato
Renzo
Michele
Simone
Tommaso
Giovanni
Giovanni
Simone †1383
Piero
Giovanni
Michele
Amerigo
Scolaio
Renzo
Francesco
Bartolomeo
Antonio
Bernardo
Benedetto
Bino
Guasparre
Carlo
Stefano
Simone
Giovanni
Niccolò
Simone
Andrea
Giovanni
Stefano

Spinelli


Spinello
Niccolò
Bonsignore
Francesco
Lorenzo † 1389
Riccardo 1357-1435
Buonsignore 1397-
Bartolomeo 1370-
Andrea
Niccolò
Lionardo
Domenico 1357?-
Frusino
Antonio
Giovanni
Jacopo
Cristofano 1425-
Niccolò 1426-1470
Cipriano 1380-1430
Bonsignore 1395-1457
Rineri 1384-1433
Francesco 1387-
Ser Ricco 1393-1450
Agnolo 1399?-
Francesco 1403-
Sandra
Lorenzo 1395-1453
Carlo
Giovanni
Lionardo 1425-66
Lorenzo 1427-
Domenico 1434-
Lodovico 1442-
Rinieri 1433-
Cipriano 1445-
Frusino 1451-
Tommaso
Francesco 1420-
Alessandro
Niccodemo 1394-1474
Rubaconte 1396-
Francesco
Lodovico
Lorenzo
Giovanni 1447-
Lorenzo 1452-
Guasparre 1442-1501
Piero
Alessandro
Tommaso 1397-1472
Antonio 1423-72
Lorenzo 1453-1530
Jacopo 1426-

Zati


Dino
Francesco
Ser Giovanni
Francesco
Pippa donna fu di Bartolomeo
Filippo
Andrea 1398-
Antonio 1405-
Giovanni 1407-
Amerigo 1411-
Francesco 1439-1524
Bartolo
Amerigo
Bartolo
Francesco 1359-
Uberto 1386-
Giuliano 1388-1466
Niccolò 1393-
Simone 1407-91
Piero 1422-
Checca
Lorenzo
Isabella
Checca
Michele 1439-
Bartolomeo †1480
Francesco
Niccolò 1446-
Bartolo 1450-
Lapo
Sandro
Andrea
Cristofano
Andrea

The Compilation of the Maps

The plans presented in Chapter Two are based on the boundary (*confino*) descriptions presented in the *Catasto* and have been supplemented by further references found in the *Notarile* and *Pupilli* archives. In the ordinances of the *Catasto* promulgated in June 1427 those paying taxes were obliged to report the condition and borders of all their property[1]. As the provision contained no new instructions concerning the reckoning of a property's boundaries, the established practice was continued, whereby one boundary was allowed for the main door and another three for three immediate neighbours. However, it is implicit in the picture of Borgo Santa Croce given by these records that although this information is always necessary to locate a house, it is seldom sufficient to pinpoint its exact position.

The three neighbouring properties given in a *portata* may not have been the only adjacent houses. In 1458 Nofri di Bernardo Serristori gave a total of nine *confini*[2]. Indeed any large house not situated on a corner was likely to abut more than three properties and this was especially the case for the warren of properties behind the street façades of Borgo Santa Croce. Equally confusing is the fact that the seemingly fixed boundary designated by the word "via" need not have actually been a street exit, but merely the exit of a house. It could have led into an enclosed courtyard, an alley or even another house. Francesco di Altobianco degli Alberti mentions that his houses in the Funghaia were entered by first passing through an *androne* in Corso dei Tintori[3] and ser Giovanni Pagnini also notes that his house in Borgo Santa Croce did not front onto the street, so it must have been reached via a passage[4]. In one extreme case a property owner had no street access at all from his house, which rendered the property unrentable, except to its neighbours[5]. This feature of placing properties behind one another can been seen on Stefano Bonsignori's map of Florence from 1584 and it provides the visual proof, where explicit boundary descriptions

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[1] "...tucti et ciascuni cittadini fiorentini, o vero qualunque altri, i quali nella città di Firençe dovessono sopportare prestançe...sia tenuto et debba per dì qui a tucto dì dodici del mese di luglio proximo futuro rapportare per scriptura a' decti uficiali o alloro notaio et scrivani o vero ad alcuno di loro tucti et ciascuni loro beni immobili, rustichi o cittadineschi, colle loro parti, qualità, demonstrationi et confini..."; *Cat.* 2, fol. 58*r*. (pencil pagination).

[2] *Cat.* 805, fol. 742*r*.

[3] See footnote 41 on page 63 for a description of the area.

[4] See footnote 71 on page 70 above.

[5] The circumstances of this property, which belonged to Domenico di Antonio Allegri, appear on page 71.

are lacking, that certain houses lacked a street entrance. Without understanding this, it would have been practically impossible to accommodate all the declared households within the given ground plan. The fact that very few of the *portate* give precise positions for the houses and that the palace of Tommaso Spinelli is the only building for which the fifteenth-century *confini* can be established with any degree of certainty[6] creates numerous possibilities for locating most properties. As there was no fixed order of listing the *confini*, one cannot always presume that the first one mentioned after the street exit is on the left or the right. Indeed one cannot even be sure that the door was at the front of the building.

Using all ten tax redactions over the course of the century helped to plug the gaps which would have resulted from only a superficial glance at these sources, but ultimately the whole process is full of pitfalls[7]. Thus any maps, including those presented in Chapter Two, can only claim a high probability of being correct, as there are so many variables to consider.

Given the general lack of fixed points, I have tried to define the edge of properties by their most likely dividing wall. In most cases it was assumed to be the thickest one which is closely coincident with the boundaries given in the *portate*. Much agglomeration of property has happened since these buildings were constructed, but it does not seem far-fetched to presume that a notably thick wall within a house may once have been the outer wall of another property. Thus, although the actual dividing line between properties might not always be inferred correctly, it is certain that their relationship to one another is correct in the huge majority of cases. Most property amalgamations since the fifteenth century have created a unified façade which conceals houses' previous delineated separation. However less attention has been given to unifying their roof lines. Borgo Santa Croce is unfortunately too narrow to allow the roofs of its houses to be checked from street level, but those on the south side of Piazza Santa Croce are fully visible and the boundaries on the maps given here are all fully coincident with the varying levels of their roofs.

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[6] See however the rejoinder concerning these *confini* in footnote 29 on page 158.

[7] The most frequently reproduced attempt to map Florence is Guido Carocci's "Il Centro di Firenze nel 1427". Yet it only indicates approximate areas of family settlement for that one year. An example of mapping used to show the genesis of a palace is Giusti and Bottai's "Documento sulle prime fasi costruttive di Palazzo Pitti". The hazards of using insufficient examples when mapping is demonstrated in Charles Randall Mack's "Building a Florentine Palace" and Philip Jacks' "Michelozzo di Bartolomeo and the *Domus Pulcra*". At its simplest their mistake was to muddle left and right, an unfortunate, but nonetheless avoidable error. Thus, although their starting point, *Palazzo* Spinelli is given correctly, the owners of the neighbouring properties are misidentified. As Jacks' map is the more extensive, it suffers more because of this, for the further away from *Palazzo* Spinelli that the owners of particular buildings are identified, the greater is the inaccuracy of their position.

The inclusion of approximately forty properties on a map covering a period of ten tax redactions from 1427 to 1495 could give rise to a total number of 2000 declared *confini*. Unfortunately, certain *portate* provide only few details and frequently in the middle of the century the boundaries were merely given as 'the same as can be seen in other *portate*'[8], even if it transpires that they were not. However, there are still hundreds of examples to draw on and in all but a handful of cases, the boundaries given in the maps agree with each of those presented in the *portate*. Exceptions only occur when it is clear that a property owner was out-of-date as to the identity of his neighbours, as some landlords clearly did not know whose property their own abutted[9]. Some of the individuals covered in this study did not live in or even near their properties in Leon Nero and others left the names of their neighbours blank, so it is fair to assume that a name entered may be incorrect if it does not correspond with the reports of other adjacent property owners who were then residing in their properties.

The maps themselves are based on blueprints made by the Ufficio Tecnico in Florence, following the 1966 flood[10]. It might appear questionable to use such a modern map, but there are in any case no reliable maps of the city before the 1840s and thus despite having been compiled five centuries after the period in question, the chief advantage of these maps lies in their accuracy. Furthermore, invoking Pierre Lavedan's principle of "the law of the persistence of the plan"[11], it likely that more has survived from the fifteenth century than has been demolished. Even when properties have been destroyed, whatever replaced them must still fit into the same space and the fact that most of the property boundaries given in the *Catasto* could be easily reconciled with those in the maps shows this to be true.

The method of denoting building boundaries on the maps varies. A dark blue line represents a boundary which persisted throughout the period examined here. An orange line shows a boundary which started the period as the external boundary to a house, but which at some point became absorbed inside a property. The magenta, light blue and pink lines denote the extent of Spinelli, Morelli and Corsi clan enclaves respectively.

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[8] For example in 1451 the heirs of Alberto di Giovanni Castellani reported their house as having "...suo chonfini chome si vede nel primo catasto"; *Cat.* 695, fol. 107*r*.

[9] Elio Conti also found this to be the case in the *contado*; *I catasti agrari della Repubblica fiorentina*, p. 33.

[10] I am very grateful to Brenda Preyer for letting me use her copies of the blueprints, as the originals are now apparently "lost". Given the deteriorated quality of the drawings, their huge size and the fact that they needed extensive editing, they were first digitally scanned and then re-sized to the more presentable format given here.

[11] Lavedan's work is cited in Spilner, "*Ut Civitas Amplietur*", pp. 491-492.

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Decima Repubblicana* (*Dec. Rep.*)
Diplomatico, Deposito Gherardi and Badia Fiorentina
Estimo
Gherardi Piccolomini d'Aragona (*GPA*)
Ginori Conti – Rinuccini
Guicciardini Corsi Salviati
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Monte Comune (Copie del Catasto)* (*MC*)
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* Details of cited Fifteenth-Century Fiscal Sources

Catasto

2	1427-1496		*Deliberazioni*
27	1427	Carro	*Portata*
29		Bue	*Portata*
34		Leon Nero	*Portata*
35		Leon Nero	*Portata*
46		Leon Bianco	*Portata*
68		Carro	*Campione*
69		Bue	*Campione*
72		Leon Nero	*Campione*
73		Ruota	*Campione*
348	1430	Carro	*Portata*
352		Bue	*Portata*
353		Bue	*Portata*
354		Leon Nero	*Portata*
355		Leon Nero	*Portata*
358		Ruota	*Portata*
359		Ruota	*Portata*
369		Lion Bianco	*Portata*
390		Ruota	*Portata*
399		Bue	*Campione*
401		Leon Nero	*Campione*
444	1433	Carro	*Portata*
445		Carro	*Portata*
447		Bue	*Portata*
448		Bue	*Portata*
451		Leon Nero	*Portata*
452		Ruota	*Portata*
491		Carro	*Campione*
491 *bis*		Bue	*Campione*
492		Leon Nero	*Campione*
493		Ruota	*Campione*
614	1442	Carro	annotated
615		Bue	annotated
616		Bue	annotated
617		Leon Nero	indexed
621		Leon Bianco	
624		Drago (S.G.)	indexed
658	1447	Carro	indexed & annotated
662		Bue	indexed & annotated
663		Leon Nero	
664		Leon Nero	indexed & annotated
666		Ruota	annotated
673		Leon Bianco	
695	1451	Carro	indexed & annotated
696		Carro	
697		Bue	indexed
698		Bue	annotated
699		Leon Nero	indexed
700		Leon Nero	annotated
702		Ruota	annotated
798	1458	Carro	annotated
799		Carro	indexed & annotated
800		Bue	indexed & annotated
801		Bue	indexed & annotated
804		Leon Nero	indexed & annotated
805		Leon Nero	annotated
806		Leon Nero	annotated
807		Leon Nero	annotated
808		Ruota	annotated
809		Ruota	indexed & annotated
810		Ruota	annotated
911	1469	Carro	annotated
912		Bue	annotated
913		Bue	annotated
914		Leon Nero	annotated
915		Ruota	annotated
1002	1480	Carro	annotated
1003		Bue	annotated
1004		Bue	annotated
1005		Leon Nero	annotated
1007		Ruota	annotated

Monte Comune (Copie del Catasto)

MC 40	1480	Bue
MC 44	1469	Ruota
MC 50	1480	Leon Nero

Decima Repubblicana

Dec. Rep. 12	Bue	indexed & annotated
Dec. Rep. 13	Bue	indexed & annotated
Dec. Rep. 14	Ruota	indexed & annotated
Dec. Rep. 15	Ruota	indexed & annotated
Dec. Rep. 16	Leon Nero	indexed & annotated
Dec. Rep. 17	Leon Nero	indexed & annotated

