

*Street Life in Renaissance Italy*



STREET LIFE  
IN RENAISSANCE ITALY

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Front cover: Francesco Rosselli (attrib.), *Savonarola being Burnt at the Stake, Piazza della Signoria*, c.1498, tempera on wood, San Marco, Florence. © 2019. Photo Scala, Florence.

Back cover: Street scene in Florence, detail from Filippino Lippi, *Madonna and Child with Saints* (Nerli Altarpiece), 1494, oil on wood, Santo Spirito, Florence. © 2019.

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Frontispiece: Unknown artist, *Florentine Street Scene*, c.1540, oil on panel, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

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# Introduction

## *Life Between Buildings*

The Renaissance in Italy is a period that has been studied extensively and from multiple points of view. Following Erwin Panofsky, numerous scholars have pointed out that there are many ‘Renaissances’, which overlap to create a rich picture of one of the best-studied periods of the pre-modern European past.<sup>1</sup> We know a huge amount about the intellectual figures, the artists, the political events, the major buildings and the significant patrons that brought them into being. The Medici, Machiavelli and Michelangelo are household names, well known to many; cities like Florence and Rome, and their major monuments and artworks, are the goal of millions of tourist journeys every year. The Renaissance, it might seem, no longer holds any secrets.

Surprisingly, however, historians know and have explored remarkably little about the actual spaces and movements that animated life in the public realm in the Renaissance period. Monuments stand proud, fashioned by the genius of architects and the munificence of their patrons; political events (battles, treaties, public punishments, dynastic weddings) are enacted at particular moments in time; discoveries (scientific or geographical) are tightly linked to the identity of individuals. We do, of course, know a great deal about the social and cultural context of the art created in the cities of Renaissance Italy, though all too often these works – housed as they are in museums – are now experienced in ways that are predominantly divorced from those original contexts. As Michael Baxandall famously wrote in the opening line of his influential *Painting and Experience*, ‘a fifteenth-century painting is the deposit of a social relationship’, and to understand that relationship it is essential to explore not just the interaction between artist and patron, but also how the work that was created operated within the ecosystem for which it was intended.<sup>2</sup>

### *Why street life?*

Streets and the public spaces of cities were, in the pre-modern era, the primary arena for social encounters and transactions, structuring interpersonal, political, devotional, commercial and everyday interactions. These spaces were consciously shaped – by collective institutional decision-making as well as through

#### **FACING PAGE:**

1. Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *The City at Peace* (or *Good Government in the City*), 1338–40, scene from the fresco *An Allegory of Good and Bad Government*, Sala della Pace, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena.

private interventions – with the consequence that we should understand the built environment of the street as perhaps the most complex artwork of the period, fashioned by a diversity of actions and executed over quite long periods of time.

Objects, individuals and events are all bound together in an ecosystem of time and place. As is increasingly being shown by scholars, reconnecting this complex system to space and location can offer new insights and open up new questions. It is evident that different ecclesiastical environments were crucial to much of the artistic production of pre-modern eras, and a vast range of scholarship has examined religious art and its wider patronage and contexts. A rather more recent trend, over the past twenty or so years, has seen the emergence and flourishing of a scholarly endeavour applied to the domestic interior, which has benefited from interdisciplinary approaches to the (largely elite) home as a place forged through art, architecture, social practices, individuals, patrons and so forth: here, it is the act of living in the domestic sphere that emerges, with the material culture that was associated with it.<sup>3</sup> This book aspires to direct a similar attention to the public realm of the world of Italian cities, seeking to reassemble a sense of the material culture of public space, and to fill the gap in historical knowledge of the mundane and the exceptional transactions that took place in cities of the past. Through visible signs and gestures that are often still inscribed in the urban fabric, this study recovers some of the multiple ways in which urban life was played out in cities, ranging from the grand and ceremonial to the prosaic and the everyday.

It is for this reason that the book's title addresses not just the physical spaces of the 'street' but the less tangible essence of the 'life' that was played out in those spaces. To that end, the hierarchies of meaning and significance applied throughout this book tend to follow the dictum, well known among contemporary urban designers, of the Danish architect Jan Gehl: 'First life, then spaces, then buildings – the other way around never works.'<sup>4</sup> In the realm of contemporary urban design, Gehl's work is best known for the application of the concept of 'shared space', a way of managing the streetscape that cancels the primacy of the automobile and redefines the position of the pedestrian – an experiment first introduced in Copenhagen and now replicated widely in cities throughout the world. The title of his 1971 book, published in translation as *Life between Buildings*, is clear, and underlines the importance of that key area of the city that is all too easily overlooked: the space between all the vertical built structures that make up the urban fabric. Gehl is distinctive for having reversed the primacy of built form in architectural practice, and for attending to the nature of human interactions in the public realm and considering how these can be improved through interventions that alter behaviours and collective experiences.

Moreover, in considering the means by which 'good quality urban space' can be achieved, Gehl specifically looks to changes that have transformed the way that cities function and have been inhabited since the Industrial Revolution.<sup>5</sup> His practice has highlighted a transfer of 'essential activities', formerly transacted in the public space of streets (commerce and business, but also commonplace interactions of various types), to interior spaces, showing that people will now occupy and enjoy public space for 'optional' activities only where appropriate quality and amenity are provided. Shared urban environments are created by reducing the dominance of the automobile, designing street furniture and



layouts that facilitate pedestrian encounters, and encouraging the establishment of retail and leisure activities that make an active feature of the public spaces of streets. Copenhagen, as well as streets in New York, Sydney, London, Brighton and numerous other cities, attests to the successful implementation of these ideas, while economic indicators and quality-of-life statistics point to the net benefits to be derived from what may seem at first to be disruptive and transformative interventions.<sup>6</sup>

But what relevance does any of this have to a study of street life in Renaissance Italy? In thinking of the urban realm as an ecosystem, and describing a priority for the people who make up cities at any given moment, Gehl (and various other theorists who will appear at different points in this book) offers us insights into ways of living and understanding urban form that are eminently transferable to different historical epochs. Moreover, while it may seem anachronistic to deny the primacy of the automobile in thinking about life between buildings in the past, the relationships occurring at street level that Gehl discusses are perhaps as old as the practice of urban living itself. Thus, to make something of a bold chronological leap, we might look at Ambrogio Lorenzetti's fresco *The City at Peace* (or *Good Government in the City*, as it is sometimes known), painted in the government chamber, the Sala dei Nove (or Sala della Pace) in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena at the end of the 1330s (fig. 1).<sup>7</sup> Lorenzetti is not, of course, representing 'shared space' in the same terms as are described and theorised by Gehl, but it is hard not to read this image of urban life – and the next, showing rural life – as demonstrating the very same primacy of 'First life, then spaces, then buildings'.

In the view that unfolds on the wall of the city hall, Lorenzetti places people in the foreground, and it is human activities that animate the scene, within the firm protective frame of buildings that enclose and define the city, from the boundary walls at one edge, through the domestic architecture of the background. In the open space of the foreground, a variety of actions are transacted in public space – a wedding procession on the far left, a group of enigmatic dancing figures towards the centre and the numerous commercial activities that line the street and spill out onto it. Movement is everywhere: a strong linear thrust binds the city to the countryside, as humans and animals trudge in and out of the gates, setting off down the via Francigena, which cuts through the countryside, or making their way along the street or piazza that forms the main focus of the foreground in the city scene. Moreover, we are reminded that the supply chain of the city was dependent upon transportation: horses are prominent throughout the fresco, both as a means of transport for the more affluent elites, shown in the wedding procession or going out hunting, and as pack animals, carrying the goods (wool packs, above all) that fuel the city's trade and industry.

This is an urban scene where, as Gehl would have it, the majority of 'essential activities' are taking place in the public realm. Lorenzetti represents the city's public face – the aspect that can be seen from the street – and does so by showing the balance between the built environment and the actions of people living in the city. The success of the image is precisely and simply achieved through this balance. That this is how we should understand it is made clear by the fresco's counterpart on the west wall, which shows the effects of war on the city and countryside. Here the balance is broken, and this is expressed forcefully



through the derelict condition of the buildings but also through the nature of the interactions occurring in the public space of the foreground. Crime and disorder rule, and there is a visible martial presence in the persons of the soldiers at the gate and the various officials in the central scene, where an armed militia intervenes in two assaults involving women.

A striking contrast emerges here; in the civic scene of peace there is no visible presence of government authority or policing, while in its opposite these figures predominate. That such a reading is intentional is revealed by the winged figures that appear above the city gates: ‘Securitas’ (safety) above the city at peace, ‘Timor’ (fear) above the city at war. Of course, the key to understanding both city scenes lies in the allegorical arrangement of figures that are associated with them, and, as Quentin Skinner and others have shown, the lynchpin figure in these allegories is that of Justice.<sup>8</sup> Without rehearsing the complex arguments that have raged among the various interpreters of Lorenzetti’s allegories of government, it is clear that where justice reigns, and where citizens contribute to its emplacement, peace is assured. ‘Safety’, as will be shown in Chapter 3, is achieved collectively, and, as such, the need for its policing by officials is not apparent. The opposite is true where ‘fear’ rules, as the conventions of civic cohabitation have collapsed and enforcement is required to stem the tide of violence.

While this summary reading of Lorenzetti’s famous fresco cycle does not differ enormously from those that have come before it, by viewing the scenes from street level, a clear focus on the city as an ecosystem can be shown to emerge. Themes that have been touched upon, and will be explored in greater detail in the chapters that follow, are policing and the regulation of behaviour, trade and the transaction of activities, transport and movement, as well as ritual events such as marriage. All these are carried out and made possible through social interactions and performance in public space. As such, the final point to be underlined here is the inextricably linked nature of people and place in Lorenzetti’s formulation. In this respect, we can view these scenes as capturing the essential ways in which the built form of the city expresses governance. The well-ordered spaces, harmonious buildings and carefully arranged curtains of shop fronts defining the contours of public space (fig. 2) all serve to articulate how the city is shaped by civic decision-making.<sup>9</sup> In turn, the groups of figures, whether dancing, trading, learning or manufacturing (fig. 3), provide a human counterpoint to the built physical spaces. These are not merely representations of the everyday transactions of life in the city, they embody how urban life comes into being.

It is perhaps simplistic to compare the Palazzo Pubblico frescoes to the equally famous but rather more enigmatic formulations of the ‘ideal city’ depicted in three late-fifteenth-century panels, probably created in Urbino and now dispersed across various museums – views that are notable for the rigorously ordered classicising built environment, almost devoid of human life (fig. 4).<sup>10</sup> The *Ideal City* panels (the subject of further discussion in the Epilogue) resist interpretation as depictions of lived environments, and instead stand almost to justify a traditional approach to architectural history, which favours monumental built form over the socio-cultural analysis of complex urban ecosystems. By contrast, Lorenzetti’s image – like so many of the paintings discussed elsewhere in this book – is a powerful reminder of the importance of knitting

**FACING PAGE:**

2. Lorenzetti, *The City at Peace*, the architecture (manipulated version of fig. 1, by Ross Davidson, with Fabrizio Nevola, redrawn by Luca Brunke).

3. Lorenzetti, *The City at Peace*, people and their activities (manipulated version of fig. 1, by Ross Davidson, with Fabrizio Nevola, redrawn by Luca Brunke).

4. Unknown central Italian artist, *Ideal City*, 1480–90(?), tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino.



together the disciplinary expertise of urban historians (social and economic) and the architectural studies of buildings and cities to achieve interdisciplinary insights into built form and urban experience.

### *What is street life?*

So what do we mean by street life? In essence, the subject of this book is the interaction of people and place, where place is specifically the public realm of an urban character. So then, the subject of the inquiry is the combination of the built environment – the buildings, piazzas and streets that make up the physical fabric – and the social interactions that take place in that environment. In this context, ‘street life’ is a term that serves to conflate place and action in a site-specific and defined way, much as we might identify actions, rituals and material culture associated with the domestic interior or sacred spaces. While religious and domestic spaces have received significant attention from scholars, the public arena of the street, both as a unit of urban space and as a public environment for social interaction, have commanded relatively little attention from scholars.<sup>11</sup>

Growing interest in street life of the past is partly due to the changing nature of architectural history, which has gradually shifted from a predominance of monographic studies of architects and monuments to a more broadly contextualised approach, setting the architectural ‘object’ in its wider social and cultural context.<sup>12</sup> The increasingly interdisciplinary nature of such inquiry has led to fruitful strands of research, such as the scholarship around architecture and liturgy – which has transformed the way that churches are studied in various periods – or that concerning architecture and individual identity formation,



which has provided a rich strand for studies of elite domestic architecture. Within the field of urban architectural history – by which I mean studies that cover both the built form and the social history of cities – a similar movement away from the formal analysis of built form and its history to a broader interpretation of contexts and meanings can be identified.<sup>13</sup>

The grand narrative of the history of cities across periods and cultures outlined in two volumes by Spiro Kostof includes an important chapter in *The City Assembled* on the street as both ‘container and content’, in which the author notes that a history of streets and the interrelation of people and place has yet to be written.<sup>14</sup> Echoing Joseph Rykwert’s comment that a ‘street is human movement institutionalized’,<sup>15</sup> Kostof examines how human use is as powerful in shaping urban form as are formal design strategies that impose grand set pieces on the city fabric. It is this binary process – part design-led and part informal usage – that sets the agenda for considering the public realm as it developed in the past. Indeed, the street has been considered as a unit of urban form, through interdisciplinary analysis that brings to bear a variety of factors, ranging from political to economic, from social to aesthetic, and often taking in the relationship of the ritual functions of the built environment to the people that inhabit it.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, the focus has tended to be on the emergence and development of particular thoroughfares or public spaces, rather than the broader analysis of the public realm and the activity that animated it in the past.

A more recent study switches the focus back to the social aspects of the cultural history of early modern European streets, considering them as the material expression of the dynamics that regulate the boundaries and relationships between public and private, but somewhat overlooking the physicality of their built forms.<sup>17</sup> This study places special importance on the meaning of space and how it was used, and helpfully identifies the street as an appropriate

unit for questioning the very concept of ‘private’, advancing a more nuanced gradation between public and domestic experiences of space.<sup>18</sup> This distinction between public and private/domestic emerges as an especially rich seam for research that probes the physical and social boundaries located at street level – issues underpinning many of the cases examined in the chapters that follow.

The study of city-based rituals has emerged over the past thirty years as the most productive area relating to how urban spaces were used. A vast and growing literature considers city streets as the stage for processions and other forms of urban ritual, such as triumphal entries, religious festivals, and events marking the life cycle of individuals (marriages, funerals, etc.)<sup>19</sup> Analysis and interpretation of such ceremonial events (which has been very much influenced by works on contemporary ritual and social drama by anthropologists such as Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner) has tended to follow the leads of Richard Trexler and Edward Muir, whose landmark studies of Florence and Venice, respectively, have provided a benchmark for work in this field throughout Europe.<sup>20</sup>

Certain streets (or, in Venice, canals) were the crucial vectors that channelled collective behaviour and took on the symbolic value of ritual routes. Among these, perhaps the most important of all were the axes that crossed Rome, used for the papal *possesso* ceremony, in which the newly installed pope traversed the city from the Vatican to the Lateran and symbolically took ownership of his diocese through a carefully orchestrated ritual.<sup>21</sup> As Muir has shown, the way in which urban processions of various sorts – whether regularly occurring religious ceremonies or extraordinary events such as the entries of monarchs – repeatedly utilised the same routes has been seen as a sign of unified urban image, projected ephemerally by ceremonies, and in permanent form by the built fabric along such routes. Urban rituals were a key way in which power relations were encoded, and in which fealty was declared and made manifest, both in courtly and civic settings. Streets thus came to be a permanent and visual extension of the ephemeral events that they articulated, as is discussed further in Chapter 1.