† Notaries' names, archival numbering and the dates of cited *filze*

Notarile Antecosimiano

165	ser Alberto di Alberto di Guido di Rucco da Firenze, 1414-1425
172	*ibid.*, 1452-1466
394	ser Andrea di Agnolo, 1489-1497
622	ser Agnolo di Alessandro, 1492
732	ser Antonio di Adamo, 1451-1454
733	*ibid.*, 1456-1458
736	*ibid.*, 1462-1469
766	ser Antonio di Francesco da Galatrona, 1464-1473
1525	ser Giovanni di Lorenzo di Angelo Bandini, 1423-1461
2446	ser Chimenti di Jacopo Bernardi, 1491-1498
2557	ser Mariotto Bertini, 1453-1461
2874	ser Barteo di Domenico Biadi, 1472-1512
2976	ser Battista Boccianti, 1434-1439
4420	ser Niccolò di ser Zenobi della Casa, 1425-1450
4821	ser Giovanni di Francesco Cecchi, 1457-1459
5046	ser Pierozzo di Cierbino Cerbini, 1452-1485
9039	ser Francesco Giacomini, 1417-1421
10446	ser Gualtieri di Lorenzo da Ghiaceto, 1450-1454
10450	*ibid.*, 1413-1464
10464	ser Francesco di ser Francesco Ghuardi, 1433-1446
10881	ser Pierfranco Guidi, 1481-1484
11423	ser Bartolomeo Lapini, 1410-1417
12126	ser Loro di ser Niccolò da Radda, 1432-1441
12779	ser Manno Manni, 1488-1494
14713	ser Andrea Nachianti, 1464-1466
14714	*ibid.*, 1467-1471
14715	*ibid.*, 1469-1471
14716	*ibid.*, 1472-1474
14718	*ibid.*, 1476-1478
14719	*ibid.*, 1478-1481
14723	*ibid.*, 1487-1489
14725	*ibid.*, 1492-1495
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17392	*ibid.*, 1405-1422
17402	ser Antonio Pugi, 1418-1450
18000	ser Verdiano di ser Donato Rimbotti da San Miniato, 1420-1460
18945	ser Goro di ser Grifi da San Giovanni Val d'Arno di sopra, 1382
20259	ser Lionardo di Giovanni di Lionardo Tolosini da Colle, 1484-1485
20830	ser Tommaso di Neri Vanegli, 1408-1440
21063	Nastagio Vespucci, 1440-1481
21154	ser Piero di Carlo del Viva, 1450-1478

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MKHIF: *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*
SMRH: *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*

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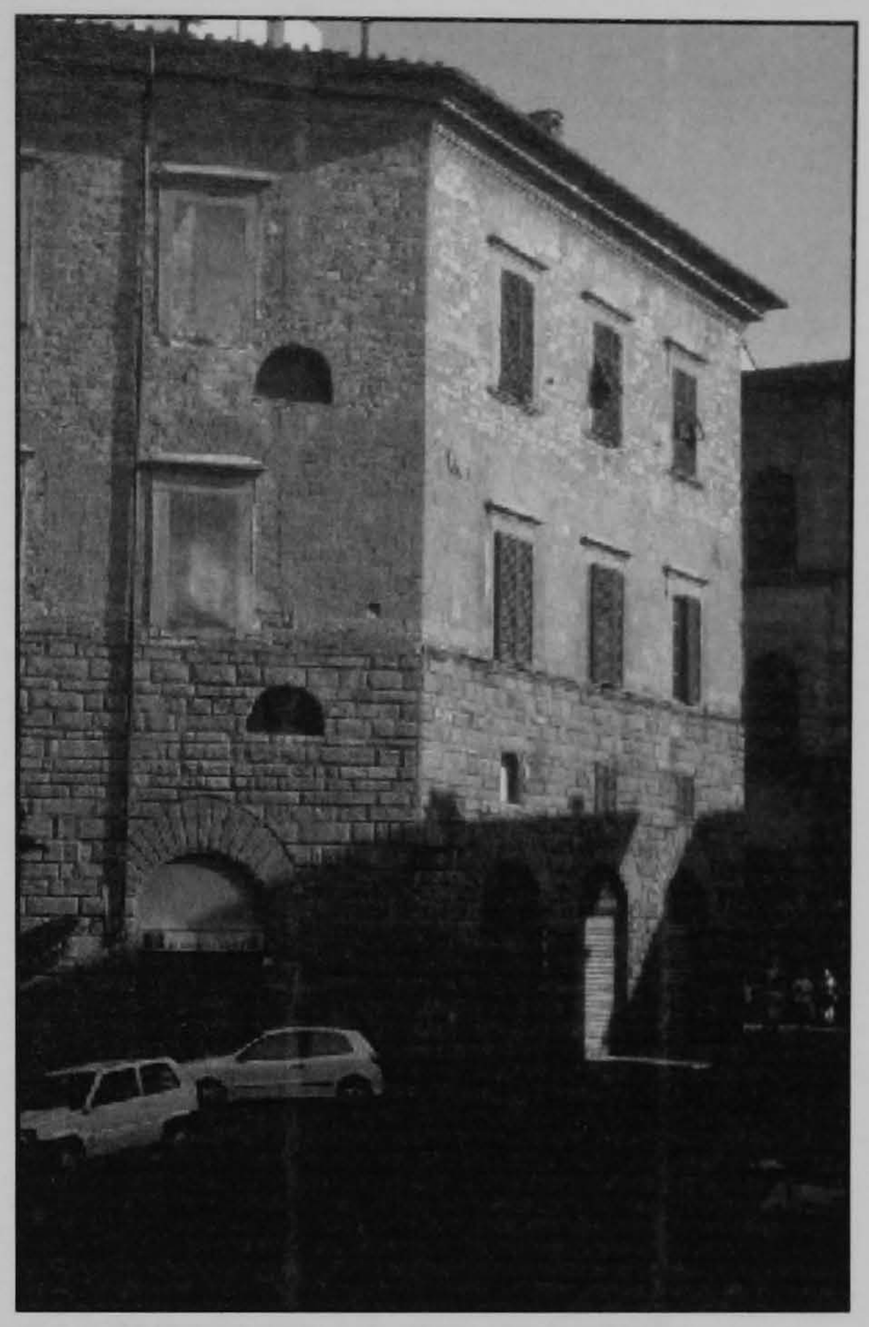
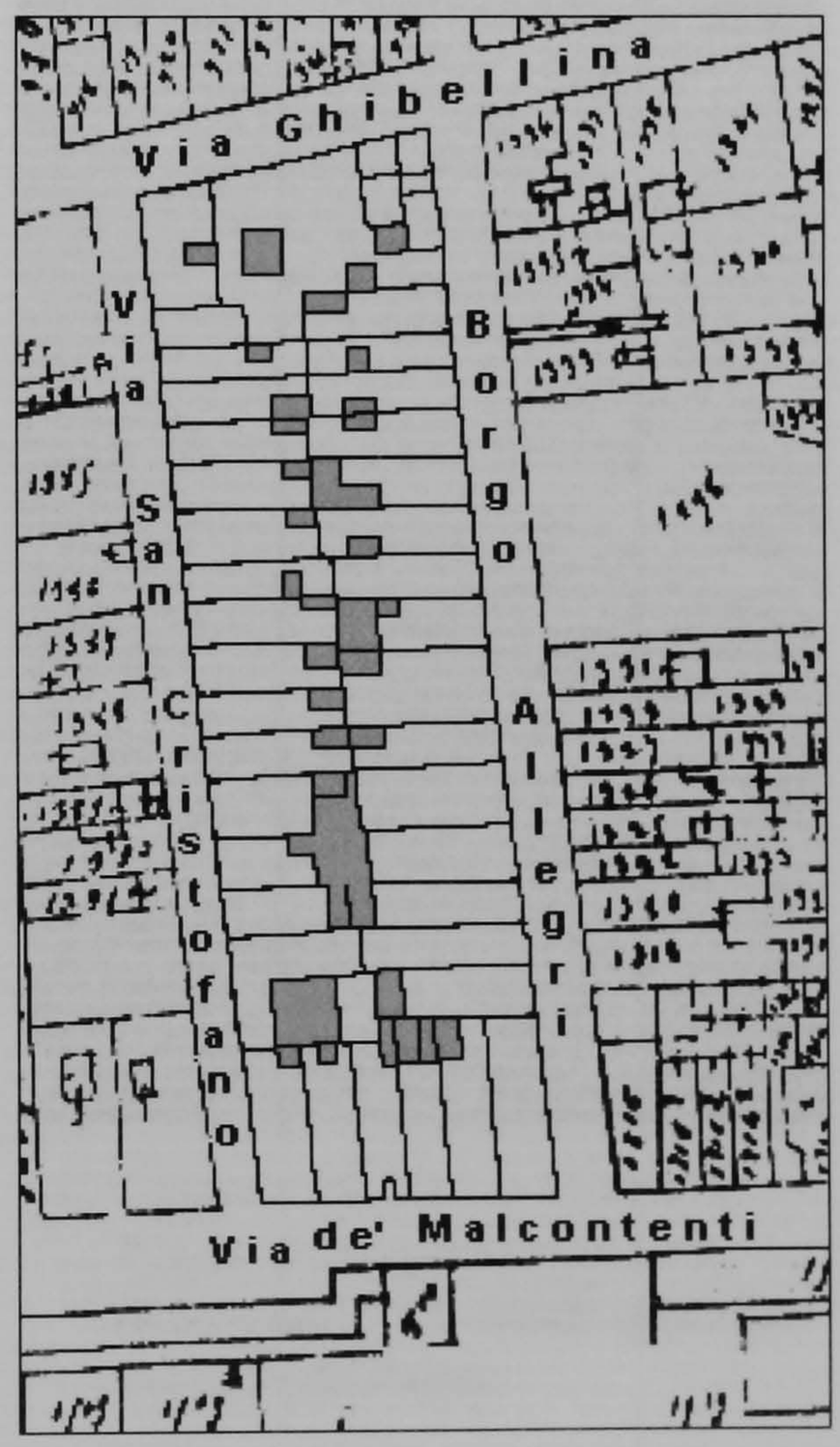
{1} Via delle Brache showing the original, western façade of San Jacopo tra le Fosse

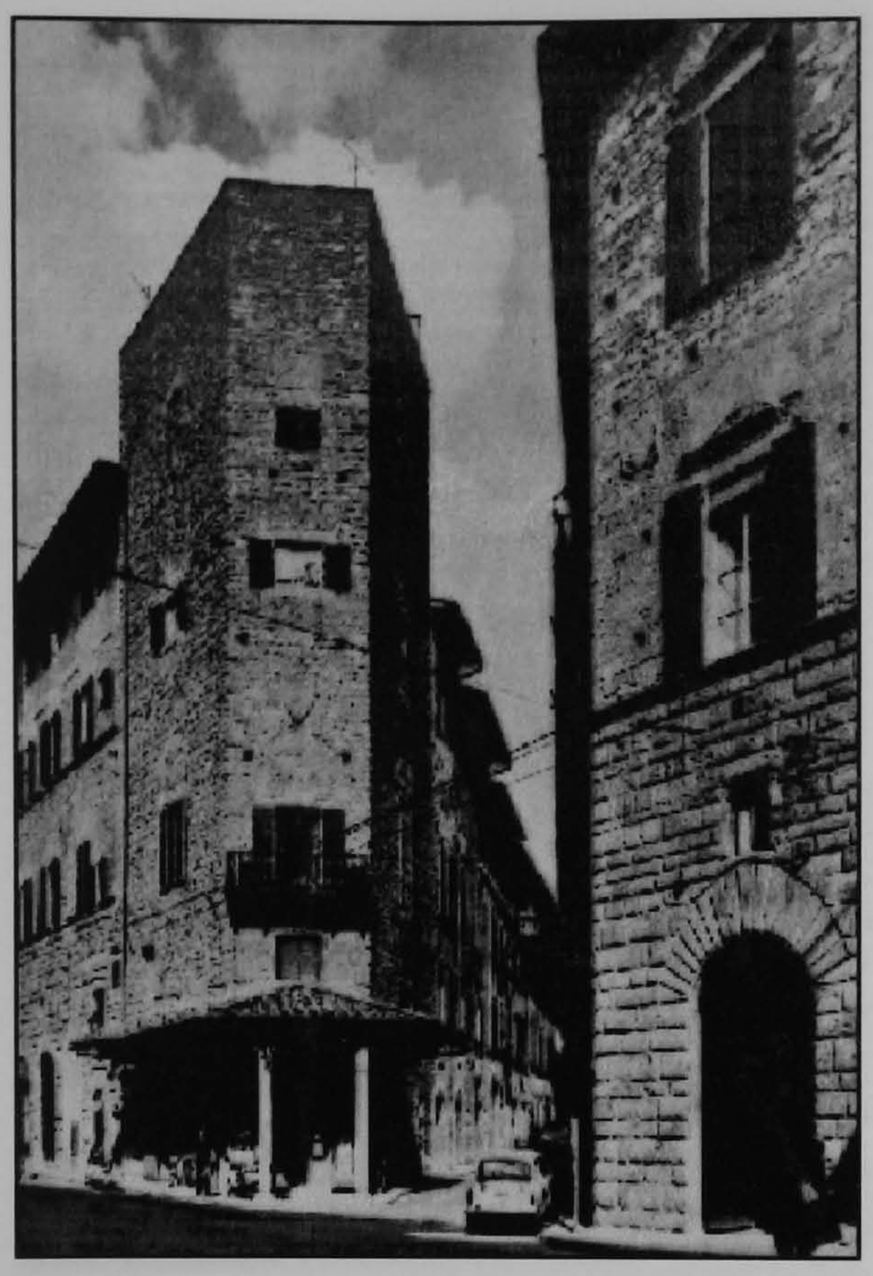
{2} The Piazza of San Jacopo tra le Fosse



{3} House no. 30: 'Il palagio di messer Benedetto degli Alberti'

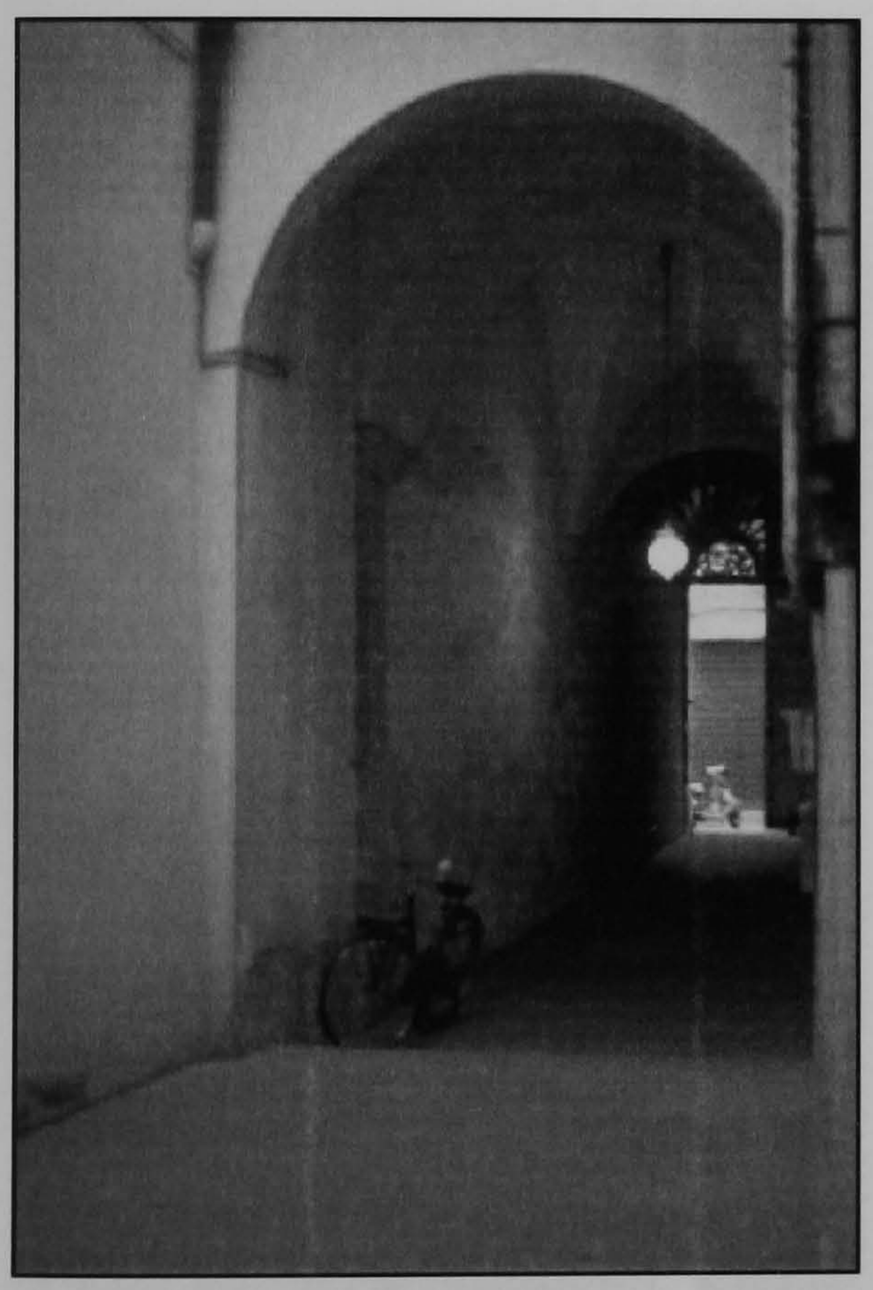


{4} The streets to the north of Piazza Santa Croce. Note the regularity of the *casolaria* and the *cortile* (marked grey)

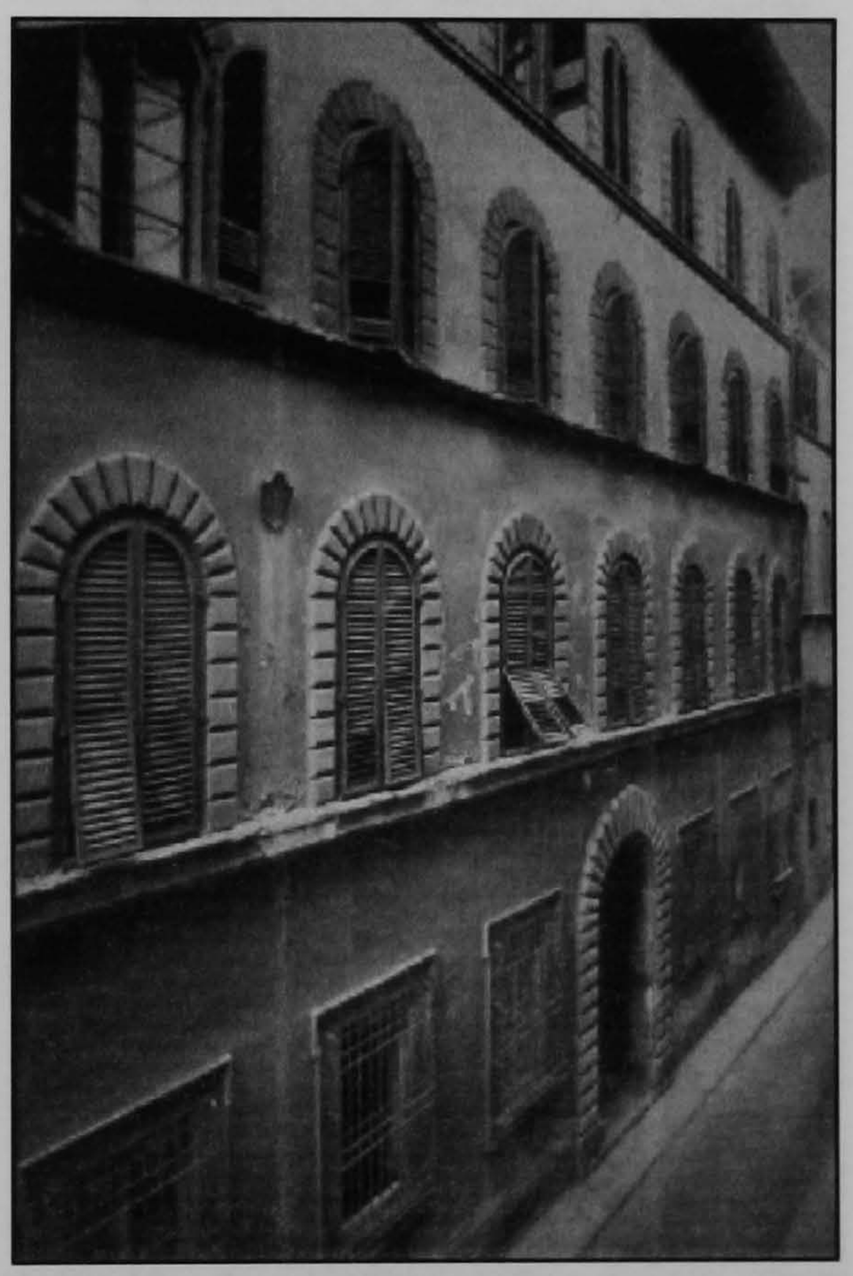


{5} The 'Torre degli Alberti'

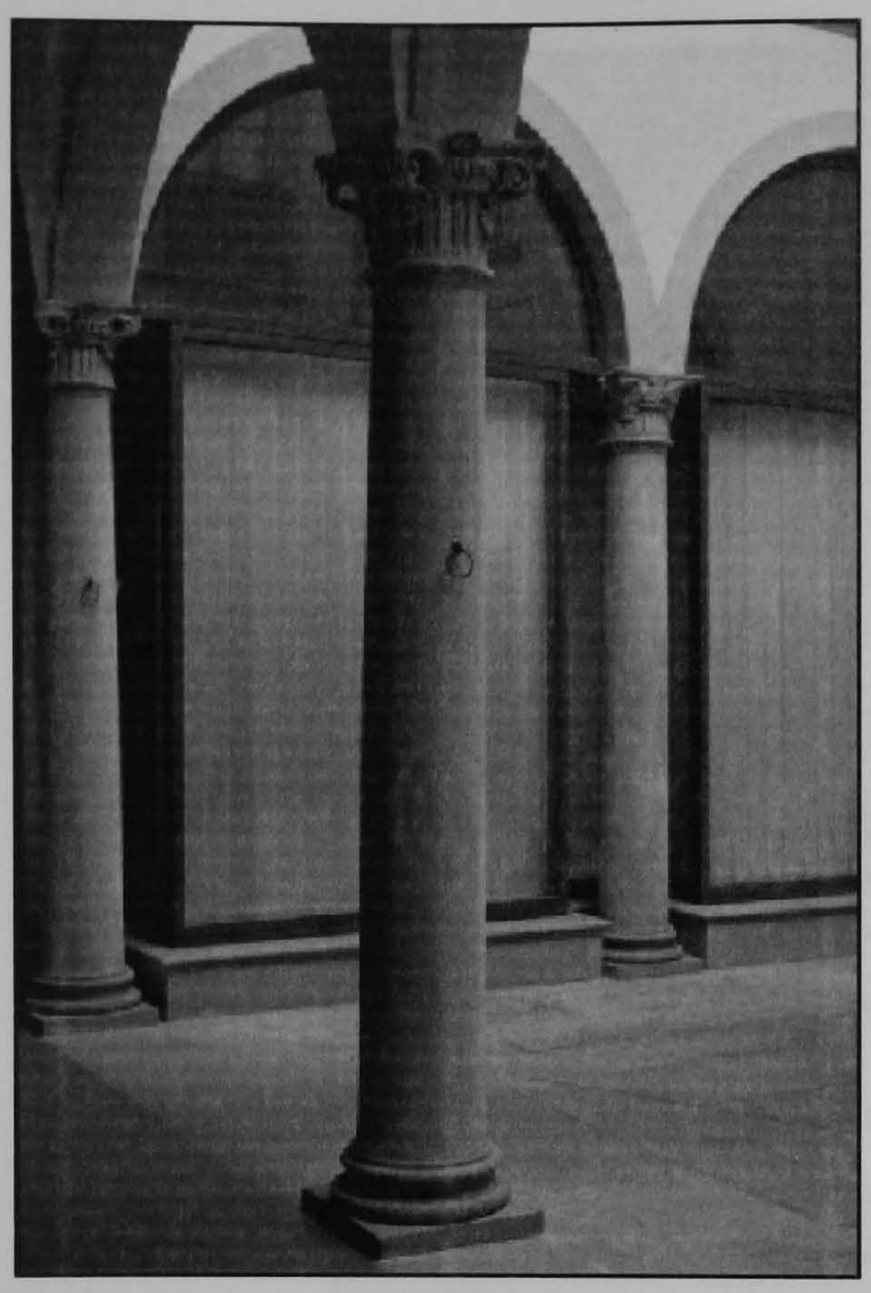
{7} House no.12 and its tower



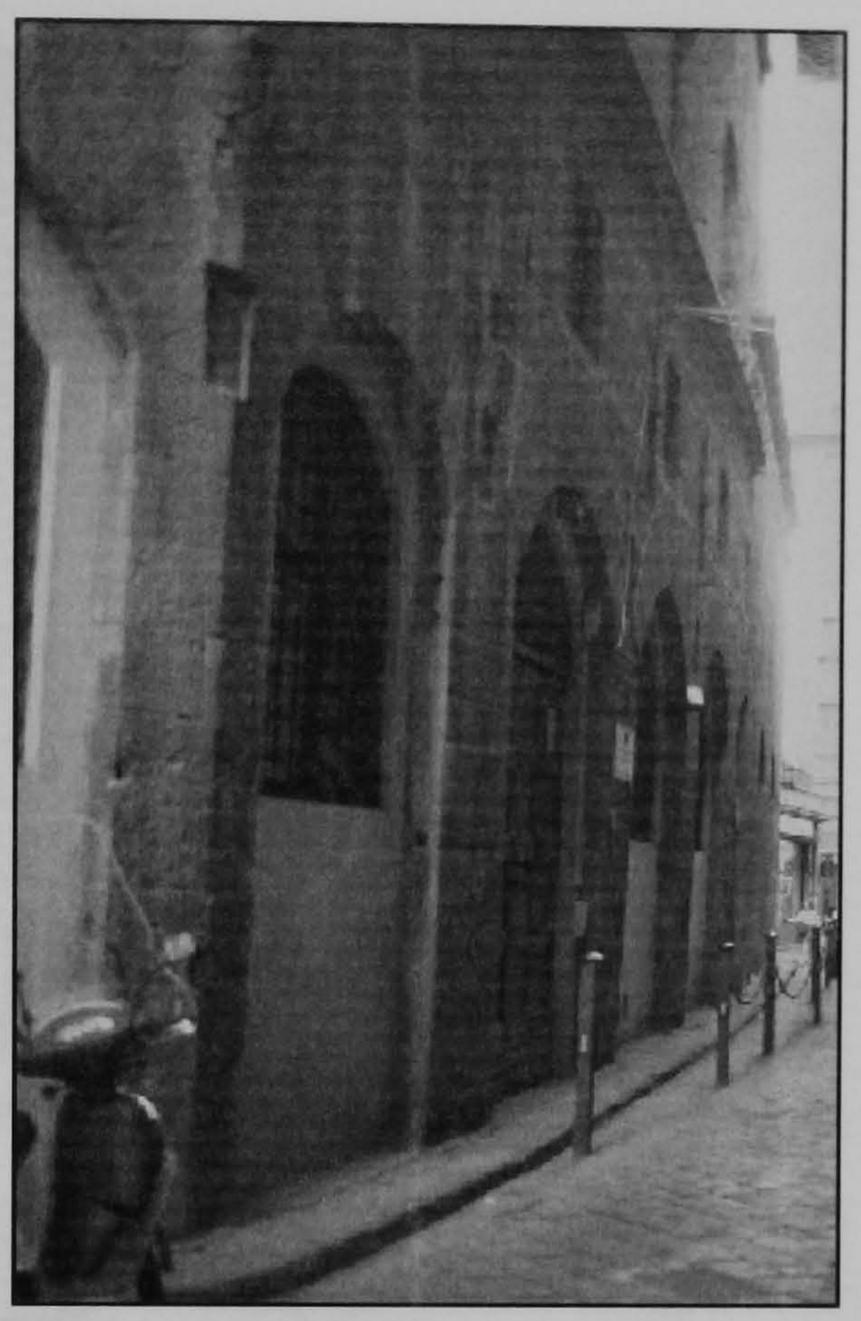
{6} The *chiasso* of house no. 36. It is marked '*g*' in the maps.