Equally, however, such urban rituals and the unity they enshrined have been understood to reveal the frictions and fractures between communities and groups within the city.<sup>22</sup> Again, in the papal *possesso*, conflict between the papacy and the local nobility, as well as the population of Rome, was articulated by moments of ritual conflict, which on occasion flared up into violent encounters.<sup>23</sup> Inclusion or exclusion, participation in or absence from events had powerful political repercussions, and streets could permanently articulate these effects: for example, by the formation of exclusive palace streets – a phenomenon that became increasingly widespread from the sixteenth century, as the well-known example of the strada Nuova in Genoa (explored in more detail in Chapter 4) shows.<sup>24</sup>

Following the study of ritual uses of urban spaces in staged processional events, some interest has been directed to the more ordinary practices of urban life in the past.<sup>25</sup> This shift towards the analysis of everyday uses of urban space owes much to the work of Michel de Certeau and Henri Lefebvre on the social production of space and spatial practices, which strongly underpins the present study.<sup>26</sup> This concern for social interactions located in their physical contexts, combined in varying degrees, has contributed to defining what the cultural geographer Denis Cosgrove described as a ‘spatial turn’ in historical research.<sup>27</sup>

Within such a methodological framework, the street emerges as a prime performative urban space, on which individual and collective actions and behaviours inscribe meaning that accumulates over time. Some years ago, Trexler commented that ‘Social spaces are central to the formation, expression, and modification of individual and group identities.’<sup>28</sup> Streets are just such social spaces, and street life is everyday and ritualised, its meanings deposited on the urban fabric through repetitive usage as well as exceptional breaks from the norm.

Outside such ritual use, however, discussions of streets have tended to be divided between the analysis of their built characteristics by architectural historians, and the life occurring on and around them by predominantly social or urban historians. While Riita Laitinen and Thomas Cohen state the intention of underlining the ‘nature of the street as an urban material entity’, their volume engages only partially with the visual form of the streets examined.<sup>29</sup> In fact, the material, visual, tangible and lasting nature of streets is peculiarly lacking in many studies, including a recent work on twentieth-century street life, which is nevertheless significant for throwing light on everyday and marginal areas of life in the city.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, Elizabeth and Thomas Cohen’s valuable and readable *Daily Life in Renaissance Italy*, offers a richly evocative picture of the varieties of urban experience, while providing only a rather limited physical context for it.<sup>31</sup>

Conversely, studies of the streetscape in seventeenth-century painting have tended to explain the genre of street views, or *vedute*, in terms of phenomena such as the Grand Tour and the circulation of images of modernity in the cities of continental Europe, rather than engaging specifically with the actions and behaviours represented in the genre.<sup>32</sup> This is something of a missed opportunity, as such images are filled with a variety of urban life that deserves further investigation. Thus, a growing interest in seventeenth-century urban scenes and characters has emerged, as in the work of Melissa Calaresu on street sellers in early modern Naples, where the painted record (however stylised) serves to capture something of the texture of life in the city, and some of the specialist activities – of ice-cream salesmen, for example – that proliferated there.<sup>33</sup> Here, the genre piece provides helpful clues for reassembling elements of everyday life that have all too often been overlooked in the scholarship.

Related to painting and the depiction in it of the urban realm, is the field of urban cartography, a science that was fast developing in accuracy during the later fifteenth century.<sup>34</sup> While, of course, accurate maps are a valuable tool for the historian who wishes to put the details of social life in cities back into their contemporary settings, it is important to note that maps did not then serve the same purpose as they do today in the navigation of the urban realm by users. As Leonardo’s famous map of Imola shows, and the complex iconographic interpretations of the map of Florence ‘with a chain’ (the ‘Catena’ map of Florence; see fig. 103) confirms, strategic, political or allegorical motives prevailed.<sup>35</sup> This being so, it is perhaps not surprising to find that little attention has been paid to the detailed depiction of urban settings in the search for the wider meanings that may have underpinned mapping innovations. Nonetheless, as will emerge in Chapter 4, city maps produced during the later fifteenth century and through the sixteenth provide an invaluable resource, not only for understanding the urban layout but also for identifying nodal locations such as street corners and informal piazzas that animated the cities of the past.

The foregoing comments have suggested that social historians of the city tend to overlook the fine-grained detail of the urban fabric of the city, while art or architectural historians may do the opposite, omitting from their studies the subtle social significance of actions and behaviours represented in an urban setting. This is to exaggerate the polarisation of disciplinary boundaries; interdisciplinary approaches are increasingly practised and, as Diane Favro argued at the turn of this century, the bringing together of the spatial, material and social qualities of city streets can bear rich rewards.<sup>36</sup> A pre-eminent example is provided by studies of early modern Rome, which have revealed the far from casual meanings associated with urban space, its ownership, and the conflicts that emerged on and around public streets.<sup>37</sup> The work of Manfredo Tafuri is exemplary in this regard, and has revealed the range and scale of urban interventions and their meaning, from the creation of new streets that imposed hegemonic authority on the cityscape to more subtle modifications that articulated the realignment of power relations in the city.<sup>38</sup> Tafuri's studies of Rome, Venice and Florence tend to focus on major patrons, even where a micro-historical approach is adopted, as with his study of the church of San Francesco della Vigna in Venice.<sup>39</sup> However, since the subjects of such studies of urbanism are predominantly ruling elites, the scale and nature of the interventions discussed tends to privilege ritual use of the streets as an expression of large-scale patronage and propaganda, quite distinct from the more ordinary city functions that pertain to the interactions of resident communities and groups.

A useful contrast is offered by studies that focus on non-elite functions of urban space and streets, and it is here that truly innovative subjects for research have emerged in recent years. The 'fertile spaces' of street life in early modern Europe, described in an important article by Peter Arnade, Martha C. Howell and Walter Simons, are located on the boundaries between public and domestic space.<sup>40</sup> The authors' subjects are not princes: instead, they focus on individuals and groups whose existence was interstitial, defined by the physical spaces that mediate between public realm and domestic space, and the social interactions that are encouraged by such liminal situations. From these 'fertile spaces', an especially fruitful line of enquiry has emerged around the physical place of shops and the practice of shopping, an activity that was largely conducted in the public space of streets and squares.<sup>41</sup> While the history of shopping has a growing scholarship of its own, and is examined further in Chapters 4 and 6, specific sorts of shops have attracted scholarly attention as semi-public places, which facilitated particular forms of dynamic social interaction. Thus, for example, pharmacies or apothecaries' shops have been the subject of a number of studies, which have shown them as places where medical information as well as neighbourhood gossip circulated freely.<sup>42</sup> The nature of shops, the transactions facilitated by them and the locations that they occupied in the city reveal the value of considering social, spatial and architectural aspects in combination. Much the same can be said for taverns, although the Italian *osterie* have been scantily studied, particularly when compared to the growing scholarship on the equivalent north of the Alps.<sup>43</sup> What this research shows is that taverns were important junctions in normal social interaction, communication and identity formation for men of all classes, as well as hubs of community for more specific, usually lower-class, groups. They were also contested spaces, around



which broader conflicts turned, owing to both a real and an imagined association with everyday violence, prostitution, sodomy and gambling, and sometimes with political or religious subversion.

The tavern and the pharmacy were socially and symbolically significant places, which provided a physical expression and location for social practices and behaviours that are central to defining concepts of street life. To this day, the word 'street' is often a negative qualifier in conjunction with other terms, and it is noticeable that similar judgements pertain when applied to the historical past: crime and deviant behaviour are commonly associated with streets and public spaces in the city. One obvious example, which has received attention across most European contexts and for a number of Italian cities, is prostitution, though the spatial dimensions of this profession have been subjected to scrutiny by only a few scholars.<sup>44</sup> Streets, taverns and bath-houses were closely associated with prostitution, and the policing of this activity was increasingly street specific, as is discussed in Chapter 3.

The street was also the privileged site for the performance of collective and individual acts and rituals of violence and justice. We may well question Michel Foucault's famously neat break between the performative, violent justice of the Middle Ages and the subtle surveillance of the Enlightenment state, but it is nonetheless evident that the public space of cities was integral to the processes of justice.<sup>45</sup> Processions regularly formed along the routes leading the condemned to the site of execution, and confraternities were established to orchestrate rituals and bring succour to those about to die, while crowds gathered to watch the spectacle.<sup>46</sup> Conversely, the street might be the chosen site for particular crimes, such as honour killings, for which the public character of the space and the performative nature of the acts made the street an appropriate setting.<sup>47</sup> Other factors, such as neighbourhood rivalries and conflicts, as well as the assertion of masculinity, could be articulated in the ritual battles that animated the cities of the Renaissance. The physical borderlines between groups regularly coincided with streets (in much the same way as regional boundaries often do with watercourses), and the streets themselves became the site for the ritual renegotiation of those borders, as did the bridges of Venice, where especially colourful fistfights took place between members of rival factions.<sup>48</sup>

While the street was a favoured setting for crime and violence, in some recent scholarship it has also come to be seen as an alternative locus for finding and defining the early modern public sphere.<sup>49</sup> So, for example, Filippo de Vivo has shown that various public spaces in Venice were key communication hubs, which mediated and favoured the transfer of information in printed and oral form.<sup>50</sup> Such interpretations push back the well-known identification of the public sphere by Jürgen Habermas, who saw the coffee-houses of the eighteenth century as the first sites where knowledge and ideas were shared outside the control of governing structures.<sup>51</sup> As spatial questions are raised in relation to social interactions in public places, so a broader picture is emerging about participation in political discourse. In Italy, it was sites such as street corners and piazzas that were favoured by street singers, storytellers and news pamphleteers: the enormous diffusion of cheap print from the early sixteenth century was fuelled by the sale and performance of those texts in public spaces.<sup>52</sup> The circulation of early modern news was transacted through these public-space hubs;

similarly, the publication of laws by heralds and town criers and their calls for the prosecution of crimes also occurred at designated sites, such as street corners and marketplaces.<sup>53</sup> Thus, as will be shown in Chapter 5, in areas such as these, as well as the more structured venues of taverns, apothecaries' and other shops, certain political functions of public space created a culture of conversation that widened participation in political discourse.

This view of the emerging public sphere builds on interactions that were intrinsic to the marketplace as a space of commerce and the exchange of knowledge and of goods.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, public space was, of course, crucial in asserting, challenging and negotiating issues of gender, class and identity, and it is these aspects of street life that have received most attention in recent scholarly literature.<sup>55</sup> While urban streets were undoubtedly a prevalently male space, as Elizabeth Cohen has recently noted, it is important to progress beyond the male/female–public/private dichotomy, as there remains an 'unworkable gap between an ideal of protective, and constraining, enclosure and the realities of most women's lives'.<sup>56</sup> That the street was a place where this 'gap' played out in the practices and behaviours of elite and non-elite women is explored further here, though the complexities of how urban public space was used and shaped by issues of gender deserve significant further study. It is increasingly clear that working women, ranging from prostitutes to washerwomen, street hawkers to orphans begging for alms, populated the streets to a far greater degree than did women from the urban elites, especially those who were unmarried.<sup>57</sup>

Finally, in this opening survey of the research and approaches that can help to clarify the present object of study, we should consider the sensory environment of the city, and the emerging theme in historical work of the 'other' senses, which have all too often been eclipsed by the predominance of attention to the visual.<sup>58</sup> A series of studies, in part following the ground-breaking research into the aural sensorium by R. Murray Schafer, have begun to reveal the rich soundscapes of the past.<sup>59</sup> Writing about early modern England, Bruce R. Smith has commented on the remarkable complexity of the sonic environment, which was distinguished by the 'number of overlapping, shifting, acoustic communities, centred on different soundmarks: parish bells, the speech of different nationalities, the sounds of trades, open-air markets, the noises of public gathering places'.<sup>60</sup> The soundscape of Renaissance Italian cities still largely remains to be understood. Following the important work on bells by Alain Corbin, various scholars are beginning to show how music and sound spread out well beyond the bounds of domestic and ecclesiastical spaces of performance, so that public spaces and streets were animated by sounds, many of which bore significant social and political meanings.<sup>61</sup>

As Chapter 2 suggests, streets were noisy, and they were often also dirty and smelly; and so the odours of the street and public health have also received some recent attention. The nineteenth-century preoccupation with segregating sewage and filth from the streets established the idea of paving as a means of separating users of the street from the ordure beneath the ground in the sewers; here again – as with the introduction of lighting or the end of the theatre of justice – modernity is heralded by the sanitisation of the street environment.<sup>62</sup> Smell (or stench), like sound, was not confined by the walls of buildings, but permeated through them, so that during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries

zoning and street-hygiene legislation recognised the widespread benefits to decorum of marginalising certain trades and activities away from central streets.<sup>63</sup> In addition to human waste, the animal waste produced by growing numbers of coaches in many early modern cities must have affected the streets in ways that researchers have barely yet explored.<sup>64</sup>

Novel areas for research, such as urban transportation and the way this shapes and alters the city environment, become more evident from an approach to street life that views the city as an ecosystem. As noted above, the fertile spaces for new research in this area arise from interstitial locations or mediating figures that are the product of the vibrant life of streets. Interpretation of such locations requires an interdisciplinary research stance that views the street as a unit for a broader spatial (in the Lefebvrian sense) understanding of the social and material culture of the early modern public realm.

So then, what is street life? How can we find it in the early modern city? And what areas might reward further inquiry? From this brief review of approaches and materials, the street can helpfully be understood as an ecosystem, influenced by multiple factors in its form, the way it was used and how it was perceived. As has been suggested, street life as an area of study specifically sets out to cross between the physical and the social fabrics of the city and to reveal the nature and degree of interdependence of one upon the other. While the street might be used for ephemeral displays of hegemonic power, it was also a space of the everyday, and as such provides a rich context for research into overlooked people, places and practices. By opening up such a vast canvas of urban life to observation, we run the risk of finding street life everywhere and nowhere, of its slipping away as easily as market stalls are packed up at the end of a day's trading. The challenge of the study of street life is to capture such daily, ephemeral practices, and to anchor them within the fabric of the social, political and cultural history of early modern cities.



The chapters that follow have been written to address particular aspects of how urban life was structured around the physical spaces of streets and squares: the public realm. Each chapter opens with a paradigmatic example, chosen to give a sense of the rich layering of meanings that can be found in actions and behaviours played out in these spaces. From these individual examples – or microstudies – of place, the analysis of particular themes spreads outwards to draw in a discussion of comparative evidence from cities across Italy.