{8} Girolamo di Matteo Morelli's Palace on Borgo Santa Croce, (house no.17). It stands opposite the Spinelli Palace

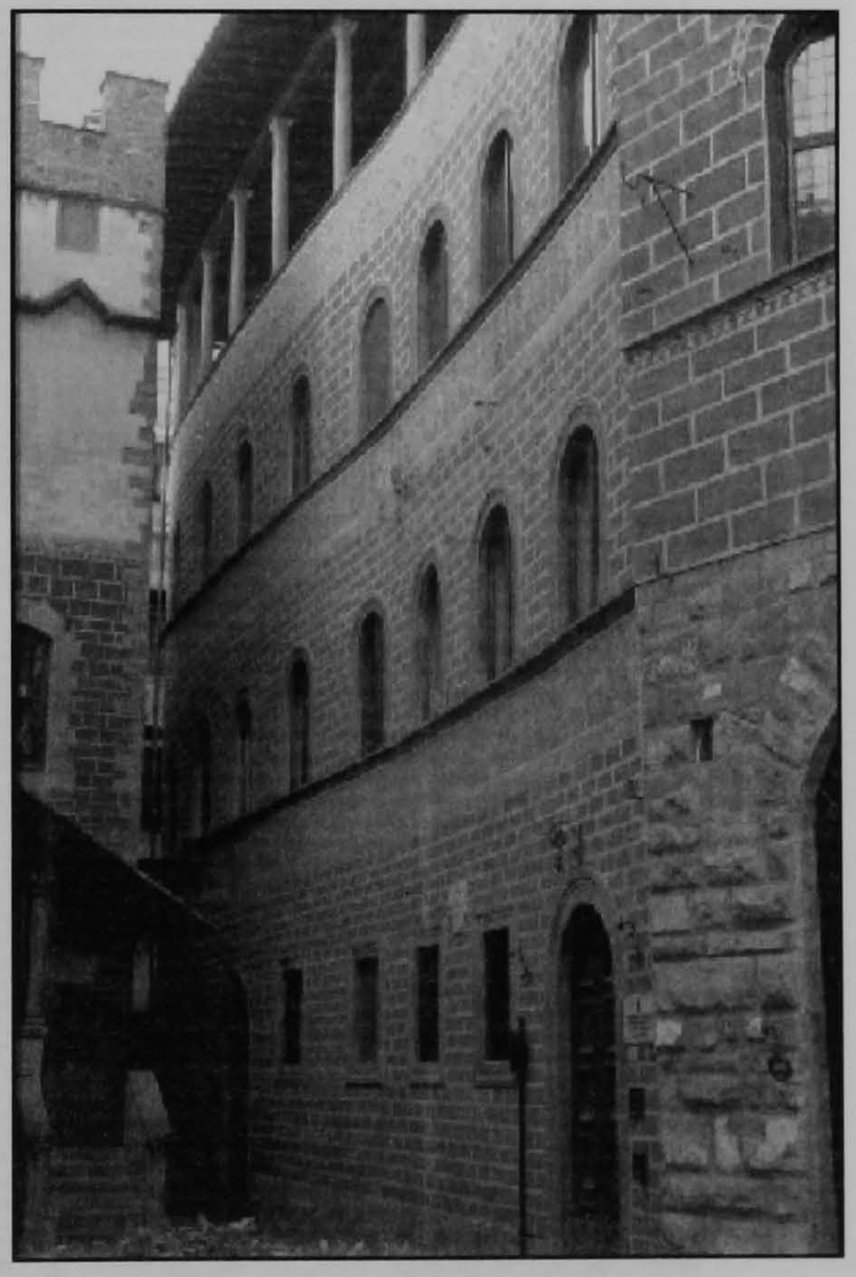


{9} The *cortile* of house no.17



{11} The Palace of the Parte Guelfa in Borgo SS. Apostoli, showing the *botteghe* incorporated into the building from 1415

{10} The Giugni Palace in Via della Condotta. Note how the *sporti* are incorporated only on the less busy side street, Via dei Cerchi.



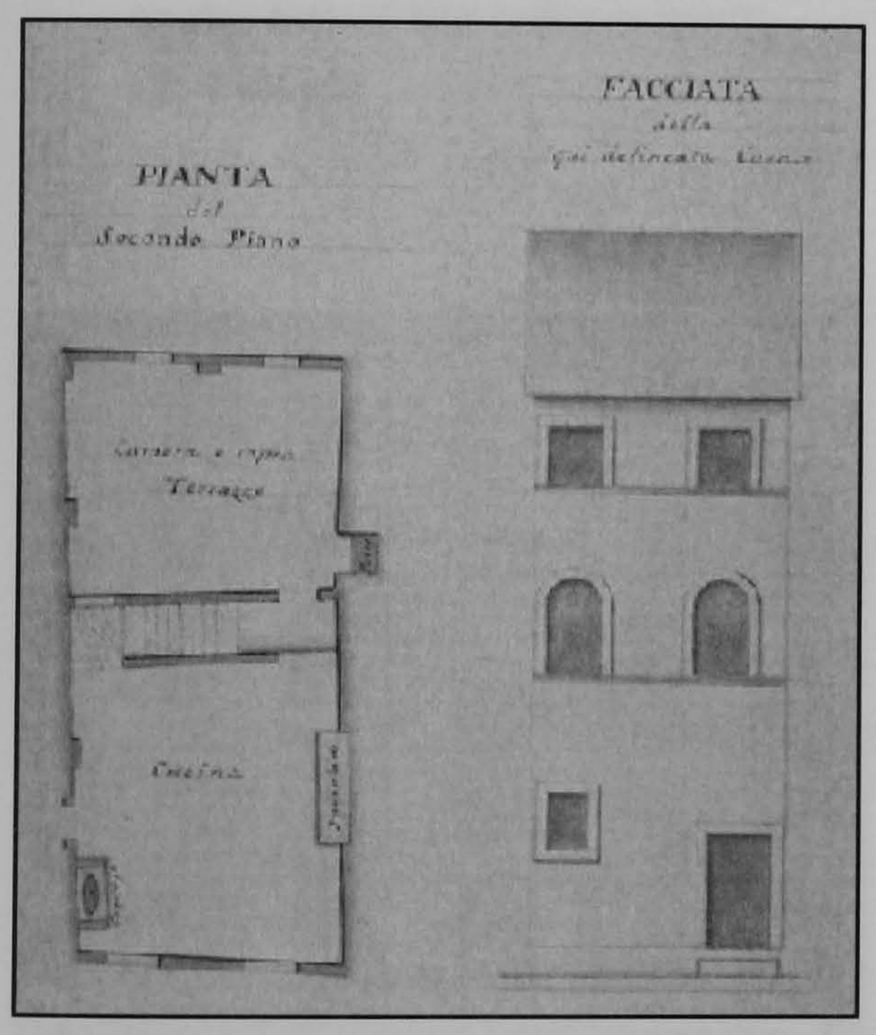
{12} The Canacci Palace in Piazza di Parte Guelfa

{13} Houses with *botteghe* in Via de' Benci which belonged to the Alberti

{14} The *botteghe* arches on the north side of Piazza del Duomo

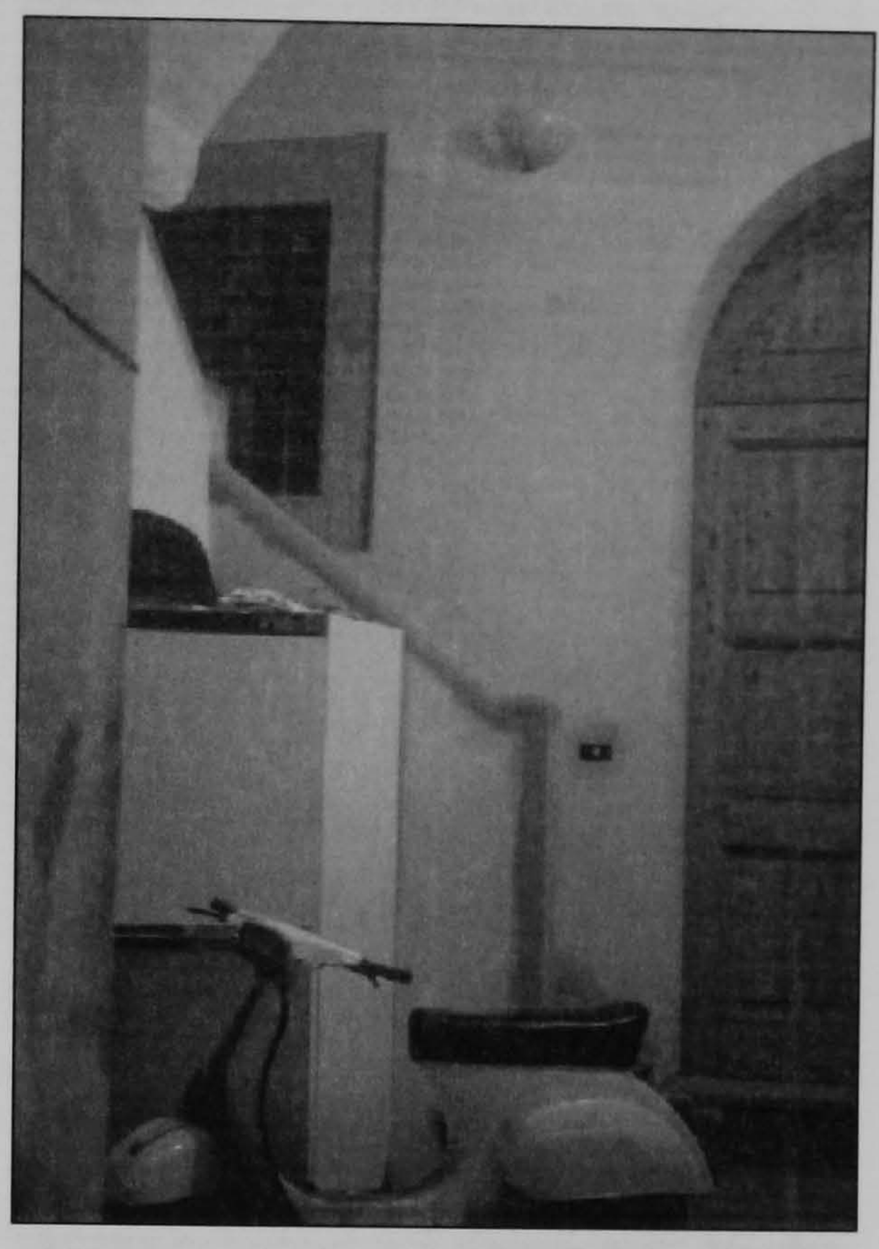
{15} Traces of *botteghe* arches in the quoins of the *Palazzo* Corsi-Horne

{16} *Casolaria* on the north side of Piazza Santa Croce



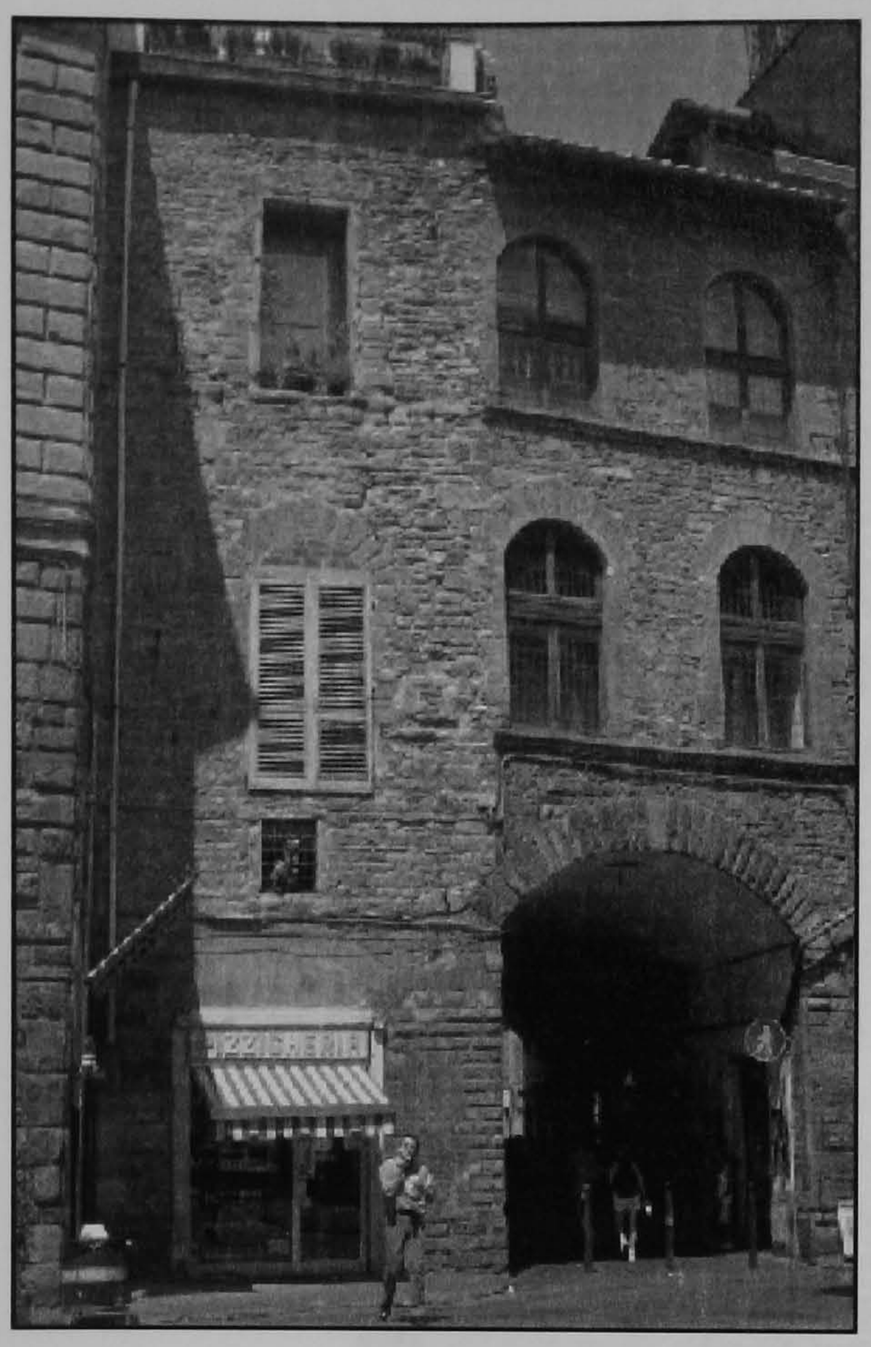
{17} The plan of a house built on a single *casolare*. The drawing is of a property in the Quarter of Santa Spirito.

{20} The building on the right shows how two houses built on single *casolaria* have been joined behind a new unified façade. The houses to the left are those in illustration 16.

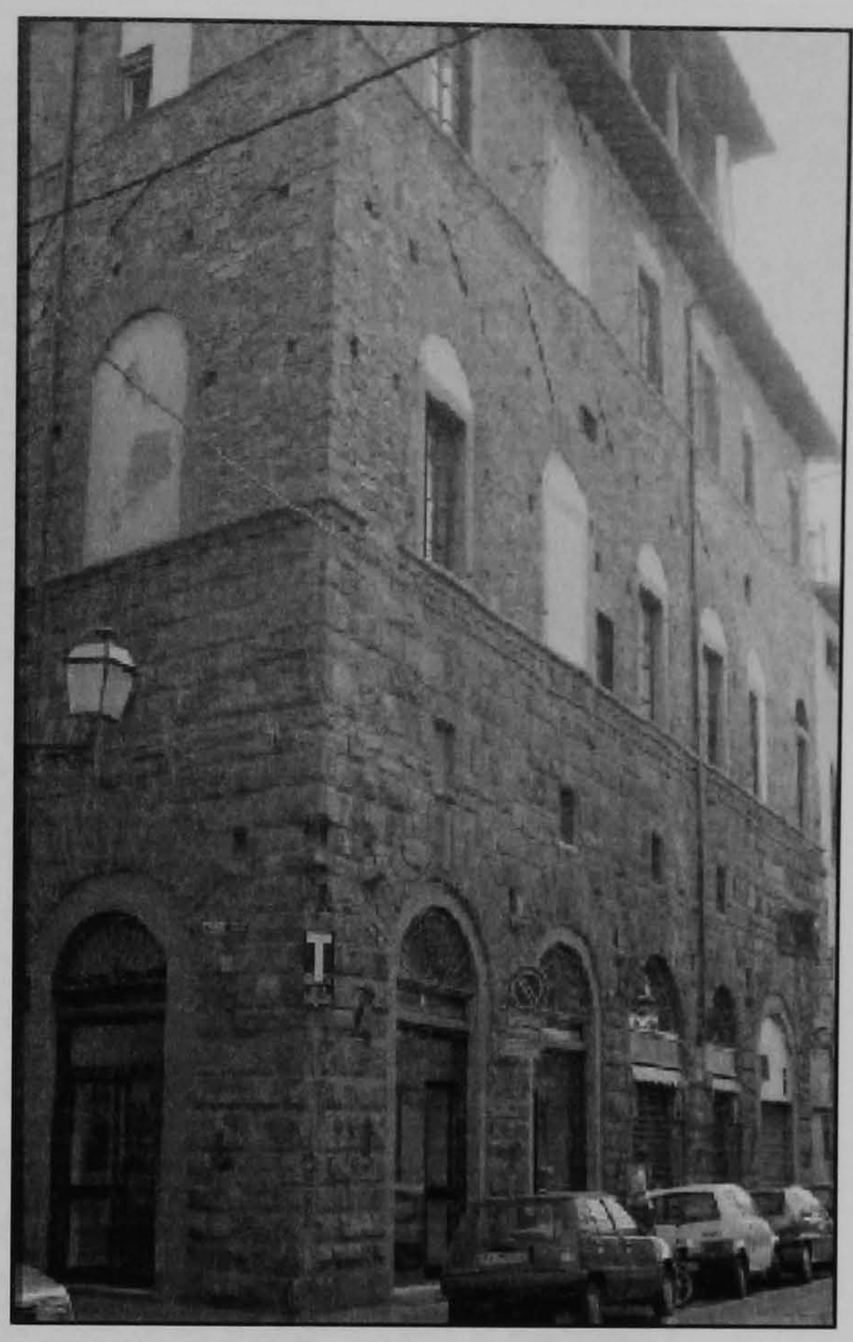


{18} The stairs in house no. 37, marked '*f*' in the maps

{19} *Sporti* in Via de' Vagellai

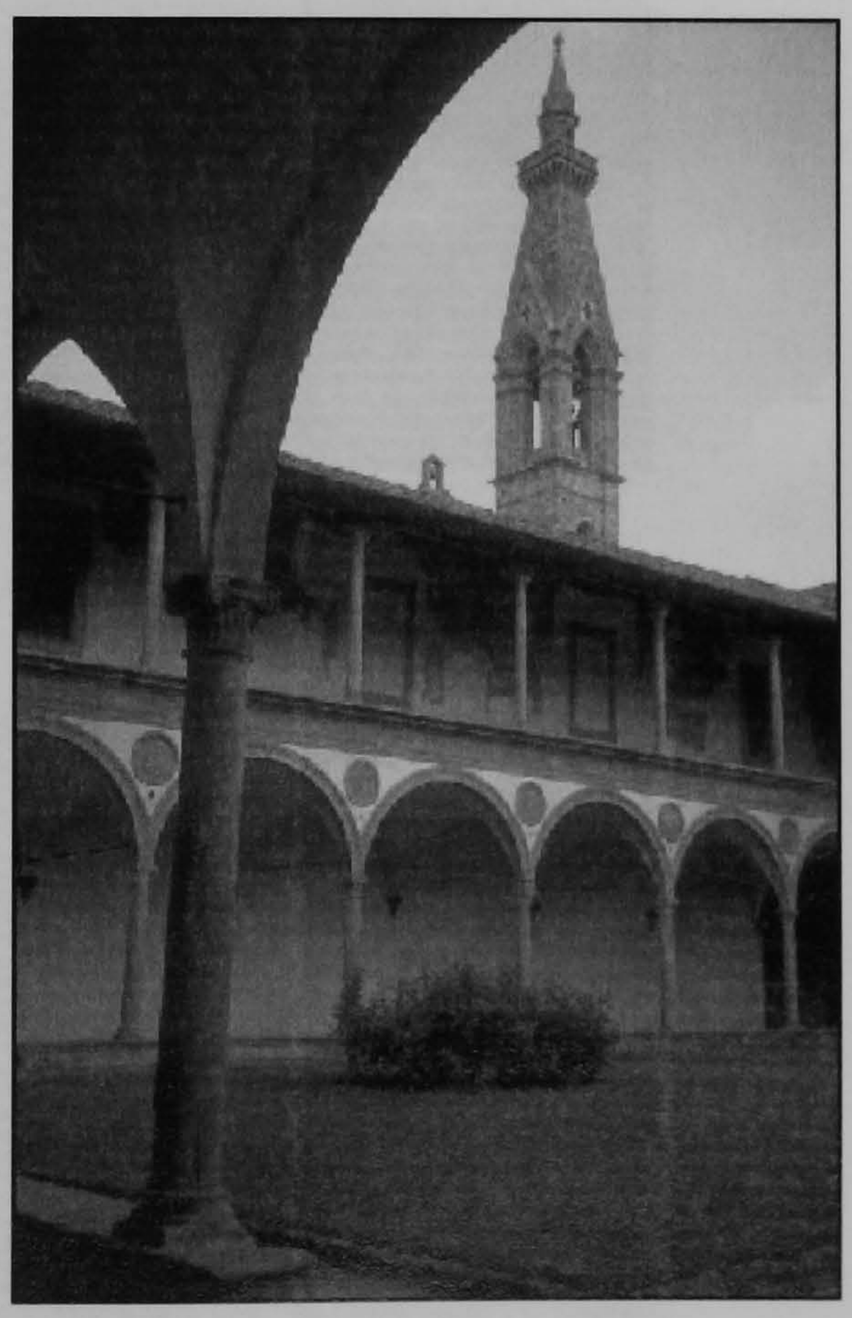


{21} A *volta* in the Piazza di San Pier Maggiore. Note how the house to the left of the volta is built on a single *casolare*.

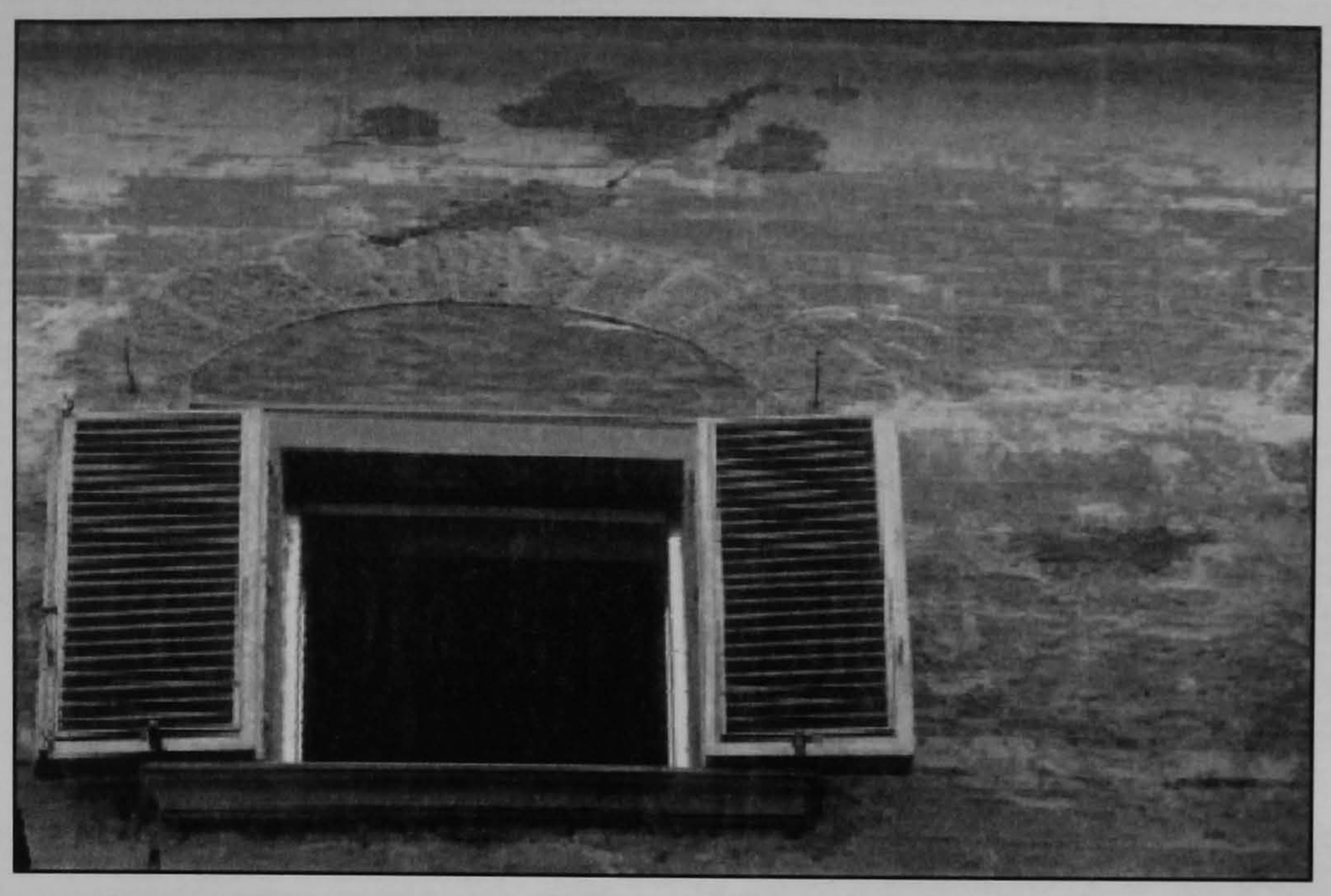


{23} A house on the corner of Via Ghibellina and Via di Matteo Palmieri. Note the *botteghe* arches and dressed stone work of the ground floor and the less ordered stone work above