While there are clearly significant challenges in attempting a coverage of the whole Italian peninsula in such a well-researched period, I have preferred to adopt a comparative approach that seeks to draw out commonalities in practices, rather than to focus on the unique nature of only one urban centre. Having researched and written extensively on a single city – Siena – I am aware of the great advantages to be gained from a tight focus, but in this study my aim is to open up a new field or approach, by proposing ways in which we can read and analyse spaces and behaviours that I hope will be explored in greater detail by others in future research. There will, of course, be failings and shortcomings, but the comparative approach has the value of enabling some degree of

measurement or assessment of the relative significance of examples that apply across multiple centres, or are restricted to particular cities or regions.

The book is ordered in two parts; Part 1 considers the city as a whole, while Part 2 focuses on specific built elements at a more circumscribed scale. In parallel with this organising principle, and complementing it, a changing perspective moves from the dominant authority of the imposed order of planners and rulers to the fine-grained and more complex everyday interactions shaped at street level. As the introduction to Part 1 argues, this approach consciously adopts Michel de Certeau's influential concept of 'practiced space'.<sup>65</sup>

The three chapters that make up Part 1 broadly consider the overarching issue of urban development through design and infrastructure as expressions of socio-political systems, though a recurring theme is the resistance and adaptation of everyday life to centralising order. The principal focus of Chapter 1 is the emergence of planned, urban-scale renewal, directed at the development of new streets during the fifteenth century, and the means by which these increasingly uniform urban set pieces articulated and framed the authority of dominant elites. Chapter 2 flips the focus to consider how urban public space structured everyday interactions and movement in the city; here, we consider the lived experience and sensory environment of streets, new and old. Finally, in Chapter 3, the framing concept of surveillance is adopted, to help us consider how streets can be understood as a technology of authority and control; again however, while it is shown that urbanism clearly articulated centralised power, it is also suggested that the policing and control of urban public space were often participatory and collective, and relied on 'eyes on the street'.<sup>66</sup>

Part 2 moves from the collective, urban-scale discussion of streets as structuring elements of urban design and experience to consider more tightly focused architectural elements within urban space, and the meanings inscribed upon them through the social practices of daily life. Adopting a framework set out by the influential urban design theorist Kevin Lynch in his *Image of the City*, the three chapters focus on three broad elements of 'imageability' through a discussion of paths and edges, then nodes and, in the final chapter, monuments.<sup>67</sup> Part 2 advances an analysis in which attention focuses firmly on the social interactions enabled and given meaning by elements of the city fabric, to propose the agency of those sites through the patterns of meaning inscribed upon them by their use.

So then, Chapter 4 serves as a counterpoint to Part 1 by revisiting the street through a focused consideration of how the Renaissance interest in street planning and renewal played out in the architectural and social specialisation of building types and of activities revolving around them; it is noted that the process was far more gradual than is often proposed, and that mixed-use conditions prevailed through much of the sixteenth century. Chapter 5 adopts a much more circumscribed point of observation – the street corner – and considers how artistic and architectural markers accentuated these nodal sites to emphasise their importance in localised interactions. In the final chapter, the discussion turns to perhaps the archetypal architectural innovation of the Renaissance, the residential domestic palace; here, in contrast to predominant approaches to *all'antica* architecture, the discussion centres on understanding this typology through a close examination of how the palace's features structured specific

behaviours and interactions between the public and domestic sphere. The Epilogue turns briefly to a distinct, yet closely related element of urban public space – the piazza, or square – and surveys this in the light of the preceding discussion, proposing that we should understand these increasingly tightly planned set pieces of urban design through the prism of socially mediated practices.

This book argues that built form and social practices should be understood to operate in concert with one another; it is this interaction – the inscribing of meanings through actions on place – that underpins Lefebvre’s influential understanding and definition of space. Lefebvre’s observation regarding the ‘social character of space’, is that ‘space is a [social] product [...] space thus produced also serves as a tool of thought and of action [...] in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power’.<sup>68</sup> Having something in common with Baxandall’s description of a painting as resulting from a social relationship, Lefebvre’s approach provides a framework for the analysis of the meanings of urban public space considered here. As we probe these meanings, so the public spaces of Italian cities will emerge as dynamic structures that shaped behaviours while also forming the setting or backdrop for them; the street emerges as a carefully assembled complex structure, whose physical, visual and sensory character carried quite specific meanings. It is proposed that urban public space was a socially mediated space, where meanings were fashioned in a dialectic between everyday actions and centralised authorities. The chapters that follow consider the spatial practices inscribed on the streets and public spaces of Renaissance Italy, in order better to reveal the dynamics at play in the ordering – representation – of the built environment and the lived – representational – experiences of its inhabitants.<sup>69</sup>

## Street Life and Street Cultures

Messere Floriano da Castel San Piero was, in his time, a famous and well-known lawyer in Bologna. He came out of church one day in the company of a number of other lawyers, and they made their way to the main square; here they came to the shop of a silversmith [at the sign of the Bear], where Floriano had had a precious and beautiful gilded silver goblet made. They stopped there while he settled the bill with the silversmith; Floriano looked around him to find his page boy, who wasn't there, so he asked the silversmith to have his apprentice take the goblet back to his house, which he was happy to do. Just at that time two young men from Rome – of the Treio district – had arrived in Bologna; they travelled the length of Italy gambling with false coins and dice as well as a host of other tricks, to con people, eating and making merry at the expense of the Crucifix (which they swore by). Their names were Liello de Cecco and Andreuccio from Vallemontone; by chance they were on the piazza when Master Floriano had sent the goblet home, and having seen it they decided to set to work to get hold of it.<sup>1</sup>

Masuccio Salernitano's *Novellino* is a collection of fifty short stories (broadly imitative of Boccaccio's *Decameron*), first published in Naples in the last quarter of the fifteenth century.<sup>2</sup> In novella XVII, Masuccio tells a story about Messere Floriano da Castel San Piero, a man famous in Bologna in his day as a lawyer. The tale is a classic *beffa* – a prank – played on the unsuspecting and perhaps rather self-important lawyer by a couple of tricksters from Rome. Liello and Andreuccio looked on while Floriano paid for his goblet in the main square, and sent it home; they went to a tavern, bought a fish and went with it to Floriano's house, where they knocked on the door and spoke with Floriano's wife, telling her to prepare a delicious banquet, as her husband would be coming home with some colleagues. They also asked for the goblet that the shop boy from the Orso had just brought, as Floriano had questioned the scales used to weigh the goblet and wanted to recalculate the price.

The rest is fairly predictable. The conmen took the goblet to a safe place just outside the city at the monastery of San Michele in Bosco, where the Roman prior was their friendly fence. Floriano came home, was amazed at the lavish lunch that had been prepared, and asked his wife what was going on, and so the *beffa* unfolded, with the goblet lost and a banquet wasted. Unsurprisingly,

Floriano was furious, and rushed back to the central square to find out if anyone had seen someone with a big fish walking towards his house. Unbeknownst to Floriano, when he reached the piazza he was seen by Andreuccio, who was ‘standing like an honest man on the corner of the piazza’.<sup>3</sup> Andreuccio saw his chance to do more damage, and doubled back to the house, where he told the unsuspecting wife that the goblet had been found and Floriano required the fish so as to hold an impromptu celebration in town. Again, the rest is obvious: Floriano lost both goblet and fish, and the tricksters cleaned up.

Like so many novellas, Masuccio’s story of the law professor Floriano da Castel San Piero provides a series of insights into the range of interactions that took place in public space, and the ways in which people and objects moved in and between the public and private spheres. Floriano is a lawyer. He has a public persona, reinforced in the story by his being in the company of other lawyers – a persona that is performed in public as Floriano moves with his colleagues between the church and the piazza. He shops in public, and there is a real sense that the act of shopping in the company of his peers, and in the unquestionably high-end context of a silversmith’s shop at the sign of the bear (Orso), is also a way of articulating his status within the urban community. The performance is not, however, played to a uniquely local crowd, as the piazza is also a space in which strangers in town might be watching; so we are introduced to two con-men from Rome, who specialise in dice and coin tricks, and travel around Italy making their living at the expense of locals who don’t know any better. While working the piazza, they are able to observe Floriano’s transaction at the silversmith’s shop, and (the novella tells us) they are well enough acquainted with the local topography to know where the ostentatious lawyer lives. Without wasting time, they stop in a tavern – the archetypal venue favoured by cardsharps and tricksters – to buy the fish that they need to stage their swindle. The success of their scheme is made possible by the fact that Floriano’s wife – presumably unacquainted with the staff of the silversmith’s shop and the tavern – unquestioningly yields the silver goblet to the fraudsters and sets about preparing the banquet commanded by her husband.

Floriano’s attempt to catch the culprit also centres on public space, as he seeks witnesses to the events in and around the piazza, while Andreuccio in turn mimics ‘honourable’ behaviour by casually hanging around on a street corner in the city’s main public space. Throughout the short novella, bodies, behaviours and places are intimately connected, and reveal transactions occurring on the thresholds between public and private spaces – churches, shops, taverns and even houses – and performed in the public space of Bologna’s central piazza



5. Michelangelo Buonarroti, St Petronius carrying a model of the city of Florence in his hands, church of San Domenico, Bologna.

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6. Francesco Raibolini, known as 'il Francia', *Madonna of the Earthquake*, 1505, fresco, Palazzo Comunale, Bologna.

and streets. Indeed, the story also illustrates a variety of conditions of visibility in the city, ranging from the public stage of the piazza, to the more remote neighbourhood where Floriano lives, and beyond the city walls to the extra-urban monastery, to which the stolen goblet is removed for safe-keeping. While it is a work of fiction, the novella is a reminder of how important site and setting are for the meaning of everyday events played out in urban environments, and it leads us to question how public spaces and built architecture shaped and framed behaviours in the early modern city.

The perspective offered by Masuccio's narrative is firmly rooted in place, albeit there is little topographical detail; the story offers a plausible scenario, as characters and setting interact in ways that are contingent on the reality of social encounters in the urban spaces of the fifteenth century.<sup>4</sup> Although, to some extent, the dramatis personae are stock characters, Floriano makes sense as a lawyer in a city famed for being the principal centre for legal studies in Europe, while the tricksters perhaps benefited from the invisibility afforded by a university town with its population of itinerant students.<sup>5</sup> Stories of this sort provide a rich body of evidence for recovering the texture of everyday life in the Renaissance city, offering a viewpoint altogether distinct from that of the majority of contemporary pictorial representations of the city. The latter arose from quite different priorities and functions, as the depiction of the city generally tended to serve to connect the viewer to a particular place.

Thus, for example, in Bologna, the young Michelangelo's sculpture of St Petronius in the church of San Domenico depicts the saint carrying a model of the city in his hands, a formula that was relatively common for urban patron saints throughout the fifteenth century (fig. 5).<sup>6</sup> The primary function of the urban portrait here is to make manifest the intercessory role of the saint on behalf of the polity; the city model instantiates the relationship between the polity and its advocate with the divine. More topographically accurate views of the city appear from the later fifteenth century in institutional commissions, such as Francesco Francia's fresco, *Madonna of the Earthquake*, painted in the Palazzo Comunale in 1505 (fig. 6), or Guido Reni's 1616 altarpiece for Santa Maria della Pietà, commissioned by the senate of Bologna.<sup>7</sup> In each of these paintings, the city of Bologna is depicted beneath its divine intercessor; these urban portraits capture the city in its entirety, encircled by walls, with secular and religious monuments prominently visible. Here too, the circumscribed spatial realm of the city is placed in direct relation to the protective agency of the divine power depicted above it.<sup>8</sup>

Such depictions, which abound for many cities throughout Italy, were intended precisely to be recognisable, so as to reinforce the mediatory function of patrons and intercessors on behalf of the polity; they depict the urban collective, and not the minutiae of urban life at a granular level. Street scenes and depictions of urban life were rare before the seventeenth century;<sup>9</sup> instead, as has been widely noted, the city as a whole came increasingly to be the subject of cartographic representation, in city views and bird's-eye maps that tended to be devoid of incidental details or human presence.<sup>10</sup> Again, taking an example from Bologna, the most detailed expression of the city in the sixteenth century is a map produced for the Sala Bologna in the private apartments of the Vatican palace for the Bolognese pope Gregory XIII Boncompagni (1575),







7. Lorenzo Sabbatini, *Map of Bologna*, 1575, fresco, Sala Bologna, private apartments, Vatican palace.

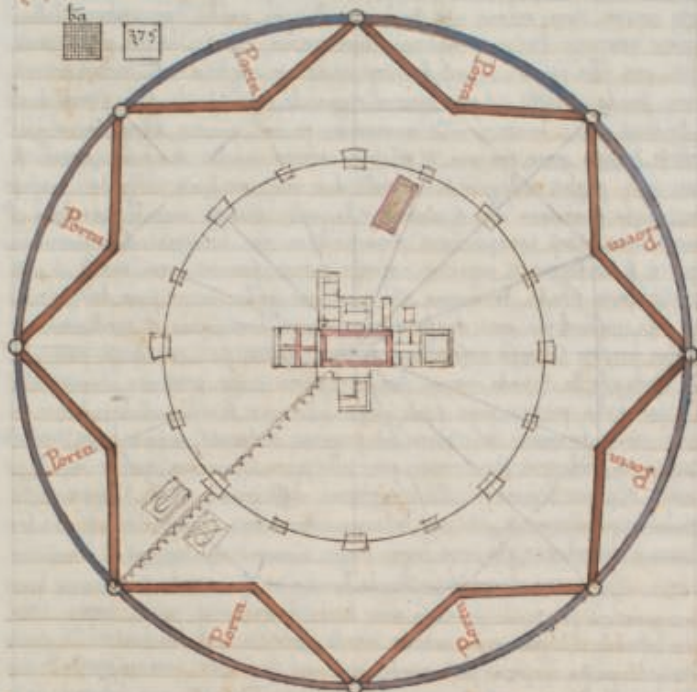
a remarkably precise depiction of his home city, in which all the religious institutions are picked out with gilded roofs (fig. 7).<sup>11</sup> Monumental public and religious buildings, residential palaces and even a few shop fronts can be identified, while most of the main streets and public spaces are labelled; recent studies suggest that actual streets are depicted, widened for greater legibility but also to increase the sense of the city's order and beauty.<sup>12</sup>

These views of the city – as model, as portrait, or as map – all depict the urban realm as comprehensible, bounded and controlled. They offer a perspective, as Michel de Certeau has described it, that makes the ‘spectator into a celestial eye [...] that creates readers, makes the complexity of the city readable, and immobilizes its opaque mobility in a transparent text’.<sup>13</sup> De Certeau was famously reflecting on the view of Manhattan afforded from the top of New York’s World Trade Center, contrasting this with the ‘practiced spaces’ of everyday life that ‘compose a manifold story that has neither author nor spectator, shaped out of fragments of trajectories and alterations of spaces’.<sup>14</sup> The binary relationship established here, between the overarching structured vision of the city as a whole and the fine-grained textures of everyday life created through

the spatial practices of individuals, offers a useful point of entry to a discussion of the category differences in forms of urban representation in pre-modern Italy.<sup>15</sup> While considerable attention has tended to be paid to the centralising forces of urban design strategies in the Renaissance period – the view from above – far less attention has been paid to how social practices constituted urban space – the view from below.