{22} *Palazzo* Salviati in the Piazza di San Simone



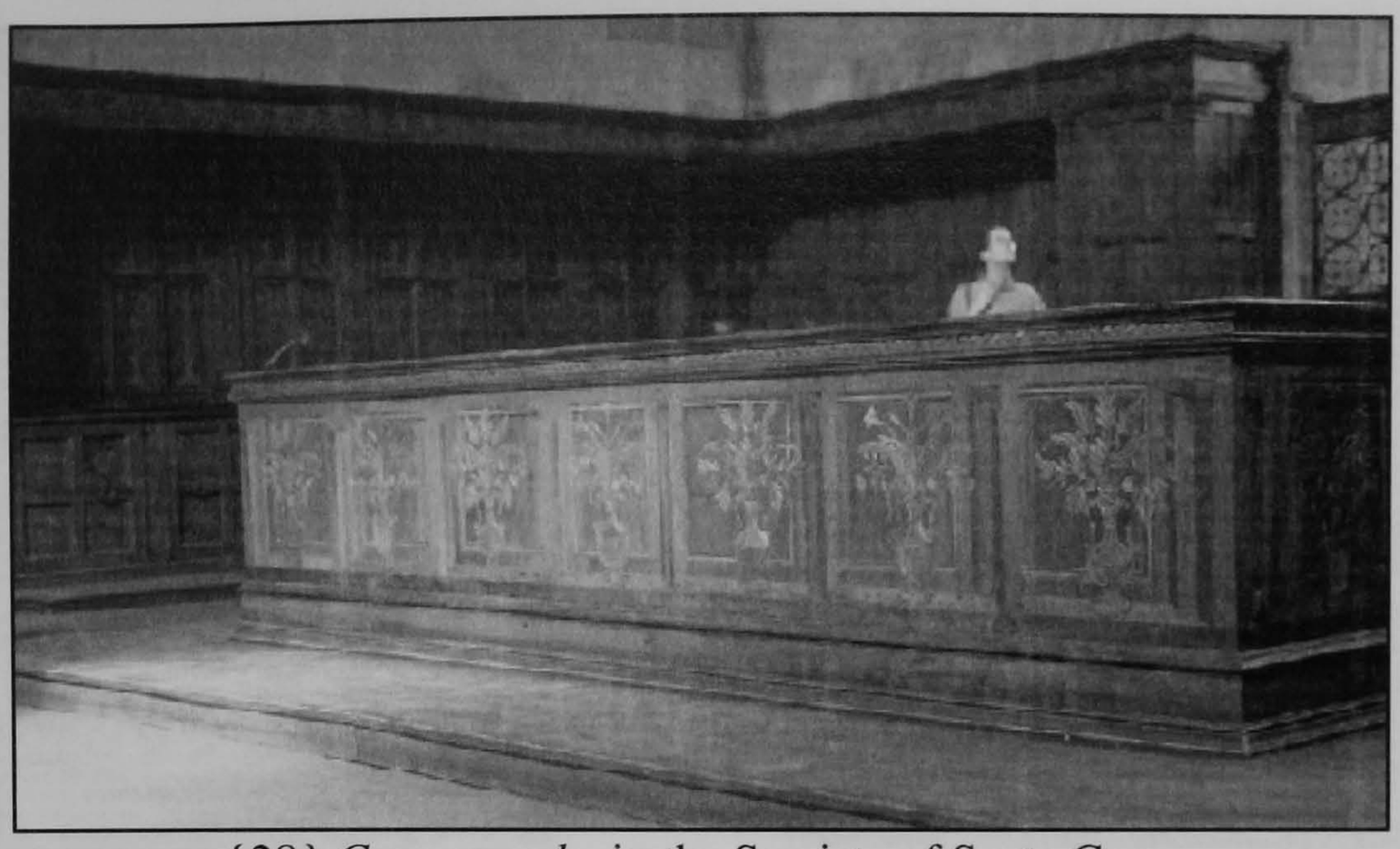
{24} The Spinelli Cloister at Santa Croce



{25} Flaking *sgraffito* on the *Palazzo* Salviati

{26} *Palazzo* Cocchi-Donati on Piazza Santa Croce

{27} The *loggia* and the ambulatory in the first cloister at Santa Croce



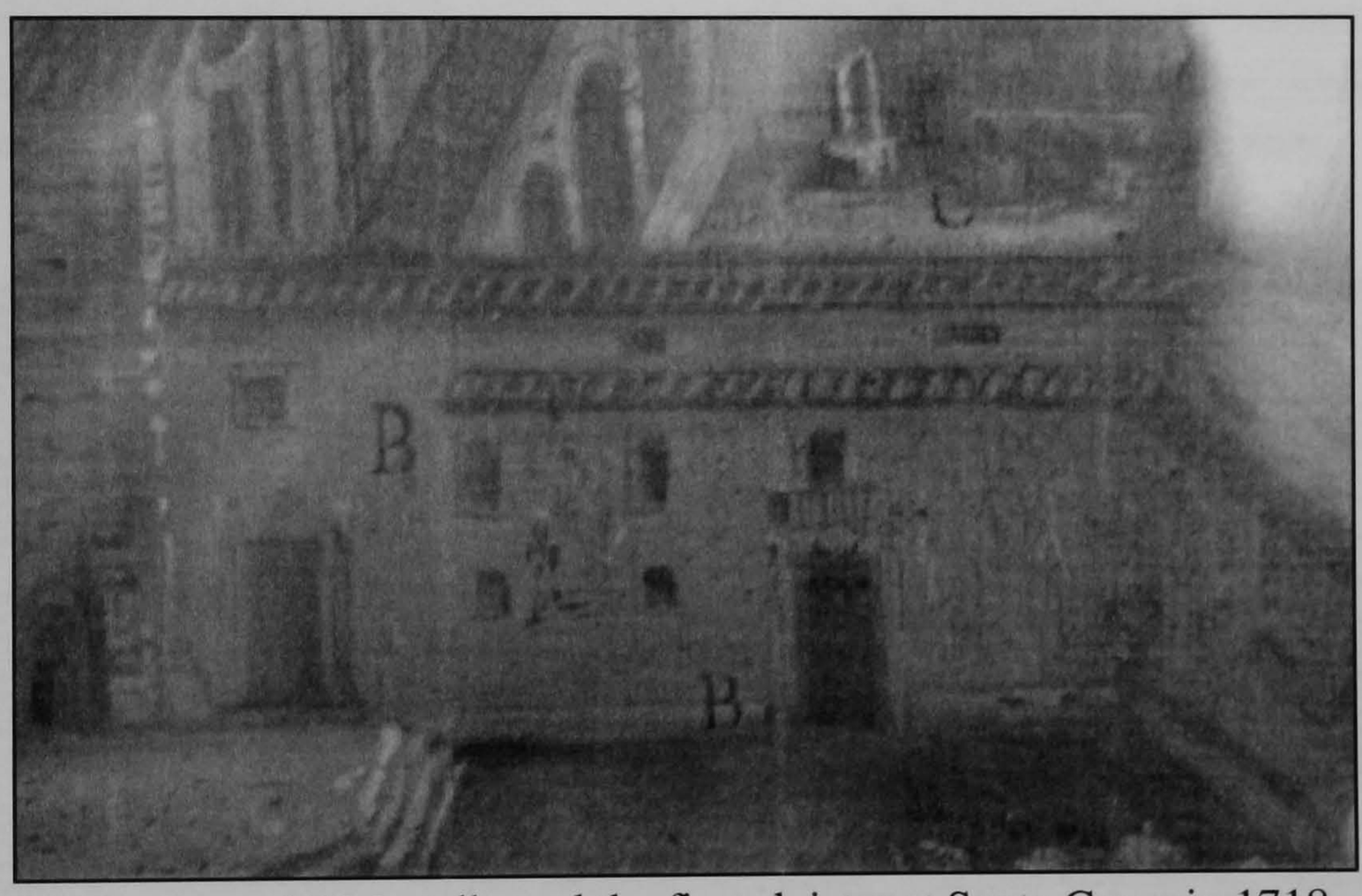
{28} *Cassapanche* in the Sacristy of Santa Croce

{29} The Spinelli Cloister at Santa Croce

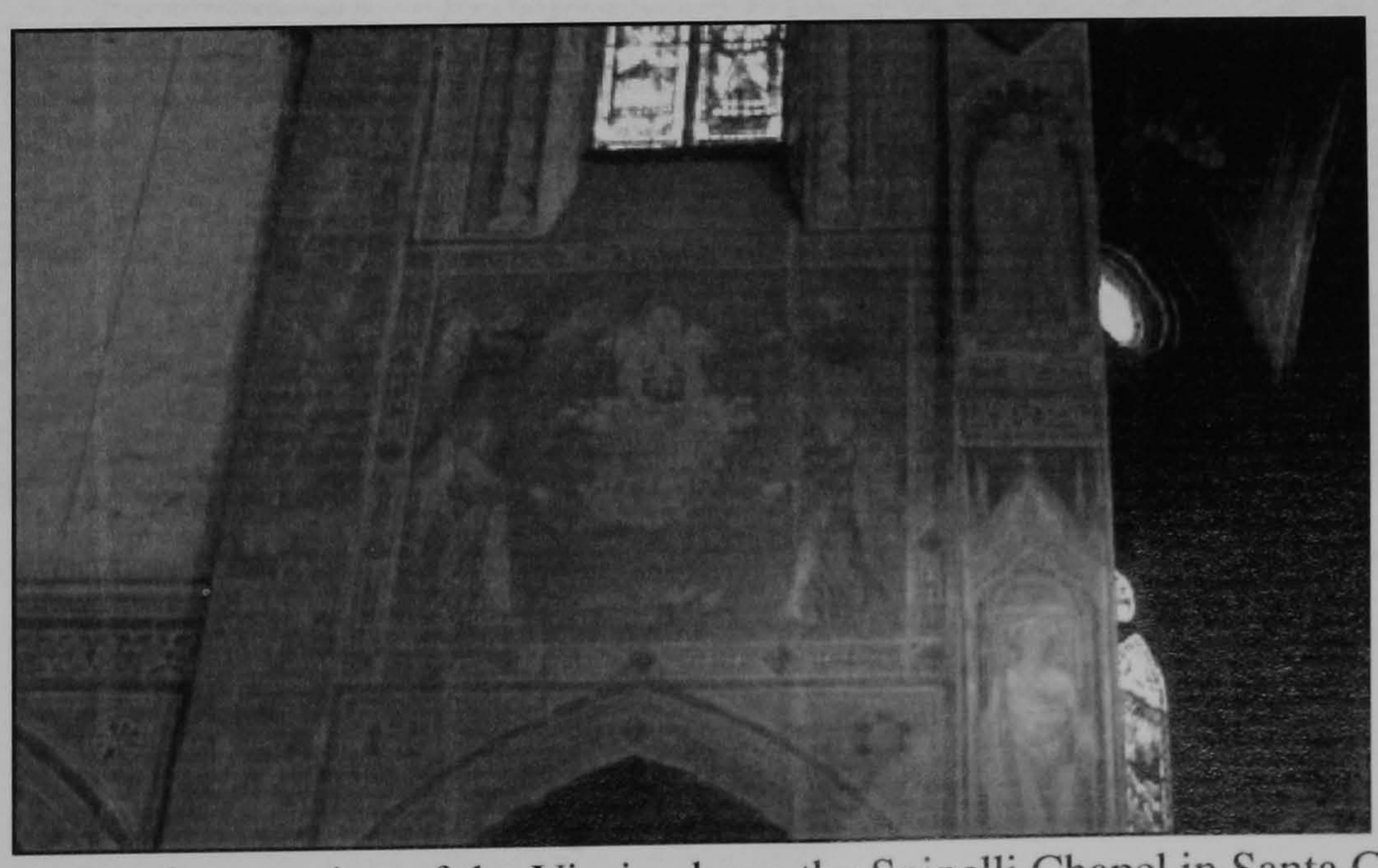
{30} A spandrel in the Spinelli Cloister at Santa Croce

{31} The tomb of Tommaso Spinelli

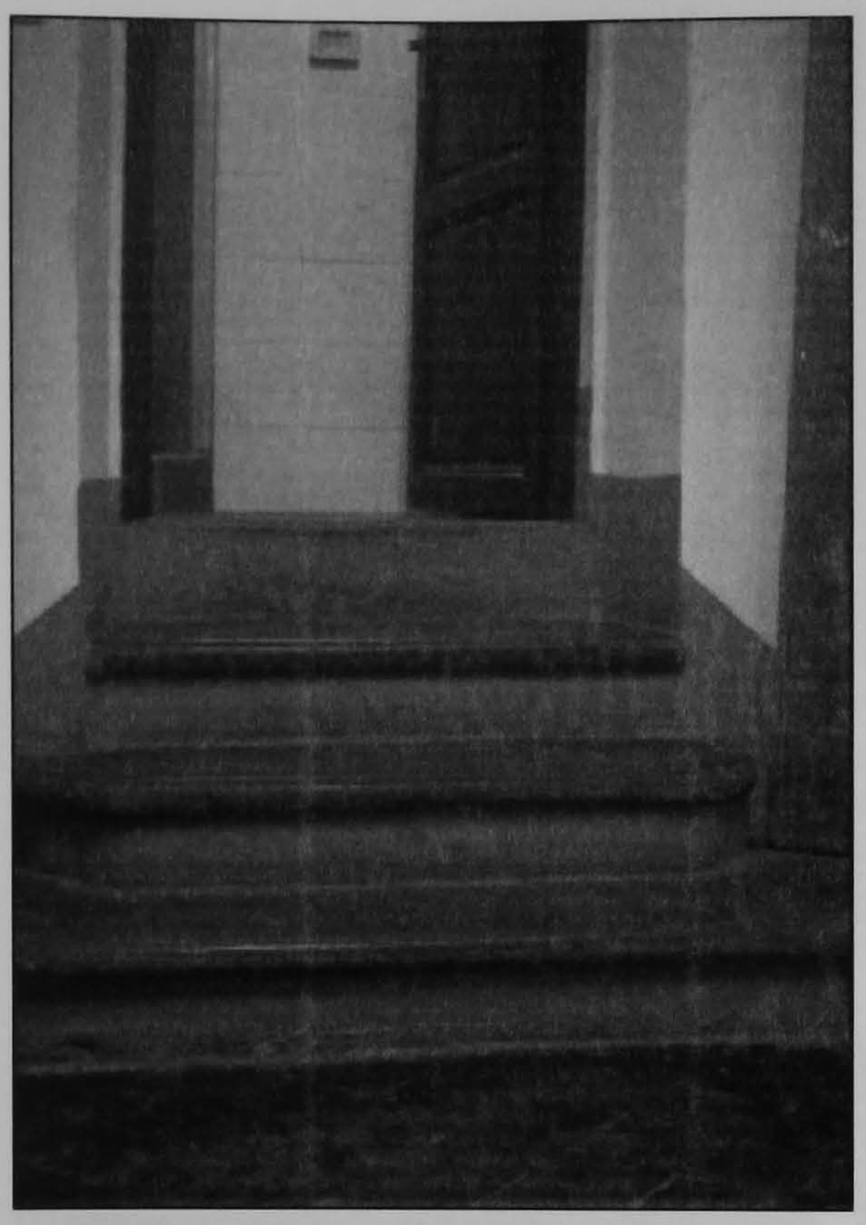
{32} The Porta del Martello in the 1750s