The chapters that follow consider the street within these two frames. The first offers a comparative overview of the building boom that altered the faces of many Italian cities during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, with a particular focus on large-scale urban renewal projects, which markedly transformed existing streets and created new ones. Given the scale of such interventions, they can be viewed as expressions of the power of central authorities, and were, indeed, frequently used to stage ephemeral ritual events that exalted the ruling elites by marking their presence through elaborate ceremonies enacted along the renewed arteries they had etched onto the city fabric. Chapter 2 sets out to identify and trace the ways in which urban spaces contained and gave meaning to objects, people and behaviours, to explore the city of everyday experiences, where ‘space is a practiced place’ and ‘every story is a [...] spatial practice’.<sup>16</sup> Following de Certeau, it adopts the viewpoint offered by stories such as Masuccio Salernitano’s novella, in which we encounter the city on foot and its residents; here, too, rituals play a part, but they are of quite a different nature. The last chapter of this section turns to the blurred boundaries between centralised or hegemonic (to use Gramsci’s term) spatial expressions of power, and the spaces of everyday life. Through a discussion of the exercise of surveillance in the early modern city, the more entangled coexistence of de Certeau’s two visions of the city emerges.

Senentione. Questa quadrem sono ciascuno uno stadio il quale stadio e  
275 braccia 1000



La descriptione della  
Citta

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il palazzo reale le quali grandezze al presente non tocho peche quando la  
farono allora intenderete tuto dalla parte della piazza inuest senen-  
tione Io fo la piazza demercatanti laqual fo larga uno quarto dista-  
dio oie nouanta tre braccia & tre quarti & lunga mezzo stadio & dalla  
parte meridiana della piazza fo un'altra piazza oie fora come diremo  
mercato & ui suendera cose da mangiare & come e la beccheria & frutte &  
herbe & altro simili cose p'bisogno della uita del huomo & questa fora lar-  
ga un terzo distadio & lunga due terzi oie braccia dugento cinquanta a  
ppresso di questa inesta gl'fo il palazzo del capitano da canto apresso la cor-  
te oie solo la strada la parte & in quella demercatanti da una testa fo il pa-  
lazzo del podesta & dall'altra parte opposta quello doue siene la ragione de  
comune. Dalla parte settentrionale fo la prigione comune laquale uene esse-  
dinto al palazzo della ragione. Dalla parte orientale de canto della pia-  
zza fo lenno oie doue si fa & conserua la moneta & appresso la doghana  
nella piazza del mercato fora come o detto il palazzo del capitano & da una

# Planned Streets and Urban Renewal in Renaissance Italy

‘This is the arrangement that I want: first I shall make a piazza in the centre of the city, and I want it to be 150 *braccia* wide and 300 long. And so that your Lordship will understand me better, I shall draw it for you on this sheet of paper, notwithstanding that it is on such a small scale that it isn’t possible to show it exactly as it should be. But that which cannot be shown to scale in a drawing, I shall describe in such a way that you can understand it [...]’

‘The streets: from each gate one street will come to the piazza, and so too from each corner there will be a main street; and, on account of the fact that the city is large, each of the streets that leads to a gate is 1,500 *braccia* long and will be interrupted by a piazza 160 by 80 *braccia*. On the two piazzas facing east, wood and hay will be sold, as also on those facing west; on the two facing north, oil and other products will be sold, and on those facing south, they will sell wine and grain; and on each of these piazzas there will be a butcher or two, as is deemed necessary; and around these piazzas all the artists will be housed. And on the piazzas placed on those streets that lead to the towers – that is, the ones that don’t lead to gates – I shall locate a religious order on each, of preachers, minors, enclosed and the other orders. And on each piazza there will be a parish church.’

‘And I plan that all the streets will have sufficient gradient that water will drain from the central piazza along drainage channels all the way to the gates; and all subsidiary streets that don’t line up to the gates will also be inclined in such a way that all the water will drain as far as the gates. And I also intend there to be porticoes lining all the main streets.’

‘And how wide will the streets be?’

‘Forty *braccia*, and the others will be 20. And as the site is rich in water, I shall bring it to various parts of the city, especially to the central piazza, where I shall make a reservoir in the centre ordered in such a way that, when you wish to clean the streets, it will be possible to open this so that so much water is released that all the streets and piazzas will be cleaned and kept in good order. And above this reservoir I shall arrange a beautiful display.’<sup>1</sup>

Antonio Averlino, known as ‘il Filarete’, wrote the *Trattato di architettura* (c.1460–64) in the form of a dialogue between an architect and his patron—prince, addressing it to his then patron, Francesco Sforza, the ruler of Milan.<sup>2</sup>

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8. Antonio Averlino, known as ‘il Filarete’, ‘Sforzinda’, design for a new city, from *Trattato di architettura*, c.1460–64, dedicated to Francesco Sforza of Milan, autograph manuscript, presented to Piero de’ Medici in 1465, Ms. Magliabechiano II, I, 140, fol. 43r, Biblioteca Nazionale, Florence.

The text is presented as a description of a new city, to be built from scratch, and dedicated to its patron by the adoption of the name Sforzinda; using this device, Filarete was able to outline all the aspects of the city, presenting his patron with a full description of its infrastructure, fortifications and a vast array of secular and religious buildings, providing somewhat grandiose dimensions that verge on the fantastical. Although there seems to be little question that Sforzinda was ever intended to be built, the treatise – which circulated in various manuscript copies (including a Latin translation produced for Matthias Corvinus in 1488) – was influential in providing the first instance of Renaissance architectural theory directed towards the definition of a complete urban project.<sup>3</sup>

Certainly, the best-known aspect of the treatise is the schematic plan of the city, created for the autograph manuscript copy, which, after he returned from Milan to Florence, Filarete presented to Piero de' Medici in 1465 (fig. 8). Here, Sforzinda is shown inscribed in a circle, its exterior walls defined by an eight-pointed star created by two intersecting squares; the points of the star are marked by defensive towers, and on the inside corners are positioned the eight city gates. As the passage above describes, the city adopts a rigorously symmetrical and radial plan, with a central piazza, from which streets arranged like spokes lead out to the gates; around the central piazza are distributed the cathedral and the ruler's palace, while adjacent piazzas are intended for markets and other city offices.<sup>4</sup> The long, wide main streets are interrupted outside the city centre by district piazzas, which provide facilities for local markets, as well as being the sites identified for parish churches. Interestingly, the architect also went into considerable detail about how the streets would be kept clean, imagining a large cistern concealed beneath the main square and covered by an ingenious fountain; water would run from the cistern along channels beside all the streets, which would be designed with a sufficient gradient for the water and waste to flow out of the city through the gates. Moreover, there is some indication that Filarete envisaged a hierarchy of streets: the main streets are given as 40 *braccia* wide, and the secondary streets are half that width, while the sense of splendour and decorum given by these wide axes would be reinforced by their being lined with porticoes.

### *Urban renewal and the transformation of the streets*

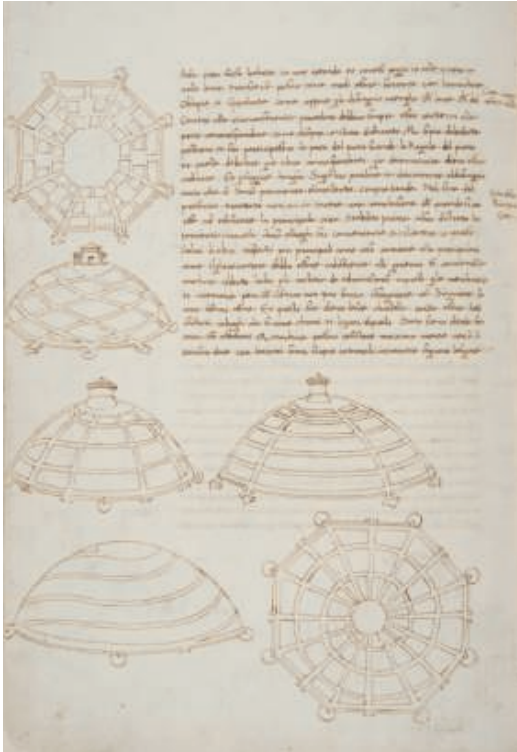
While Filarete's long treatise naturally addresses much else, the discussion of Sforzinda's streets serves to highlight issues to do with the scale of the new, planned city, and underlines a series of concerns that arise repeatedly in the deliberations and executed plans for the improvement of many Italian cities from the middle of the fifteenth century. As this chapter will show, while it was virtually impossible to create a city *ex novo*, the numerous interventions that transformed urban centres throughout the peninsula operated at an urban scale, so that streets, their size, width, cleanliness and splendour, were key factors that rulers and city government authorities sought to correct and improve. Nevertheless, with only occasional exceptions, these built exercises in urban renewal brought about gradual change to the pre-existing city fabric by addressing specific streets and areas, thus revealing what urban historian Spiro Kostof described as the 'urban process' at work.<sup>5</sup>

It is, at least to some degree, a recognition of the infinite variety of city forms and the range of strategies available for shaping and adapting these that inform Leon Battista Alberti's comments on streets in his treatise *De re aedificatoria* ('On the art of building'):

When the road reaches a city, and that city is renowned and powerful, the streets are better straight and very wide, to add to its dignity and majesty. But with the settlement of a fortified town the entrances will be made safer if the road does not lead directly to the gate, but runs to the right or the left along the wall, and preferably even directly under the battlements. Within the town itself it is better if the roads are not straight, but meandering gently like a river flowing now here, now there, from one bank to the other. For apart from the fact that the longer the road seems, the greater the apparent size of the town, no doubt it will be of great benefit in terms of appearance and practical convenience, while catering to the requirements of changing circumstances. And it is no trifle that visitors at every step meet yet another façade, or that the entrance to and the view from every house should face directly onto the street; and while elsewhere too much openness will be disagreeable and unhealthy, here the large scale is welcome.<sup>6</sup>

Alberti's remarks on the arrangement of streets in the city are surprisingly summary and pragmatic. The key principle that governs his approach to main streets is that their scale should be appropriate to the dimensions of the city itself – straight and wide roads are well suited to large and important centres – while he is keen to underline that non-axial distribution of streets brings numerous benefits for both residents and visitors. Within the city, Alberti acknowledges some hierarchy of streets, those leading to the main secular and religious buildings being singled out for special comment, though his main proviso is that streets should be 'properly paved and thoroughly clean'.<sup>7</sup> Significantly, he comments on the relationship between the street and the façades of the buildings that line them, recognising that the street is the principal urban stage on which buildings are observed by passers-by, and conversely that the goings-on in the public sphere can be watched by the residents from their houses. This is a fundamental observation, which marks the recognition of a conscious dialogue between the public realm and domestic space.

Alberti's comments are a warning that it would be a mistake, in a discussion of the Renaissance street, to focus primarily or exclusively on examples where the sort of axial symmetries and order envisaged by Filarete were achieved in built form. While there are numerous examples, increasingly common from the end of the fifteenth century, of regularised, straight streets, defined architecturally and socially by some degree of homogeneity in the buildings that line them, the reality in the majority of cases was closer to Alberti's observations: a combination of straight axes and sinuous routes. Despite a long-standing debate around whether it is appropriate to speak of 'urbanism' – a term that captures a sense of the science of urban design perhaps better suited to describing the large-scale, city-wide interventions initiated by such reformers as Baron Haussmann in Paris in the nineteenth century – it is nevertheless an inescapable fact that urban planning was actively pursued, with significant effects on



9. Francesco di Giorgio Martini, designs for new towns, *Trattati di architettura*, Ms. Magliabechiano, II, I, 141, fol. 29v, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence.

types of improvement policies and campaigns, often overseen by dedicated teams of officials, which resulted in the creation and remodelling of the streets themselves.

Although the scale and scope of Filarete’s urban imaginings – like those of other theorists such as Francesco di Giorgio Martini, who similarly proposed symmetrically laid-out new towns for his employer, Duke Federico da Montefeltro of Urbino (fig. 9) – did not leave a physical trace, the account of Sforzinda captures the rhetorical power of urbanism as an expression of governance. In this respect, treatises describing ideal urban forms bear a resemblance to the use of urban processional rituals, increasingly employed by rulers as a mode of visually articulating authority on a city scale. As numerous studies have shown, the paradigm of the ‘ceremonial city’ is especially evident in the Renaissance revival of the classical triumphal procession, in which the network of streets was employed to create a tight narrative of authority exercised on the city. Such processions reveal the relationship between the active pursuit of policies that regularised street networks and the adoption of these routes for performative spectacles.

*‘spacious streets [...] long and straight’: Authority, street design and urban renewal*

The overall impression made by a city on outside visitors was not formed as a result of the impressive effect of single monumental secular or religious buildings, but rather tended to derive from a combination of the overall qualities

the built city fabric, in earlier periods.<sup>8</sup> The urban street was perhaps the most significant element that was actively used to transform cities in Italy through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; interventions ranged from the authoritarian prescriptions of autocratic princes to more negotiated transformations enforced by the government institutions of the city republics.<sup>9</sup> As Zeynep Çelik, Diane Favro and Richard Ingersoll have argued:

ideology is always present in plans for streets, but authority is often forced to compromise because of the multiplicity of actors in the urban process, and the desired ideological program can easily be muffled. The design of most streets is determined by a series of negotiations involving patrons, technical experts and governmental agents.<sup>10</sup>

It is not possible to provide a survey of all the interventions by means of which streets identified as key sites for urban renewal were transformed by various authorities during the period. However, streets can be understood as a distinct unit within the urban fabric, and as such they were subjected to various





of the architectural fabric and other environmental factors.<sup>11</sup> Such impressions might change in relation to the perspective of the viewer, but also according to the season and other variables.

A case in point is the comments made about Mantua in 1459–60, when the city was host to numerous important visitors, who gathered for the papal council held there by Pius II Piccolomini. Arriving in the summer of 1459 to be the guest of Marquis Ludovico Gonzaga in Mantua for more than six months, Pope Pius II did not profess himself unreservedly fond of the city. He described the island city on the Mincio (fig. 10) in his *Commentarii*, reporting that ‘there are many splendid houses and palaces fit for kings; [but] the inhabitants are unfortunately troubled by dust in the summer and mud in the winter.’<sup>12</sup> While acknowledging the need for suitable secular and monastic accommodation to house the many visitors to the city, he nonetheless also reported that there was unrest among the cardinals, who complained that ‘the place was marshy and unhealthy; the heat was intense [...] very many were catching fever; nothing was to be heard except the frogs.’<sup>13</sup> By September, when the council had fully convened, things appear to have improved: the Siense ambassadors at the papal court in Mantua, Niccolò Severini and Lodovico Peltoni, noted in their correspondence with the city council in Siena: ‘we advise your excellencies that Mantua today is adorned with prelates and lords, ambassadors and many courtiers, and it is a beautiful Mantua, and in addition there are many large, beautiful and dignified residences. There is an abundance of all things.’<sup>14</sup> Soon after the conclusion of the council, in January 1460, an agent of Marquis

10. Gabriele Bertazzolo, ‘Urbis Mantua descriptio’, 1628, engraving, Biblioteca Teresiana, Mantua. (Compass north is at the foot of the map.)



11. Piazza San Pietro (now piazza Sordello), Mantua, as the site depicted in Domenico Morone, *The Gonzaga Victory over the Bonacolsi in 1328, 1494*, oil on canvas, Palazzo Ducale, Mantua.

Ludovico in Venice reported a conversation he had had with the papal ambassador, who

greatly praised Your Lordship and Mantua [...] saying that apart from the mud there was no city in the world more adapted or convenient for the Papal court [...] I replied to him that Your Excellency had begun paving the *piazza* and wanted to go on to do the rest of the city.<sup>15</sup>

As this selection of comments makes clear, the season evidently had a considerable influence on how livable the city was perceived to be, with summer heat, dust, frogs, malarial infection, poor air quality and winter mud overshadowing the architecture, however magnificent. The pope's observations regarding dust and mud directly addressed the city's infrastructure and the impossibility of dealing with seasonal changes as they affected the unpaved streets; significantly, it was precisely this shortcoming that was countered through urban renewal plans, undertaken almost immediately after the council's departure.

As is widely recognised, the city of Mantua was extensively renewed from 1460, and the plans that were put into effect by the patron-cum-amateur-architect marquis owed much to conversations he had had with the pope and with Leon Battista Alberti, who also sojourned in the city as a member of the papal court.<sup>16</sup> A primary focus of Gonzaga attention was the sequence of piazzas south of the family's residential court complex on piazza San Pietro (today piazza Sordello), the central civic and commercial spaces around the Broletto and piazza delle Erbe that were flanked by the Palazzo del Podestà, and the site of what was to become the vast new basilica of Sant'Andrea (figs 11 and 12).<sup>17</sup> Following advice perhaps provided by Alberti, the piazza delle Erbe was regularised, with porticoes running continuously along the ground floor of the Palazzo della Ragione, faced by similar arcades along the west



12. Piazza delle Erbe, Mantua, with the Torre dell'Orologio (left) and the loggia masking the flank of the church of Sant'Andrea (right, foreground).

side of the street abutting the flank of Alberti's Sant'Andrea.<sup>18</sup> In addition to reordering the piazza, a well-documented campaign was undertaken to pave these central areas, 'to improve and make Your Excellency's city more magnificent', as one merchant described the work in May 1461.<sup>19</sup>

Significantly, however, the paving plans extended well beyond the civic and commercial centre to include a number of streets that led southwards to the site of the new church of San Sebastiano, also designed by Alberti. While the execution of the Sant'Andrea project was much delayed by complex negotiations with the Benedictines who officiated the original church, ground was broken for the new church of San Sebastiano as soon as the papal court had left, perhaps as an *ex voto* to the saint who had protected the council from any outbreaks of plague.<sup>20</sup> The site for the church on the south-west periphery of Mantua did much to extend the influence of the Gonzaga over the small city, much as plans to pave the civic centre expressed their good government through the provision of infrastructure and amenities.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, by creating paved streets that linked the political and commercial centre in the north-east of the city to the area around San Sebastiano, a real impression of scale was created. Correspondence from the city engineer, Antonio d'Arezzo, writing to Ludovico in August 1461, underlined precisely this aspect of the street-paving campaign: 'the said street is now beginning to emerge as it is intended to be, and [...] your citizens – both small and great – like this a great deal, because they can see it to be a magnificent work.'<sup>22</sup>

While individual architectural projects – both those of the Gonzaga and those of the courtier families – participated in the overall renewal of the small city, it is significant that infrastructural elements contributed to binding the process together into the coherent whole that citizens and visitors alike could perceive.<sup>23</sup> Thus, when the marquis' son, the recently appointed Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga, returned to Mantua in January 1464, he is described as having taken a walk through the renewed city centre:



13. Inscription, 1476, on the corner of the house of Andrea Mantegna, Mantua. It reads: ‘On a site given to him as a gift by the Lord Lodovico, most excellent prince, in the year of our Lord 1476, Andrea Mantegna built this from the foundations, 15 November.’

14. The church of San Sebastiano, Mantua, from 1460, with the house of Andrea Mantegna (left).

the route he took was along the street through the town to see those new buildings [...] and he wanted to walk along the street to the piazza [delle Erbe] to see the shop of Zuliano de Lanzino and another across the street from it, both of which he very much liked, as he did the porticoes of the cloth shops and the embellishment to the new *palazzo* [del Podestà] which he turned back twice to admire.<sup>24</sup>

Such attention to streets, paving, porticoes and shops underlined the civic benefits of Gonzaga munificence, which is also recorded through a remarkable set of inscriptions that survive in various parts of the city to record the role of the Gonzaga in advancing urban improvement. The earliest dated surviving inscription appears on the corner of the house of Andrea Mantegna, opposite the church of San Sebastiano, and records the munificence to him as court artist of his employer, Ludovico Gonzaga, who had provided the site on which his residence was built from 1476 (figs 14 and 13).<sup>25</sup> The house was paired with the church, which was still under construction, and the two buildings served to give definition to the edges of the street, which led towards the southern perimeter of Mantua; the area was further embellished in the subsequent decades with Francesco II’s late-fifteenth-century Palazzo San Sebastiano, and beyond it the Palazzo Te, designed by Giulio Romano for Federico II from 1525. An elaborately inscribed candlestick pilaster, dated 1481, marks the edge of another newly built palace, Palazzo Arrivabene, on the crossroads of a wide street leading from the centre towards the church of San Francesco; its location served to give prominence to the palace and to emphasise the width of the street (fig. 15).<sup>26</sup> Another inscription, of 1496, records Francesco Gonzaga’s intervention in restoring the bridge of San Francesco sul Rio, on the western edge of the city (fig. 16).<sup>27</sup> Since the church of San Francesco housed a significant commemorative chapel and tombs of the Gonzaga family, the extension of infrastructure improvements to this district is a logical counterpart to developments around San Sebastiano; the renovation of the bridge not only provided definition to the city’s western perimeter, but also underscored Gonzaga commitment to the renewal of the city as a whole.

Additional research is needed to document and map such stone inscriptions; an initial survey suggests a higher incidence close to the city centre, but a relatively regular distribution along streets radiating out towards the urban edge (fig. 17).<sup>28</sup> In this respect, these markers – which tend to appear on the corners of buildings at the most prominent intersections, where they could most easily be seen – provide a subtle trace of the expansion of the small city along laid-out streets radiating from the centre. This was a long-term project, enacted over at least two centuries, so that in 1588 a Venetian ambassador was able to comment of Mantua that it was ‘most pleasing for the great quantity of great and beautiful palaces, and above all for the spacious streets, which are marvelously long and straight’.<sup>29</sup> The example of Mantua is interesting precisely because the public spaces of streets and public-facing amenities, such as piazzas, porticoes and shops, emerge as significant means by which the Gonzaga rulers expressed their munificence and just rule, a message that was reinforced through inscriptions and heraldic devices signalling their patronage throughout the city’s fabric.

This process of urban renewal was far from unique, however, and its like is documented in many other centres throughout the fifteenth century. Indeed, so much was the fifteenth century a period of large-scale urban renewal throughout the peninsula that Leon Battista Alberti could ask in his treatise on architecture: ‘how many cities, which as children we saw all built of wood, have now been turned into marble?’<sup>30</sup> Although Alberti’s question is a somewhat heavy-handed reference to Suetonius’ comments about the transformation of Rome by the emperor Augustus, it nonetheless captures something of the energy with which change was perceptibly altering the built form of cities throughout the Italian peninsula during the period.

Nor was such a process limited to cities ruled by *signori*. We can observe many of the strategies promoted by the Gonzaga in Mantua operating in the transformation of the urban core, particularly the main streets, of the independent city republic of Siena.<sup>31</sup> Writing less than a decade after Siena’s conquest by the troops of Emperor Charles V (1555) and its transfer to Medici control (1557), the city’s new governor, Agnolo Niccolini, wrote to Duke Cosimo de’ Medici in January 1564 regarding maintenance of the streets.<sup>32</sup>

When I was in Florence I reminded Your Excellency, in the name of these Gentlemen [the citizens of Siena], that there was a need to repave the streets of this city, which are for the most part in disrepair [...] And I told you that



15. Palazzo Arrivabene, Mantua. A candlestick pilaster, dated 1481, adorns the corner of the building, recording its construction.

16. Inscription, 1496, on the bridge of San Francesco sul Rio, Mantua. It commemorates the restoration of the bridge by Francesco Gonzaga.





17. The sites of stone inscriptions in Mantua, c. 1470–1570 (manipulated version of figure 10, with annotations by Luca Brunke). (Compass north is at the foot of the map.)

here the custom is, as is also recorded in the written statutes, that the materials – that is, the bricks – should be paid for by the owners of the houses that front onto the streets, while the labour of the workers should be paid for from the public purse [...] the process of beautification will start from the main street, which is called the strada Romana, then [proceed to] the street that leads to the cathedral, and subsequently to the other most used streets.<sup>33</sup>

Years of war had left their mark on Siena’s infrastructure, with the brick-paved streets damaged and uneven; Niccolini’s correspondence goes on to describe local paving practices – still visible in the paving of the piazza del Campo (fig. 18) – of laying large bricks (*mezzane*) in a herring-bone pattern, which was susceptible to damage if it was not maintained, as the bricks could easily slip out of place.<sup>34</sup> What is remarkable about the governor’s correspondence with the duke is that it establishes the continuation of the traditional cost-sharing strategy for urban improvement and maintenance; the charge was split between residents and the public authorities, in spite of the city’s loss of independence.



Duke Cosimo affirmed his support for this approach, stating his wish that the work be undertaken ‘for the beautification and benefit of the city and the utility of all residents’.<sup>35</sup> In so doing, he established a direct line of continuity from Siena’s civic past, in which the collective benefits of public spending on infrastructure and amenities were often described in terms of this very formulation of public good, defined in terms of beauty and utility; a viewpoint that was most famously expressed in Ambrogio Lorenzetti’s fresco cycle for the Sala della Pace in the city hall (see fig. 1).

Spreading outwards from the central market square – the piazza del Campo – to the city’s main streets, the paving project, initiated on the grounds of aesthetics and hygiene, was enforced by government policies established through legislative measures dating from as early as 1262.<sup>36</sup> From at least 1290, a group of building professionals called the *viarii* (from *via*, ‘street’) had officiated over the management and maintenance of the streets; within the walls, they had a particular remit to ensure that the main streets were paved, and to attempt to limit the filth and dirt that secondary, unpaved streets brought into the city centre.<sup>37</sup> Numerous interventions throughout the fourteenth century sought to widen streets, to provide greater access to light, and where possible to correct the alignment of building façades to create more regular pathways. All these modifications, which actively affirmed rights over the public realm, were understood to express most clearly a pervasive sense of the ‘order and rule of the entire city’.<sup>38</sup> Streets and public spaces were thus an important location for the demonstration of civic values and the ideals of the *bene comune*, and within

18. Piazza del Campo, Siena, showing the characteristic pattern of paving dating back at least to the 16th century, engraving by Pazzini-Carli e Figli in Guido Mucci, *Nuova guida della città di Siena per gli amatori delle belle-arti* (Siena, 1822), pp. 74–5.

the framework of the rights and duties of citizenship the principle was established that residents who benefited from street improvements should participate in meeting the associated costs.<sup>39</sup>

These policies, already well established by 1309, were reaffirmed throughout the fifteenth century in both legislation and enacted polices for the maintenance of streets, as well as for the day-to-day activity and costs associated with street cleaning.<sup>40</sup> During the first half of the fifteenth century, a new government office – the *petroni* – was established to identify properties in poor repair that were ‘causing great damage and shame to the city’, and was invested with powers to enforce repair or threaten expropriation.<sup>41</sup> The significant principle revealed by the activity of the *petroni* is a shift from the maintenance of the open spaces of streets and piazzas to a more all-encompassing vision of the city as shaped by the collective effect of private property as well as the city’s public spaces and monuments. Thus, the maintenance of everyday housing stock came also to be considered an indicator of the city’s prosperity and good government; thanks to the work of the *petroni*, a large number of houses and palaces, as well as the public spaces around them (all too often occupied by rubble and building materials) were cleared up at their owners’ expense.

There is some evidence to suggest that the policies enforced by the *petroni* may have been directly connected with plans to beautify the city around the time that the Council of Pavia, officiated by Pope Martin V (*r.* 1417–31), was relocated to Siena (from 1423), although more broadly they gave expression to the government’s growing concern for the appearance of the city as a whole.<sup>42</sup> After the return of the papacy from Avignon to Rome, throughout the fifteenth century Siena increasingly became a transit point for pilgrims and elite travellers of all sorts (emperors, kings, popes and ambassadors, as well as merchants) on their way to and from the Eternal City.<sup>43</sup> These travellers, users of one of the most significant pilgrimage routes of pre-modern Europe, the Francigena, were increasingly understood by the Siennese authorities to be instrumental in communicating the fame and identity of the city abroad, and it was at least in part for their benefit that many of the fifteenth-century urban improvement policies were introduced and enforced. It is, indeed, surprising to note the frequency with which the enabling legislation and decisions of the city’s government offices refer not just to the declared aim of beautifying the city, but also to outside visitors (no less than local residents) as the intended beneficiaries of those improvements. The most compelling evidence of an active policy in favour of areas of the city that were most visible to the eyes of outsiders is the fact that the majority of interventions were focused along the main artery that cuts through the city from the Porta Camollia in the north to the Porta Romana in the south. This central thoroughfare, the urban section of the via Francigena, known in Siena as the strada Romana, emerged through the latter part of the fifteenth century as the priority for government-led urban improvements, spear-headed by the appropriately named *ufficiali sopra l’ornato della città* (‘officials in charge of the city’s beauty’), a new government office whose title identified their city-scale improvement remit.<sup>44</sup>

The *ornato* was an office of nine men, whose main purpose was to enforce policies for the improvement of the urban fabric and, in particular, to encourage (and to some extent oblige) private property owners to renew their properties





19. Map of Siena, showing the interventions carried out by the *ufficiali sopra l'ornato della città*, 1431–80 (map by Yanel de Angel and Luca Brunke).

following certain criteria of *ornato* ('beauty' or 'decorum'). Established in 1458, perhaps on the advice of Pope Pius II Piccolomini, their task was 'to work incessantly and oblige all citizens without exception to improve the civic image [*honore publico*] and renew the city's appearance by appropriate and beautiful works'.<sup>45</sup> This they appear to have done for over a quarter century, notably directing their energies to the removal of 'jetties' or overhanging balconies that projected out from the façades of buildings above street level. The *ornato* had no budget, but they could appeal to the government on behalf of property owners in order to secure partial subsidies for the building interventions that they recommended. Although the subsidies the *ornato* was able to leverage were fairly small, their activity is well documented through large numbers of recommendations approved by Siena's great council that aimed to increase beauty (*ornato*) and counteract the shame (*vergogna*) derived from buildings left in a state of disrepair.<sup>46</sup>

Under the aegis of the *ornato* officials, a concerted policy was pursued for the renovation of housing stock along the city's most prominent streets – the *strada Romana* and *via di Città*; it ensured that jetties, balconies and other wooden appendages were removed from house façades, and the appearance of the streets was improved with brick-built houses, as well as many new, elegant palaces.<sup>47</sup> The spatial implications of this policy are clear (fig. 19). Where, previously, the primary focus of government policy on urban beautification had been on the civic centrepiece of the *piazza del Campo* and its religious

20. Case Serracchioli, 13th century (remodelled 1924), at the intersection of via Santo Stefano and piazza della Mercanzia, Bologna.



counterpart around the cathedral, the work of the *ornato* extended the government's remit to the shaping of the built form of the primary artery that cut through the city, connecting the centre to its principal gates. There can be little doubt that the *ornato* pinpointed the strada Romana, with a spike in their activity in the 1460s primarily directed at the demolition of overhangs.<sup>48</sup> This activity was supplemented with a series of zoning provisions, which altered the commercial makeup of the street, by discouraging tradesmen involved in noisy or dirty industries (such as pan-makers, butchers and tanners) from working along the *strada*, and providing incentives for luxury retailers (such as goldsmiths and wool and silk merchants) to locate their shops there.<sup>49</sup> So, through offices such as the *ornato* and the *petroni*, Siena's government was able to enforce the duty of citizens to initiate and finance an extensive process of urban renewal along the city's principal thoroughfares.