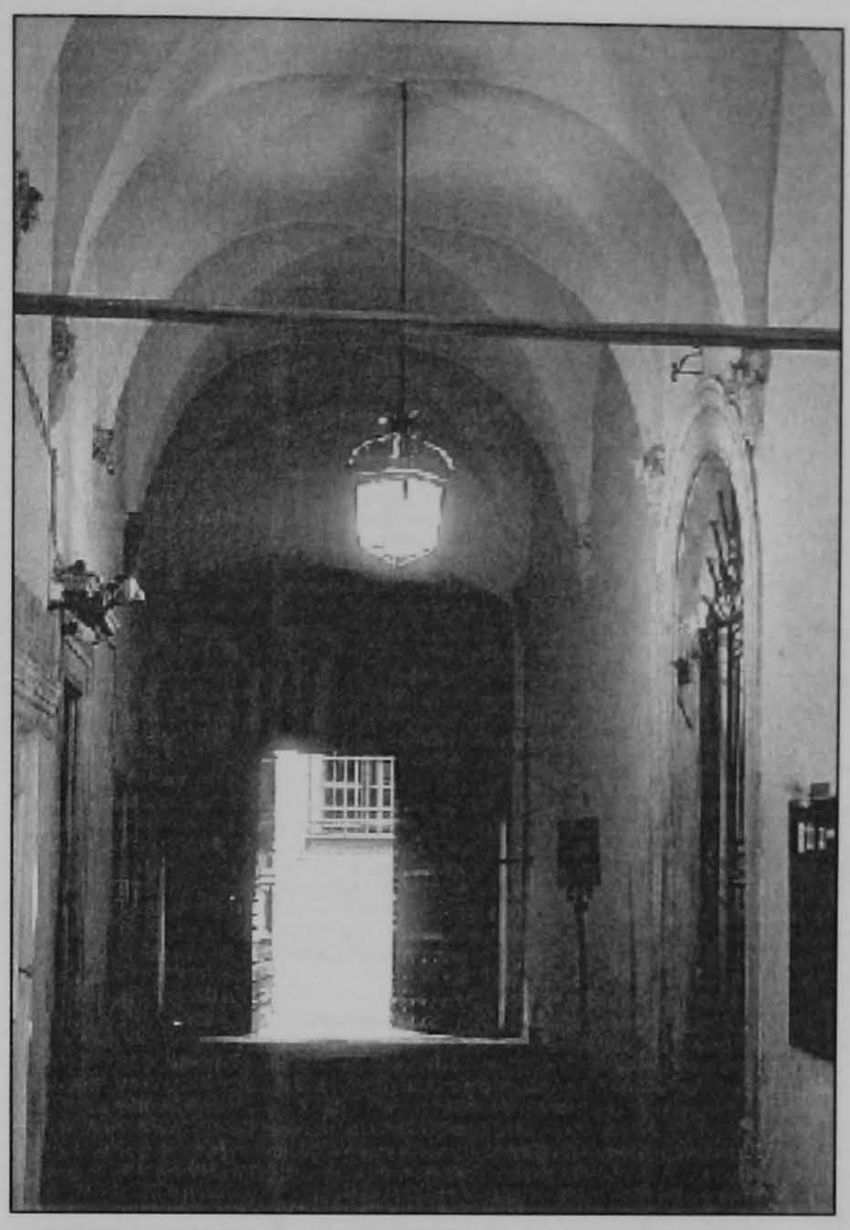
{33} The Porta del Martello and the first cloister at Santa Croce in 1718



{34} The Assumption of the Virgin above the Spinelli Chapel in Santa Croce

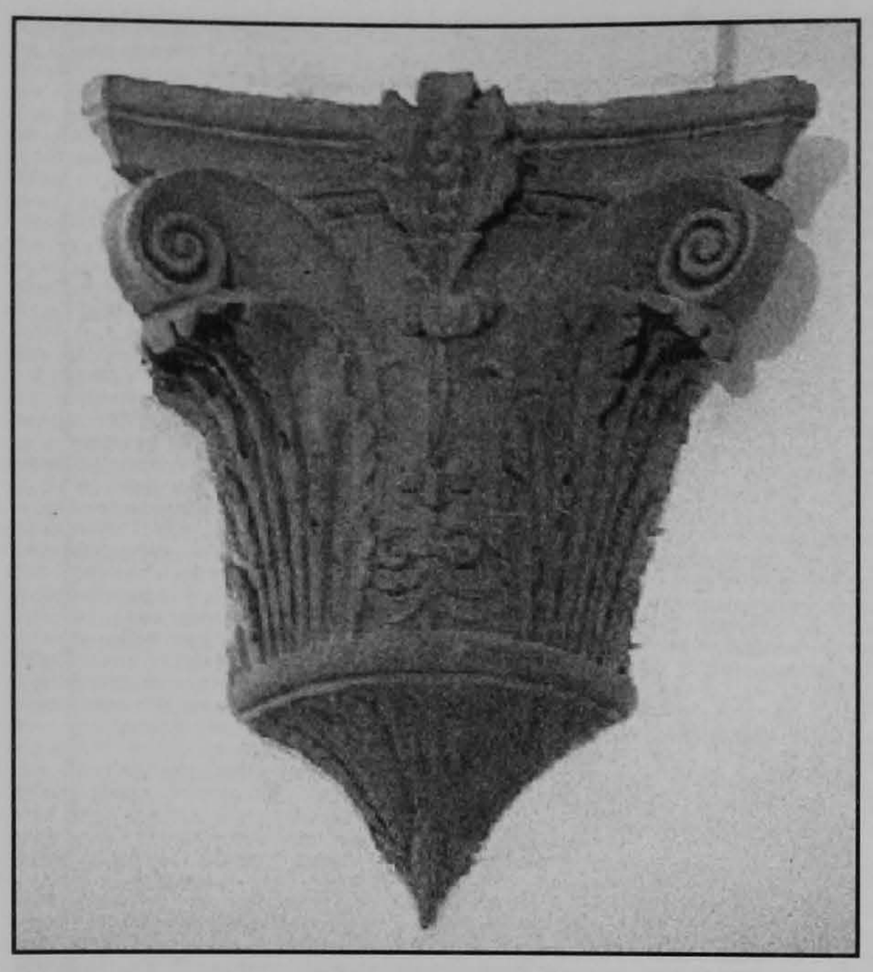


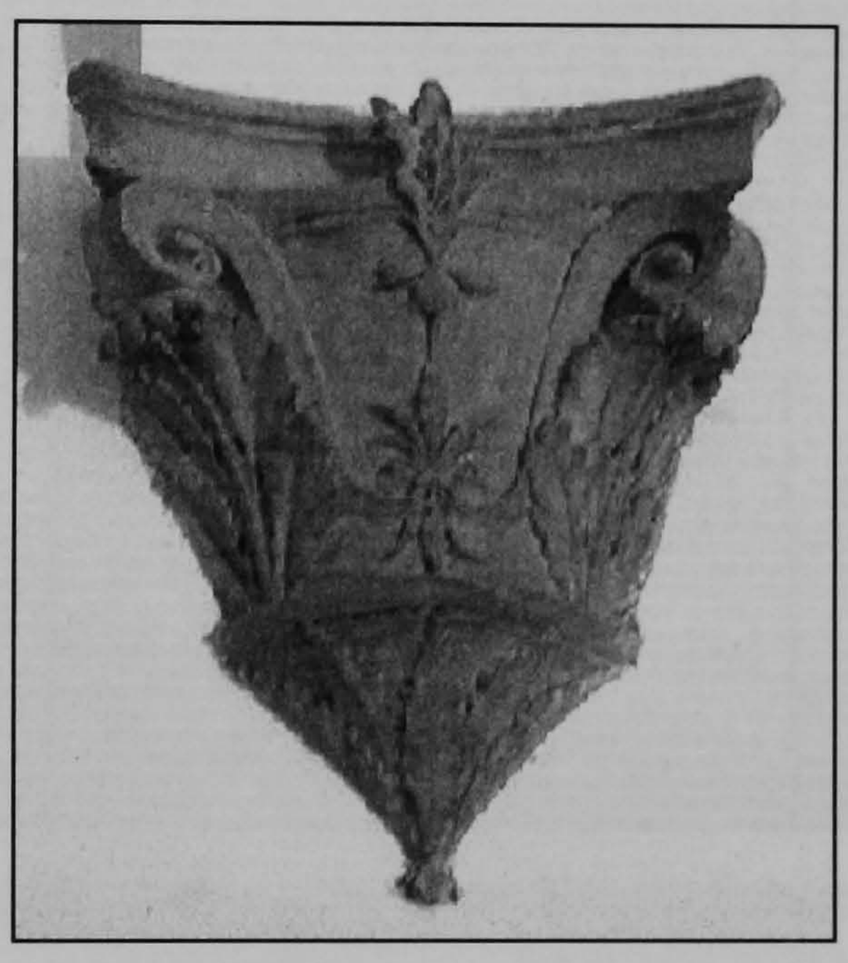
{35} Steps showing the difference in floor level between houses nos. 37 and 38

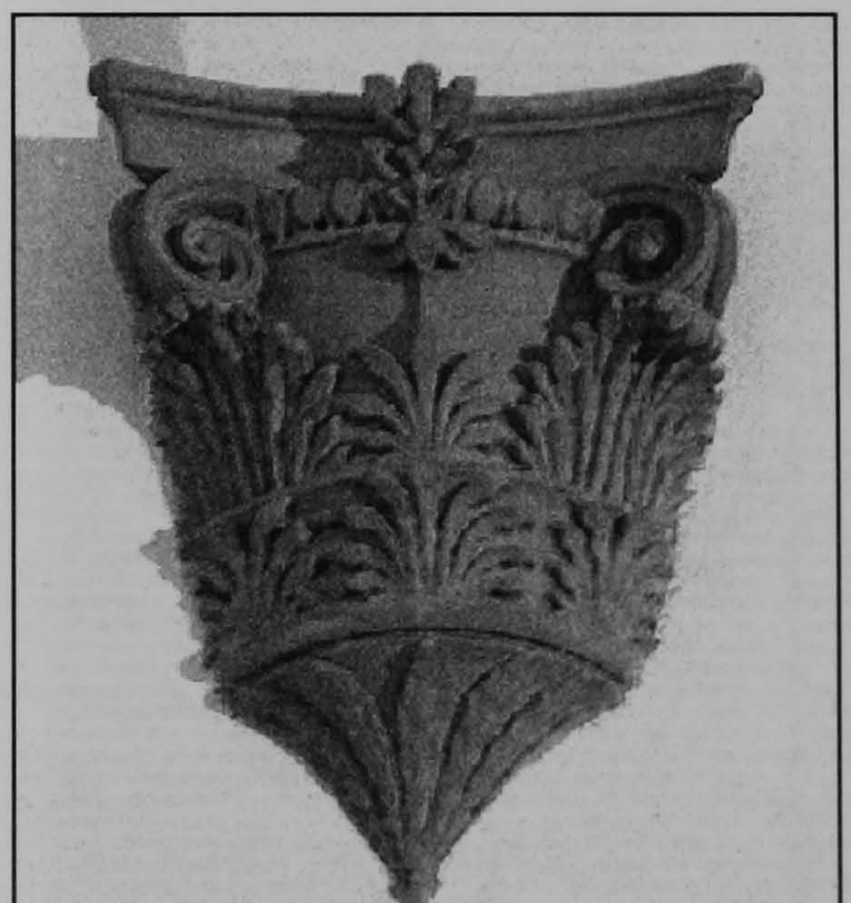


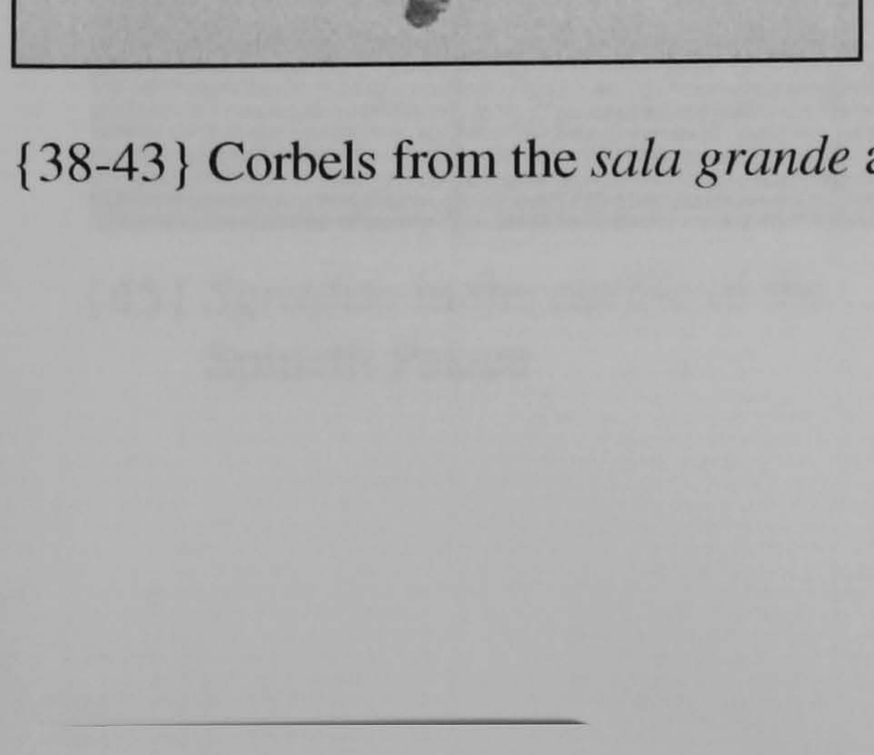
{36} The view down the *androne* of the Spinelli Palace, looking onto Borgo Santa Croce.