### *'convenience and ornament': Porticoes and new streets*

In Siena a case can be made that the pretext of removing medieval jetties and balconies was the catalyst for urban renewal, leading to the creation of a regularised streetscape of façades lining the main routes through the city. But in some other cities of northern Italy, urban renewal proceeded by addition as opposed to subtraction. In Bologna, for example, a conscious policy of managing public space through the creation of porticoes that lined many of the city's squares and central streets was long established, but it was more comprehensively enforced from the 1400s.<sup>50</sup> The arcaded porticoes that border the city's streets are a distinctive feature of Bologna to the present day (fig. 20). Statutes from as early as the thirteenth century had encouraged their construction and maintenance, and more than three centuries later the statutes of 1567 acknowledged the 'convenience and ornament' provided by porticoes, and required the replacement of wooden piers with more elegant brick or stone arcades.<sup>51</sup> A real turning



21. Piazza Maggiore, Bologna.

point for the policy of promoting porticoes occurred in 1407, when the city's ruling authorities – possibly with subsidies from the banker's guild – oversaw the erection of a portico along the entirety of the east side of the central piazza Maggiore, a unified arcading system that masked the narrow commercial streets extending eastward, the *via degli Orefici* and *via Clavature* (fig. 21).<sup>52</sup> As part of these same plans, the piazza was paved in brick and stone, creating a significantly grander and cleaner central public space, onto which the church of San Petronio and the main government buildings faced.<sup>53</sup> These interventions to beautify the central civic piazza followed closely on the brief period of Visconti control of the city (1402–3), during which the piazza had been stripped of its civic functions; they can thus be understood as a conscious purpose to reassert the city's autonomy through improvements to its political and commercial core.<sup>54</sup> The *Loggia dei Banchi*, as the portico was called, was paid for in part through subsidies provided by the frontagers along the street, and (as Richard Tuttle has argued) stands as an important precedent for the use of arcading to regularise central public spaces, as in the well-known later examples at Vigevano and Ascoli Piceno, but also in cities throughout northern Italy.<sup>55</sup>

While the central piazza Maggiore remained a major focus of building activity through much of the fifteenth century – with the construction of the new *Palazzo del Podestà* in the 1480s, for example – there is evidence of growing attention being given to improving Bologna's streets.<sup>56</sup> Just as in Mantua, a stated aim of improvements that began in 1462 was to 'clear the city of stinking mud', an objective to be achieved by extending drainage and sewerage systems and paving the streets.<sup>57</sup> However, it is also evident that the beautification resulting from these public-hygiene measures was directed at the streets that were most prominent, especially the major axes radiating from the centre to the city's main gates.

A key figure in this process was Giovanni II Bentivoglio, Bologna's leading citizen from 1462 and acknowledged *signore* from 1480. It is perhaps not surprising that considerable attention was paid to improving the *strada San*

22. Site of the Palazzo Bentivoglio (dem. 1507; now piazza Verdi), Bologna, with the church of San Giacomo Maggiore.



Donato (now via Zamboni), a straight street leading north-east from Porta Ravegnana in the centre; it was on this street that the Bentivoglio family properties were concentrated, and the vast new Palazzo Bentivoglio was erected facing a new piazza, itself paved and lined with porticoes (fig. 22).<sup>58</sup> Adjacent to the palace and flanking the street along one side, the late-thirteenth-century church of San Giacomo Maggiore was already the focus of Bentivoglio family patronage, as it was the site of their family chapel. In order to link the palace with the church, from 1477 Giovanni II oversaw the building of a portico along the street, using arcading similar to that on his palace.<sup>59</sup> Over the following decade this portico was extended further towards the centre, and although the palace was demolished in 1507 as a powerful sign of the end of Bentivoglio ascendancy after the reconquest of Bologna by Pope Julius II, the portico at San Giacomo survives (fig. 23), as do the arcades on the piazza. Clearly, these interventions dignified the residential enclave of the city's leading citizen, whose ambitions were made clear in a classicising inscription added to the strada San Donato portico: 'Bologna glitters under Giovanni Bentivoglio just as Rome shone under Caesar.'<sup>60</sup>

Giovanni II's involvement in urban improvements was not limited to the area around his palace, however, and, in spite of a carefully conducted campaign of *damnatio memoriae* following the end of the Bentivoglio *signoria*, there is visual and documentary evidence for his promotion of urban renewal activities elsewhere in the city. A rare surviving capital on via Galliera contains a portrait roundel of Giovanni and the inscription DIV IO[HANNES] B[ENTIVOLUS]

P[ATER] P[ATRIAE], and also attests the street's widening and the addition of porticoes.<sup>61</sup> Documents record Bentivoglio's active involvement in promoting the demolition of wooden overhanging structures that invaded the streets, widespread paving campaigns and the removal of shop counters (*banchi*) from the central piazza.<sup>62</sup> Perhaps most significant of all was the creation of a grand new central axis running from the centre (by the north-east edge of the Palazzo Comunale) west to the paved piazza San Francesco.<sup>63</sup> This ambitious project, begun in 1496, required a major demolition campaign, which essentially reopened the original route of the Roman *decumanus*, facilitating movement from a *quadrivium* of existing roads converging on piazza San Francesco from a westerly direction and channelling it into a new, wide, straight street, leading eastwards to the centre, which was named the via Imperialis in honour both of its ambitions and Bentivoglio's allegiance to the Holy Roman Emperor.<sup>64</sup> The new street was aligned with the via Mercato di Mezzo, the central commercial street, which was itself widened through the demolition of wooden overhangs and porticoes; it connected



to a new piazza running along the northern side of the Palazzo Comunale, to which most market activities were relocated from the piazza Maggiore.<sup>65</sup> That Giovanni II was the principal promoter of this grandiose project was clear to a local chronicler, who commented that 'Zoanne Bentivogli caused the street to be made, as he is always eager to make Bologna beautiful.'<sup>66</sup>

Viewed in isolation, it is possible to see the San Giacomo portico on strada San Donato as part of a localised urban improvement around the familial enclave of the Bentivoglio, and the via Imperialis as a grandiose means of relocating commercial activity away from the piazza Maggiore, in order to transform the piazza into a representational civic space expressive of Bentivoglio's control of the city.<sup>67</sup> Certainly, it would seem that as Giovanni II's power grew so did the means by which it was articulated on an urban scale. Nonetheless, together with the works undertaken on via Galliera and other main city arteries, and the construction of new porticoes throughout the city in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Bentivoglio's changes to the urban landscape pursued long-established and far-reaching ambitions that are attested from as early as 1412, when the Loggia dei Banchi was completed. As Bologna was a relatively large walled city, with a medieval centre overlaid on the earlier Roman grid, changes to the urban fabric were inevitably gradual. While interventions such as the creation of the via Imperialis stand out as decisive and transformative, it is the cumulative effect of grand and minor alterations to the existing fabric that really changed the city, by extending civic control over the public spaces of the central piazza to the main streets that radiated from that piazza to the city gates.

23. Portico, begun 1477, flanking the church of San Giacomo Maggiore, via Zamboni, Bologna.

This increased attention to the network of streets was a common feature of urban renewal in many Italian cities at this period, though it is significant that in Bologna the local characteristic of lining street fronts with porticoes was actively promoted and can clearly be understood as a unifying element of the city's architecture, and part of its collective image. In his 1560 account of Bologna, Pietro Lamo, in his description of the Bentivoglio residential enclave, recorded the 'arcaded ground floor loggia, which serves as a public portico supported on columns', and numerous visitors to the city identified its extensive network of public porticoes as one of its most distinctive characteristics.<sup>68</sup> As Alberti observed, porticoes provided shade in the summer months and, more importantly, protection from rain during the rest of the year; they were not unique to Bologna, however, and they were widely deployed as part of urban renewal campaigns in cities throughout northern Italy, especially in the Po valley.<sup>69</sup>

The process of widening main streets by the removal of projecting balconies and other temporary features (as in Siena), and straightening them by demolition and the construction of new palaces and façades was the principal means by which cities were gradually transformed through the Renaissance. Writing about the plans of King Alfonso of Naples in the late fifteenth century to reorder his city, the humanist Pietro Summonte reported that the king intended to 'extend all the main streets in straight lines from wall to wall, removing all projections [...] and then to lay out transversely, also in straight lines, the cross streets from one end of the city to the other'.<sup>70</sup> The plans remained largely unexecuted, but it is interesting to note that Summonte describes how this rationalised layout not only sought to revive the classical grid arrangement of the ancient city, but might serve a practical function by making use of the natural slope of streets towards the sea to facilitate cleaning, and had military and defensive benefits in view of the growing importance of ballistics in town planning.

The Terra Nova of Ferrara – now usually known as the *Addizione Erculea* in deference to its patron, Duke Ercole d'Este (*r.* 1471–1505) – stands out from the preceding examples for the bold decision to extend the pre-existing city, more than doubling the walled enclosure by the addition of a whole new district to the north of the ducal residence around the Castello Estense (or Castello Vecchio).<sup>71</sup> Here, the grand vision of axial streets aligned to city gates described by Summonte in relation to Naples was given built expression, although the vast project took decades to complete and to this day the northern part of the city contains considerable areas of unbuilt land. While there is some evidence that plans for this northern extension may have originated in the 1470s, the real impetus to build a new set of walls that would enclose a number of previously suburban buildings, including the Este villa or palace of Belfiore and the churches of Santa Maria degli Angeli and the Certosa, came only with Ercole's humiliating defeat by the Venetians in the war of Ferrara (1482–4), when the city had come under direct attack.<sup>72</sup> As detailed court accounts show, funds were assembled from 1486, and from 1492 these were deployed to fortify the new perimeter with walls and three new gates.<sup>73</sup> A woodcut view of the city shows the new walls in place enclosing a vast and as yet un-urbanised area, with Duke Ercole and his entourage in the background, conducting one of the almost daily tours of inspection that he made from 1492, while the foreground is filled with the densely packed city facing the Po (fig. 24).<sup>74</sup>



24. Unknown draughtsman, view of the city of Ferrara from the south, 1499–1505(?), woodcut, Ms. Alfa.f.3.17, fol. 285, Biblioteca Estense Universitaria, Modena.

What the woodcut also shows is an idealised vision of the axial alignment created between the city's now central piazza – the large open paved area between the monumental Romanesque cathedral (right) and the ducal residential complex of the Castello Estense and Palazzo del Corte (left) – and the new Porta degli Angeli at the top of the print. While not absolutely accurate in topographical terms, as there is a slight eastwards adjustment to the axis in the new part of the city, the print effectively conveys one of the most symbolically significant aspects of the Addizione project, which was to place the ducal residence at the heart of the city, so that the main streets converged around the castle complex. The print is also a reminder that Ercole's architectural concerns were not limited to the new district that takes his name. During the first decade of his long reign, the duke supported a series of interventions that transformed the central precinct, reducing the disorderly concentration of shops and market stalls around the main square, while at the same time unifying the ducal residence by creating a connecting building (the via Coperta) between the castle and the Palazzo del Corte.<sup>75</sup> These plans aimed to make a dignified setting for the ducal residential complex by reordering the public spaces around it – in particular, by banishing livestock, trades such as those of butchers and manure sellers, and other insalubrious activities that created what one chronicler described as a 'stomach-churning' stench.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, although some trades were zoned out of the city centre, new shops were provided around the central piazza, where even the ducal residence was furnished with a 'very beautiful and magnificent loggia' that housed shops facing towards the cathedral.<sup>77</sup>

Thus, in common with many of the urban improvement campaigns of the period, hygiene and decorum motivated changes to the central square, where the city's commercial activity was showcased in purpose-built arcaded shops.<sup>78</sup> By contrast, the Addizione Erculea was initiated largely for military and defensive purposes, but the vast scale of the enterprise resulted in perhaps the most significant set piece of urban design of the fifteenth century, as new streets



25. Map of Ferrara, showing the medieval city and the main areas of 15th-century expansion (Google Earth, with additional cartography and annotations by Luca Brunke).

were laid out to be occupied with numerous grand palaces. The wide central axis of the new district is via degli Angeli, which cuts a straight route from the Castello Estense to the newly built Porta degli Angeli (fig. 25); it is intersected by the via dei Prioni, another new straight street that linked two other new gates, Porta San Benedetto (west) and Porta San Giovanni Battista (east). This central crossroads naturally emerged as the most important location in the new district, and it was here that some of the first palaces were constructed, including one built by the duke's doctor, Francesco da Castello (now Palazzo Prosperi-Sacratì), and the magnificent Palazzo dei Diamanti, whose faceted stone dressing was a tribute to Ercole d'Este's heraldic diamond device (fig. 26).<sup>79</sup> The paved via degli Angeli was the first to be occupied by new palaces, most of them built by courtiers and leading merchants as opposed to the local aristocratic elite, suggesting, perhaps, that participation in the duke's urban project was something of an obligation for those with strong patronage ties to the duke.<sup>80</sup> Built in a





26. Biagio Rossetti, Palazzo dei Diamanti, from 1493, via degli Angeli (now corso Ercole I d'Este), Ferrara.

relatively short period of time, during the final decade of Ercole's reign, the austere, brick-built, classicising architecture creates a harmonious whole, bound together in an elegant way by the recurring use of candlestick pilasters, which articulate the corners of many of the buildings.<sup>81</sup>

Much the same can be said for the piazza Nuova – also on the via dei Prioni, two blocks east from the via degli Angeli intersection – a vast new open space, framed by arcaded buildings that were to give the piazza a uniform appearance.<sup>82</sup> The western side of the piazza was occupied by a large palace erected by the Strozzi (resident in Ferrara after their exile from Florence), while the court official Giovanni Stancarò built a house on the south-eastern corner, and another arcaded structure (perhaps a granary) originally closed off the northern side. Although the piazza was referred to as a market square in documents of 1494, little commercial activity seems to have relocated here; instead, the large rectangular arcaded space, which was evidently intended to resemble a

classical hippodrome, was used for jousts and other courtly equestrian spectacles. Building accounts indicate that the arcaded piazza was to have as its central focus a tall column topped with an equestrian monument of Ercole, though a city view of 1598 shows the column *in situ* but on the ground, and the intended monument was never completed.<sup>83</sup>

The grand scale on which Ferrara was extended transformed the city, re-fortifying it, placing the ducal precinct at the centre, and creating a series of wide new streets that ordered the Terra Nova district, with a large piazza intended for commercial and ceremonial functions and numerous newly founded religious institutions. Rebalancing the city to place the Este fortified residence at the centre opened up vast tracts of land for urbanisation by courtiers and allies, thus articulating in built form the status and prestige of Duke Ercole d'Este. In these respects, the Addizione Erculea could be said to achieve in built form some of the ambitions of the paper architecture of the Quattrocento theorists Filarete and Francesco di Giorgio Martini. Described by Jacob Burckhardt as 'the first really modern city in Europe', and by Ludwig Heydenreich as 'the first systematic piece of town-planning in the whole Quattrocento', Ferrara appears to embody the coming together of theory and practice.<sup>84</sup> Certainly, if we view city plans such as Filarete's famous drawing of Sforzinda (see fig. 8) as articulating the ambitions of princely patrons, there are parallels to be drawn between Ferrara and the 'ideal city'.<sup>85</sup> Ercole's reordering of the city's central spaces in such a way that they more obviously reflected the magnificence of the ducal residence, while consigning noisy and smelly trades to purpose-built piazzas and workshops behind the palace and away from view, conforms with Filarete's advice, but equally can be compared with zoning practices enforced in many cities during this period. The proposals of Francesco di Giorgio Martini are rather more instructive, with their greater attention to fortification and the foundation of well-defended towns and cities, whose centralised layouts were expressive of the authority of the ruler, while at the same time providing stronger defences by placing the palace at the centre of the city.<sup>86</sup> Clearly, military considerations were a key concern addressed by the Terra Nova extension to Ferrara, as manifested by the city fortifications and the re-centring of the ducal residence, so it is perhaps not surprising to observe parallels with the advice that Francesco was formulating in the final decades of the fifteenth century for the Montefeltro dukes of Urbino, and for the king of Naples.<sup>87</sup>

The most complex example of Renaissance urban design, and the use of street improvements as a strategy for urban renewal and an instrument for the articulation of power and authority is the city of Rome. Here, after a period of neglect that ended with the Council of Constance (1414–18) and the resulting return of the papacy from Avignon to Rome in 1420 under Pope Martin V Colonna, the street network was radically transformed over the course of about a century.<sup>88</sup> The degree to which the city stood in need of maintenance is conveyed clearly in a papal bull (*Etsi in cunctarum orbis*) issued soon after the pope's return in 1425, which claimed that:

Many inhabitants of Rome [...] have been throwing and illicitly hiding [animal] entrails, viscera, heads, feet, bones, blood and skins, besides rotten meat and fish, refuse, excrement, and other fetid and rotting cadavers into the

streets [...] and have dared boldly and sacrilegiously to usurp, ruin, and reduce to their own use streets, alleys, piazzas, public and private places both ecclesiastical and profane.<sup>89</sup>

The bull emphatically and repeatedly addresses the theme of hygiene and the need to restore a degree of order and cleanliness to the streets, and also singles out for special comment the extent to which the public realm had been eroded by private interests. This is the background for the concerted effort, supported by dedicated officials, to reassert control and to renew the city's fabric. The bull re-established the office of the *magistri viarum*, who were charged with street maintenance; the significance of the task assigned to them was confirmed a quarter of a century later, when Pope Nicholas V reissued the statutes of the *maestri di strada*, increasing their powers to intervene on a range of issues to do with construction and urban planning.<sup>90</sup> These powers were further extended during the pontificate of Sixtus IV, whose bull of June 1480 (*Et si cunctarum civitatum*) established legislation that facilitated the expropriation of property in order to make available to elite patrons of significant new palaces larger plots of land for their building projects.<sup>91</sup>

The restoration of the papacy to Rome resulted in the affirmation of St Peter's and the Vatican complex as the primary residence of the pope, favoured in part over the Lateran (the seat of the Bishop of Rome) as it was somewhat removed from the main residential and commercial core of the city and the centre of local government on the Capitoline. With the pope's return there followed the rapid growth of the papal court and administration; the composition of the city of Rome was transformed and the population grew rapidly.<sup>92</sup> Across the Tiber from the Vatican, a complex network of medieval streets, which pre-dated the numerous papal interventions of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was most easily navigated by its three major axes: the via Lata (now the via del Corso) entered the city from the north at Porta del Popolo, and the two east–west axes, the via Peregrinorum and via Papalis, linked the Vatican precinct to the Lateran, passing by various landmarks and piazzas (fig. 27).<sup>93</sup> These streets cut through the *abitato* – the lived-in core of Rome built during the Middle Ages – and thus were lined with residential properties of varied social status. The routes also eased and rationalised the movement of outsiders through the city, so service industries and luxury retail naturally concentrated around these thoroughfares, where pilgrims and other visitors would notice them.<sup>94</sup> While the provision of amenity for the growing city – with its large population of foreigners and a high concentration of mobile elites attached to the entourages of the cardinals who resided in Rome as well as to the papal court – was a major concern, the creation of new streets also became a significant means by which the pontiffs marked the city fabric with a lasting legacy of byways whose names echoed those of their patrons.

Although Martin V recognised the need to reorder the city of Rome, papal finances and authority were too weak to make much real progress, so that as late as c. 1450, the Florentine humanist and bookseller Vespasiano da Bisticci could still comment that 'Rome had become, in the absence of the pope, a place of cowherds', reporting that sheep and cattle pastured where previously merchants had worked, and suggesting that only the intervention of the pope and his court



27. Map of Rome showing the main streets, overlaid on G. B. Nolli, 'Nuova pianta di Roma', etching, 1748, Harvard Map Collection, Harvard University Library (additional cartography by Luca Brunke).

could set things right.<sup>95</sup> It was under Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447–55) that the first active steps were taken to create order around the Vatican precinct, the chosen residence of the papacy, almost a separate centre (the Borgo) and divided from most of the rest of Rome by the Tiber; the direction of the city's gaze was now focused on the seat of the popes across the river, which was linked to the *abitato* by the bridge of Sant'Angelo.<sup>96</sup> Lively scholarly debate continues around the interpretation of the description of Nicholas' plans for the Borgo, reported in Giannozzo Manetti's posthumous biography of the pope. Almost certainly the plans remained just that, but even the idea of creating three parallel streets between St Peter's and Castel Sant'Angelo was highly innovative; it may have been proposed by Leon Battista Alberti, who dedicated the first version of his treatise on architecture to the pope.<sup>97</sup> As so often occurred in Rome, however, the brevity of the pontiff's reign cut short this scheme, and his successors looked to other projects to enhance their prestige and leave their mark on the city for posterity.



Somewhat piecemeal interventions worked towards the improvement of the Vatican precinct; Pius II's benediction loggia (c.1460), erected to face towards the somewhat reordered piazza in front of the Constantinian basilica of St Peter's, stands out as one of the more significant interventions in the area.<sup>98</sup> Pius' extensive architectural patronage was more visible outside the papal capital, however – most notably in the extensive remodelling of his birthplace, Corsignano, as Pienza.<sup>99</sup> His successors looked to other parts of the city to leave their mark: the Venetian pope Paul II largely directed his attention to the axis of the via Lata, which led from the Porta del Popolo south to his monumental residence of Palazzo San Marco at the foot of the Capitoline.<sup>100</sup> 1475 was a jubilee year, and such occasions, which resulted in considerable increase in the flow of pilgrimage traffic to and through the city, often led to improvements in the city's infrastructure. In this instance, legislation under the pontificate of Sixtus IV altered the city in significant ways.<sup>101</sup> Measures passed in 1473 and 1480 facilitated institutional and private interventions for the beautification and improvement of the city, and the pope actively promoted the restoration of forty churches and the construction of seven new ones, including the church of Santa Maria del Popolo, immediately adjacent to the Porta del Popolo, the principal entrance to the city from the north. The church's position marked this important nodal point, where the via Flaminia (the approach road from the north) turned into the via Lata (the straight route to the city centre), and was a significant site of patronage for the pope and his associates (fig. 27).<sup>102</sup>

This attention to the visibility of papal interventions within the city's fabric is especially clear in the pope's patronage of the vast pilgrimage hospital of Santo Spirito, close to the Tiber, off the via Lungara in the Vatican Borgo; this hinge location between the city and the Vatican precinct, where pilgrims visiting the tomb of St Peter arrived after crossing the river, underlined the function

28. Giovanni Battista Falda, 'Archispedale Apostolico di S. Spirito in Sassia', engraving, from *Il nuovo teatro delle fabbriche, et edificii, in prospettiva di Roma moderna* [...], published by Giovanni Iacomo Rossi, 3 vols (Rome, 1665), vol. 1, pl. 29, Brown University, Providence, RI.

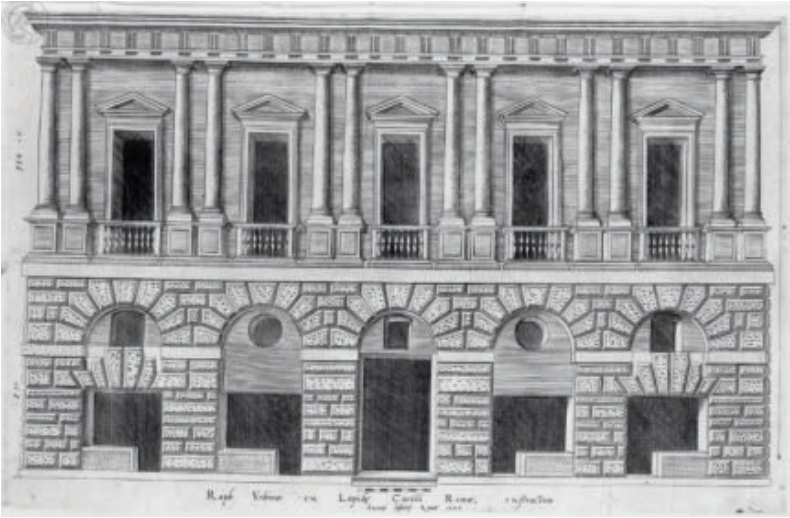
29. Jean Barbault, 'Veduta di Ponte Sisto / Vue du Pont Sixte', engraving from *Les plus beaux edifices de Rome moderne* (Rome, 1763), following p. 66, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome.



of the hospital in the service of travellers and gave prominence to the papal patronage, which was emblazoned and inscribed on the hospital's exterior walls and windows (fig. 28).<sup>103</sup> However, it was not buildings alone that enabled Sixtus to claim to be the *urbis restaurator*, but also his special attention to the city's thoroughfares. As Manfredo Tafuri and others have noted, Sixtus significantly revised the street network, initiating the via Sistina, which cuts from the piazza di Ponte, on the *abitato* side of the Ponte Sant'Angelo, along the Tiber towards the north (the Porto di Ripetta), and the via della Lungara, a new street linking the Vatican south to Trastevere and the port there (Porto di Ripa Grande).<sup>104</sup> These streets eased the movement of visitors to the Vatican, but also, significantly, connected the papal Borgo with the city's two river ports, ensuring access to supplies, but also asserting papal authority over Rome's trade. In addition to these streets on either side of the Tiber, Sixtus also commissioned a grand new bridge – the Ponte Sisto (fig. 29), which still bears his name – a vital new piece of infrastructure that eased everyday movement and pilgrim traffic through the city, as its prominent inscription declares:

Sixtus IV, the pope, for the use of the people of Rome and the multitude of pilgrims that will participate in the jubilee, restored this bridge that was justly called 'broken' and rebuilt it from the foundations up, at great expense and with great care, and wished that it be renamed Sistine.<sup>105</sup>

With these new streets and the bridge, but also, of course, through the extensive direct and indirect patronage of secular and religious architecture, Sixtus' pontificate marked a step change in the built fabric of Rome, the widespread use of the papal insignia and inscriptions serving to hammer home the scale and distributed presence of these interventions on an urban scale.<sup>106</sup> Sixtus appears to have established the significant precedent of making the foundation of new



30. Antoine Lafréry, 'Palazzo Caprini', 1549, engraving reproduced in *Speculum Romanae magnificentiae* (Rome, 1574?), pl. 118, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome.

streets a papal prerogative; while not all popes created new streets in Rome, many of them did, and their ambitious projects left a mark that is still legible in the city's street layout and names.<sup>107</sup>

It was Pope Alexander VI Borgia, however (r. 1492–1503), who brought together street design and architectural patronage in a single project, the via Alessandrina – an early example of the palace street that created a monumental and regularised ceremonial axis, lined to a significant degree with elite residences. Again, as occurred in the pontificate of Sixtus IV, it was a jubilee year (1500) that served as the important catalyst for the creation of the new street, plans for which were set in motion by Alexander in the latter part of 1498.<sup>108</sup> Cardinal Raffaele Riario was appointed as superintendent for the 'nova via fienda ad palatium' (the 'new street to be built to the [Vatican] palace') on 20 February 1499; by April work on the new street was under way, and it was opened as part of official celebrations that started the jubilee on 24 December that same year.<sup>109</sup> This seemingly rapid progress is somewhat deceptive; the street was not created from scratch, but instead was formed by renovating a pre-existing route by cutting back house fronts, carrying out some demolitions and constructing a number of larger-scale new palaces. Various building projects on what was to become the via Alessandrina are documented from soon after the pope's accession, and specific mention of the street was made as early as 1496.<sup>110</sup> Nicholas V's plans had anticipated a plan for parallel streets leading through the Borgo to St Peter's, and it is perhaps hardly surprising that the main access streets to the Vatican should have been subject to improvements throughout the second half of the fifteenth century.<sup>111</sup> In this respect, then, the Borgia pope harnessed and coordinated ongoing efforts to reorder the area, which included the piazza Scossacavalli, and took credit for this by applying his name to the street, just in time for the jubilee-year pilgrims to take notice.