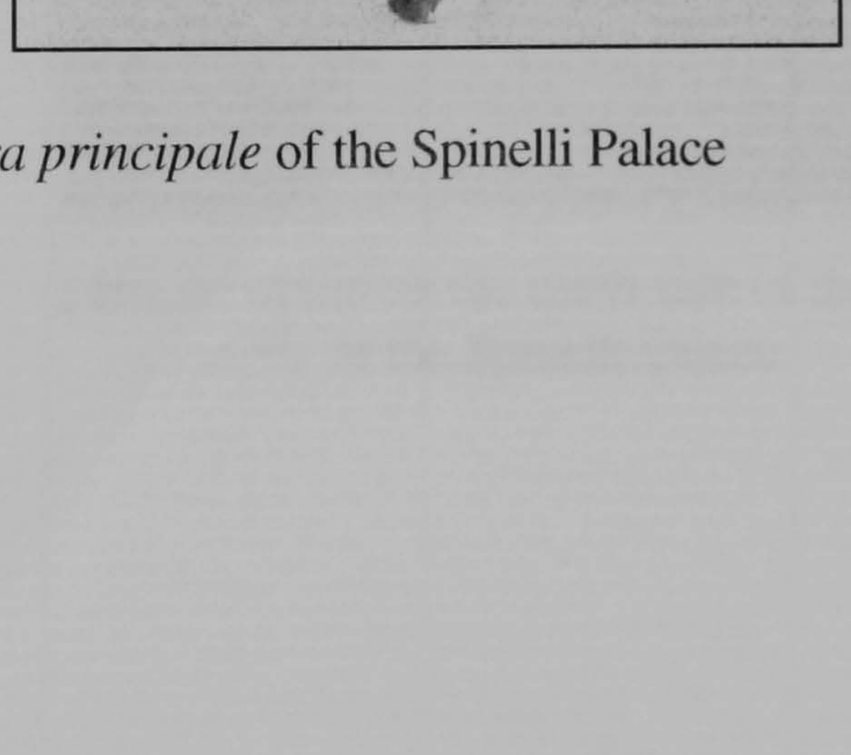
{37} The rear portion of the Spinelli Palace *cortile*, marked '*d*' in the maps.









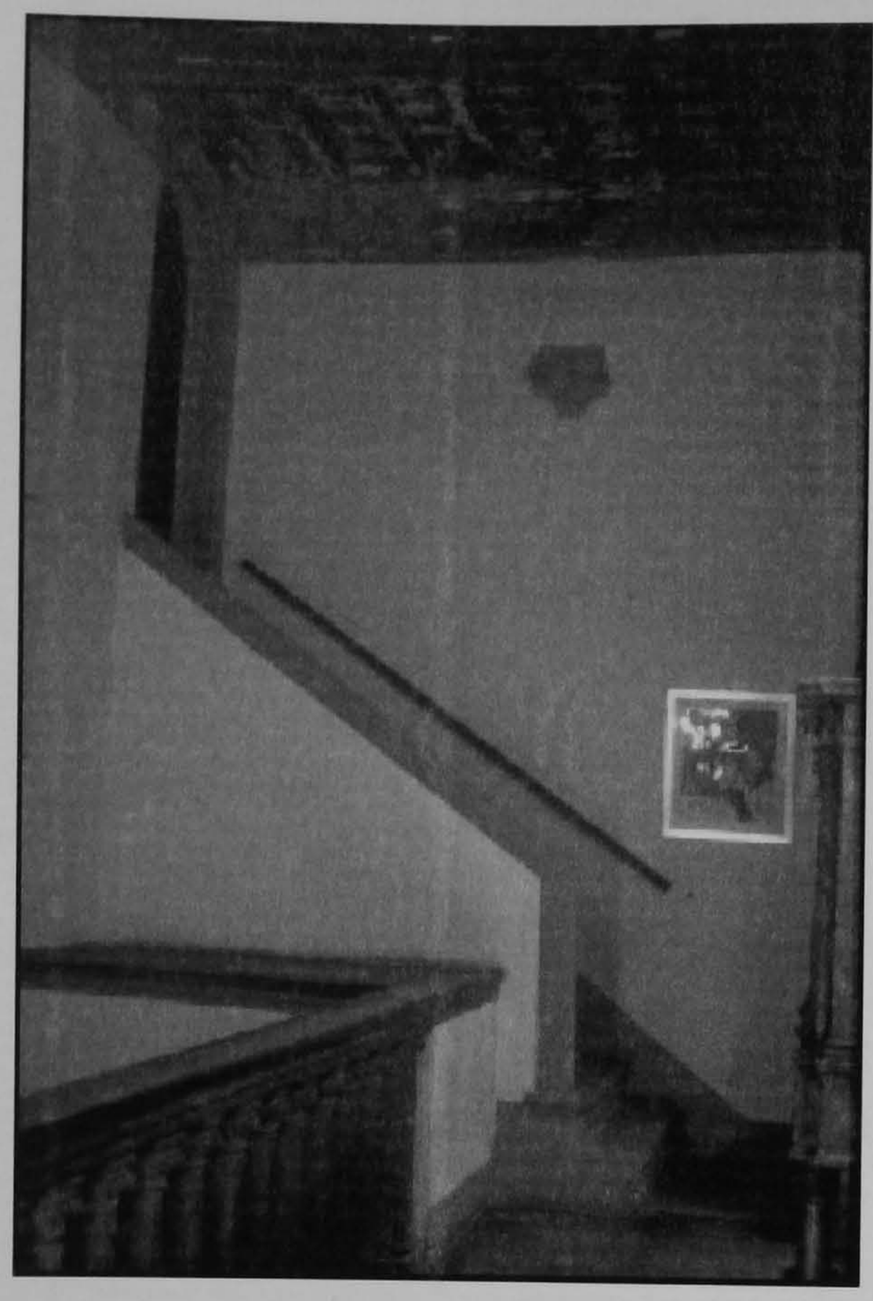


{38-43} Corbels from the *sala grande* and the *camera principale* of the Spinelli Palace

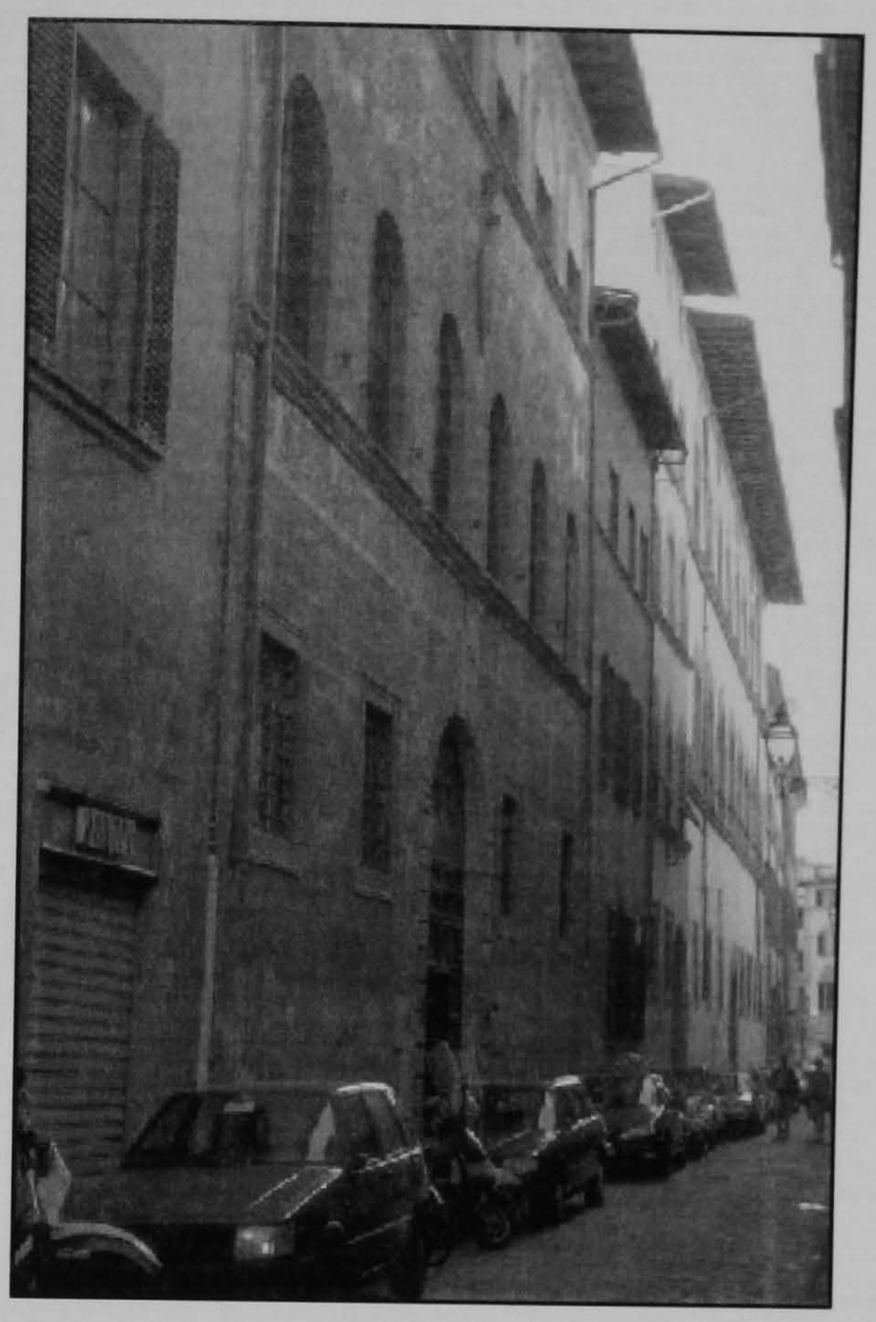
{44} Hercules and the Nemean Lion and Cupid. *Sgraffiti* in the *cortile* of the Spinelli Palace

{45} *Sgraffito* in the *cortile* of the Spinelli Palace

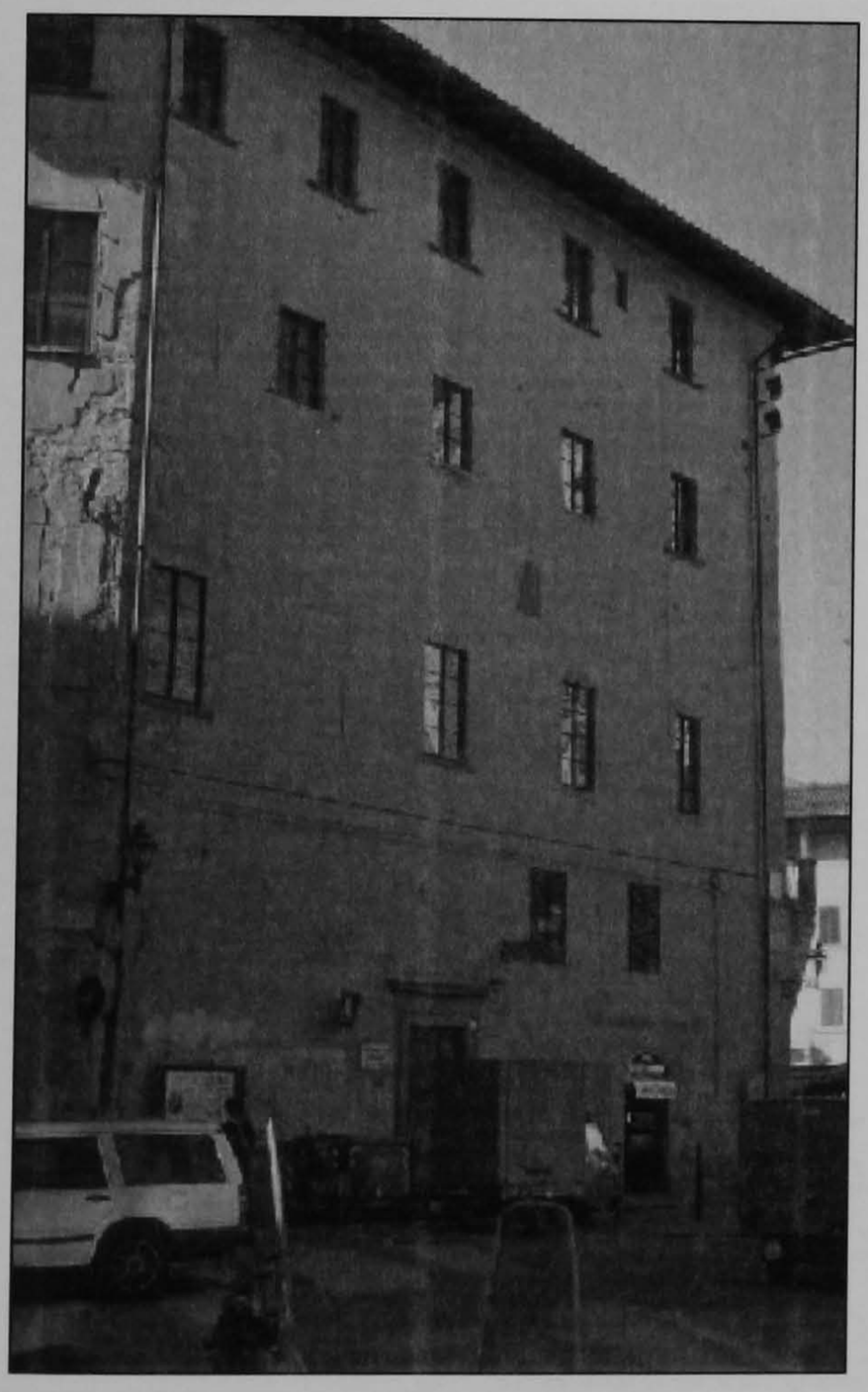
{46} A capital on the north side of the *cortile* of the Spinelli Palace



{47} A portion of the old stairs of house no. 39, showing how they were incorporated in the Spinelli Palace



{49} The façade of the Spinelli Palace overlooking Borgo Santa Croce



{48} House no. 1/2, the home of Giovanni di Paolo Morelli

{50} A detail of the *sgraffito* on the Spinelli Palace façade