That the improvement of the appearance of this axis to the Vatican was a primary concern is reaffirmed in a papal bull of 1500, which required front-agers along via Alessandrina to renew their palace façades within two months



on pain of expropriation; these rules further imposed a minimum height requirement for façades of 7 *canne* (about 15 metres), although it is unclear whether either rule was firmly applied by the *magistri viarum*.<sup>112</sup> By this time, palaces built by cardinals Castellesi, Soderini and della Rovere framed the piazza Scossacavalli, and these were later joined by Palazzo Caprini, constructed for the Bishop of Viterbo, Adriano Caprini, (later the residence of Raphael) and completed around 1510 (fig. 30).<sup>113</sup> Alexander seems equally to have had an eye to the defensive value of straight streets, and the via Alessandrina can be understood as part of his wider campaign to make the Castel Sant'Angelo into a fortified protective bastion, set at the entrance to the Vatican precinct and connected to the papal palace by well-ordered thoroughfares that could be easily controlled.<sup>114</sup> The pope's death in 1503 significantly slowed progress on the newly regularised street, though his successor, Julius II (r. 1503–13), ordered its paving in 1505. In fact, a number of the more significant palaces that eventually lined the street – including the palaces of curial officials Jacopo da Brescia and Giovanni Battista Branconio dell'Aquila – were not constructed until the pontificate of Leo X (r. 1513–21), when new impetus seems to have been given to the street project.

*'sumptuous and excessive building work': Resisting urban renewal*

That the development of the via Alessandrina spanned a number of decades on either side of the pontificate for which it is named illustrates the degree to which the 'urban process' was gradual; while policies and patrons might provide the stimulus or catalyst for change, the final realisation of such plans



tended to require time and some degree of collective participation in the endeavour. Moreover, it is all too easy to associate the documentary and material traces of a street renewal project, and to link it back to the point of inception without interrogating the circumstances of its subsequent development and completion.<sup>115</sup> In this respect, via Giulia in Rome is exemplary; as its name clearly implies, the street is closely associated with the patronage of Pope Julius II, and, although its initial design can firmly be attributed to the papal architect Donato Bramante, its present form is the result of centuries of interventions (fig. 31).<sup>116</sup> To some extent, at least, the time lapse between its design and completion can be accounted for by well-motivated resistance to the plans, brought to bear by a number of citizens.

Pope Julius' plan was for a 'wide and straight street', as the humanist Egidius of Viterbo, vicar general of the Augustinians, noted, and the ambitious project to impose order on the *abitato* is rather grandly proclaimed in a classicising inscription on a building at the northern end of the via dei Banchi (fig. 32): Julius is said to have 'embellished the city of Rome, which at the time was more like a squatter's settlement than a properly planned city'.<sup>117</sup> Described by Manfredo Tafuri as a cutting-edge new street, via Giulia was part of a wider papal project to rebalance the city away from the civic focus around the Capitoline (where markets were held well into the mid-fifteenth century) towards the Tiber, the Vatican and Castel Sant'Angelo, in line with papacy's growing power over the city.<sup>118</sup> The via Giulia project centred on a focal building, the massive new Palazzo dei Tribunali, which was intended to house, under one roof, all the tribunals of the city – both ecclesiastical and secular; it was planned to relocate there a number of administrative offices that had hitherto been housed on the Capitol, where, as civic institutions independent of the papacy, they held out against the move.<sup>119</sup> The project was fiercely opposed by many Roman citizens, including a number from the city's oldest noble families (the *romani cives*), which led to an uprising.<sup>120</sup> The surviving fragment of the Tribunali building on via Giulia (fig. 33) is an eloquent testimony to Julius' failed ambitions to take control of these legislative prerogatives: the abandonment of the building project coincided with the establishment of a *pax romana* in August 1511, through which the pope reached terms with the elite Roman families prominent in the civic government.

Although the Tribunali centralised administrative complex – which, incidentally, adopted an ostentatiously defensive design, resembling as much a castle as an urban palace – was abandoned, the via Giulia nonetheless emerged as an important palace street, developed through incremental acts of private patronage, which, over the centuries that followed, lined its absolutely straight course with palaces and churches.<sup>121</sup> Even so, the demands placed on citizens through 'forced participation' in large-scale building campaigns of this sort can be understood to have been politically motivated, as the citizen and nobleman Marco Antonio Altieri commented:



32. Inscription, 1512, at the northern end of via dei Banchi, Rome, commemorating the improvement of city streets under the aegis of Pope Julius II.



33. The base of Palazzo Tribunali, via Giulia, Rome. Work on Pope Julius II's ambitious building project was halted in 1511.

the sumptuous and excessive building work, and the universal ornament of citizens, contribute to the glory only of princes [... but for Roman citizens,] being short of funds, credit and will, by making the supreme effort to build, through pomp and ornament, we all come closer to our terrible and ultimate end.<sup>122</sup>

Altieri voices a resistance to building projects that articulated the power and ambitions of 'princes' – in this case the papacy – whose urban-scale interventions might run counter to the interests of other constituencies.<sup>123</sup>

Palace streets were, indeed, a powerful means by which rulers and city governments were able to harness investment by individual patrons in architectural renewal to create a collective impact on urban space that was significantly greater than the sum of the individual parts. Streets such as the via Maggio (Florence), via del Capitano (Siena), the strada Nuova (Genoa) and the via degli Angeli (Ferrara), as well as main streets in many other cities, including Parma, Piacenza, Perugia and Vicenza, were all renewed during the sixteenth century, usually in a classicising style that created unified streetscapes expressive of the shared identity of powerful elites and ruling groups.<sup>124</sup> Nonetheless, in many of these cities there is also evidence that there was resistance to change of this scale, often from families outside the ruling groups, but also from disenfranchised minorities and even from active participants in renewal plans who could ill afford the building costs. Zoning restrictions aimed at concentrating luxury trades along prominent streets tended to push those who practised malodorous trades, such as fishmongers, butchers and shoemakers, out to more peripheral areas, while quite careful measures were implemented to prescribe the areas where prostitutes were permitted to operate; resistance to these measures is frequently documented.<sup>125</sup> So, in Milan, repeated attempts from the mid-fifteenth century to clear the butchers from around the cathedral square so as to create 'a wide opening that is beautiful to behold' proved hard to enforce, as commercial interests appear to have prevailed over these aesthetic considerations.<sup>126</sup> Similar resistance from shopkeepers resulted in multiple legislative measures to clear porticoes, loggias and other structures built around shops in the cathedral district, as well as on the main axis connecting it to the Castello Sforzesco, though these were largely unsuccessful, as repeated attempts are documented throughout the second half of the fifteenth century.<sup>127</sup>

Active patrons could also prove reluctant participants in urban renewal campaigns; for instance, a remarkable correspondence from the recently elected young Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga to his father Ludovico, the Marquis of Mantua, documents the demands placed on him to participate in multiple building projects commanded by Pope Pius II Piccolomini.<sup>128</sup> While a stable residence in Rome was an obvious necessity for a prince of the church, Pius' predilection for the rural retreat of his birthplace in south Tuscany meant that much of the papal court relocated to the small town of Corsignano for



significant periods of time; Cardinal Francesco wrote in September 1462 of the forcefully conveyed expectation that he should participate in the reconstruction of the town by contributing a palace along the main street.<sup>129</sup> It seems that the Piccolomini pope was fairly direct in his demands that the 18-year-old cardinal should do as he requested: ‘all day this good man the pope does nothing else but say that the Cardinal of Mantua is not building this house, and that something could well happen that would make him regret not having built it.’<sup>130</sup>

At Corsignano (rebuilt and renamed Pienza), a diminutive masterpiece of urban planning was enacted in the few short years of Pius’ pontificate (1458–64) around the main piazza, where a new cathedral, city hall and Piccolomini residence were built in short order; the urban-scale impact of the project was reinforced by palaces along the small town’s main street, commissioned under a degree of duress by the Gonzaga, Borgia and Ammannati cardinals (fig. 34).<sup>131</sup> As has been shown, moreover, in order to make way for these magnificent new urban palaces, large numbers of properties were expropriated and the inhabitants relocated, some of them to purpose-built row-housing (the so-called *case nuove*) set back from the main street (fig. 35).<sup>132</sup> The contained setting of the Pienza project highlights the challenges of urban-scale renewal, showing how pressure was placed on sometimes reluctant patrons, and new construction inevitably had a human cost for displaced populations.

At times, the historical record preserves well-articulated complaints about urban renewal and its effects. In Siena, just as the *ornato* officials used civic pride (and its opposite – shame, *vergogna*) as a trigger to nudge those who lived along the city’s main street to renew their houses, so petitions by many citizens document a reluctance to accede to those demands in the light of the considerable costs involved. Furthermore, in the bid to improve the appearance of the city’s main street, zoning provisions were enforced against butchers, who put up

34. Corso Rossellino, Pienza, with the palaces built by the cardinals Gonzaga and Borgia (left, foreground) and the Palazzo Piccolomini (left, background), and the bell-tower of the new city hall.

35. *Case nuove*, row-housing, Pienza.

strong resistance to measures that confined them to the urban periphery, where they were out of sight of passing dignitaries and visitors, despite the fact that they had easier access to water to clean their premises.<sup>133</sup> Rather more unusual is a case of October 1513, when unknown citizens protested against a tax levied to pay for street improvements and ephemeral displays in the lead up to the visit to Siena of the recently elected Pope Leo X.<sup>134</sup> Chronicles report that posters were affixed around the city that bore the cryptic remark: 'The loan will be paid, the earth will be removed, the pope will not come.'<sup>135</sup> The reference to clearing earth is somewhat abstruse, but seems to have had a double meaning: on one hand it suggested the likelihood of a riot occurring against the forced loan demanded of citizens to finance the visit, while, on the other, it referred to a pile of building waste that had been left on the piazza del Duomo during construction of the palace of Siena's first citizen, Giacompo Petrucci, which was moved to make space for one of the planned triumphal arches for the papal visit.<sup>136</sup> The complaint thus suggested that expensive street maintenance around the newly developed street of the city's ruling elite might precipitate a revolt, especially in the light of the likelihood that the visit from the pope would not take place. We do not know whether the uprising ever came about, but what is certain is that Leo did not enjoy the results of the expensive preparations for his papal visit, as he took a different route to Florence.

Further north in the peninsula, the evidence from Ferrara highlights similar tensions that might accompany ambitious, urban-scale building campaigns. Duke Ercole's northwards expansion plans (discussed earlier) almost doubled the area occupied by the city, and created a significant demand on citizens and courtiers to fill the vast area contained inside the new perimeter walls with buildings. One chronicler, Hondedio de Vitale, was openly critical of the duke's preoccupation with building: 'the Duke of Ferrara [...] does nothing other than build palaces, play music and songs, and organise jousts, riding from one place to another, caring not a jot for everyday government.'<sup>137</sup> The account seems to be corroborated in the woodcut view of Ferrara (see fig. 24), where the duke can be seen riding out to inspect the Terra Nova site. Significant tax pressure was imposed on all citizens to contribute to construction costs, and in at least one instance appears to have resulted in a retaliatory gesture: on 28 April 1502 the town crier announced a reward of 50 ducats for information leading to the capture of the culprits who had damaged the column made ready for the central monument in the piazza Nuova.<sup>138</sup> As with so many of the projects discussed in this chapter, Duke Ercole's addition to Ferrara relied on courtiers and families who benefited directly from ducal patronage to build many of the houses and palaces; few were to be constructed by the city's established nobility, although they would have contributed through their taxes. In spite of the duke's best efforts, a bird's-eye view of the city in 1598 shows large areas of undeveloped land; the attempt to relocate the market to the piazza Nova failed, and the column damaged in 1502 still lay broken in the square.<sup>139</sup>

These instances illustrate the range of documented resistance to urban-scale interventions that transformed streets and cities in Renaissance Italy. They testify to the underlying political and power struggles that inevitably accompanied the significant realignments of property and architecture involved in enacting changes to urban usage and renewal of the city environment.<sup>140</sup> The discussion

now turns from built architecture to the performance of ephemeral displays in public space, and explores how such displays highlighted the political aims and ambitions to which large-scale projects for street transformation sought to give permanent visual form.

### *Ritual use of public space: Streets, processions and authority*

The improvement of existing streets and the creation of new ones was, as has been shown, a complex task, in which the will of powerful individuals often provided an essential catalyst but which might then take a considerable period to reach fruition. Urban-design interventions at the scale of the street were an effective means of articulating authority, although such projects were seldom completed during the lifetimes of their initiators. In this respect, temporary events in which city streets were the primary setting for ceremonial rituals provided a unique opportunity to showcase the intended effects of permanent changes on an urban scale. The ephemeral and ceremonial could reveal the programmatic functions of such interventions as an articulation of the power of specific individuals or ruling groups. The ritual use of public space has been the subject of extensive scholarly attention,<sup>141</sup> so here I shall focus on a specific series of events in 1462, during which Pope Pius II Piccolomini exploited the performative potential of streets by mounting triumphal entries that charted new routes through a number of recently reordered areas of central Italian cities.

This direct relationship between urban improvements and the articulation of authority is perhaps most clearly expressed in a remarkable passage from Pope Pius II's autobiography, in which he recorded a ceremony he had officiated in Viterbo for the feast Corpus Christi in the summer of 1462.<sup>142</sup> During the procession, which involved an elaborate pageant and set pieces in front a number of the cardinals' residences in the city (described in further detail below), the pope, who led the procession bearing the monstrance containing the consecrated host, encountered a group close to the Borgia residence who asked him 'Who is this pious king?', to which he responded 'The powerful Lord of the world.'<sup>143</sup> The double entendre on the pope's name and proclaimed piety, but even more so the response to it, in which a second play on words, eliding the pontiff's title and the sacramental presence of Christ, was surely intended, offer a clear insight into the ideology of papal monarchy espoused by Pius II.<sup>144</sup> Here, the words proclaimed by the pope, as well as the route taken by the procession, which connected a series of locations that were subject to improvements commanded by him, expressed the absolutist ambitions of the pontiff.

Some months before the Viterbo Corpus Christi, the pope officiated an elaborate procession on 11–13 April 1462 to welcome into Rome the precious relic of the head of the Apostle St Andrew, secured from Thomas Palaeologus, the exiled Despot of the Morea.<sup>145</sup> Remarkably, the ceremonial observance and processional route followed for the relic, which had been brought from the Adriatic port of Ancona by Cardinal Bessarion, imitated that usually adopted for the *ingressus*, the entry of an emperor or other potentate into the city of Rome. As part of a three-day ceremony, the relic was first taken to a liminal site outside the city walls by the Ponte Milvio, on the via Flaminia, the northern route into

the city; here the ceremonial encounter between the pope and the relic was staged on a dais, and later a chapel was erected on the site to commemorate the event. On the second day the relic was transferred within the city walls to the church close by the northern gate, Santa Maria del Popolo, where it rested for a day after the long journey. Finally, on the third day, a triumphal procession was staged through the city streets: the route first followed the southern bank of the Tiber (later the via di Ripetta), avoiding the city centre, and then, diving into the *abitato*, passed the Pantheon and Sant'Eustachio to join the via Papalis; after traversing the Campo dei Fiori, it went past San Lorenzo in Damaso to the Canale di Ponte, and 'having crossed the bridge', proceeded beyond Castel Sant'Angelo, 'to reach St Peter's along the via Sancta'.<sup>146</sup>

By organising the reception of this precious relic as if it was an honoured guest, the pope ensured that the processional route was invested with visual significance, as citizens, cardinals, and the neighbourhood of Tuscan merchants and bankers around the Canale di Ponte vied for prominence through the lavish decorations they provided along the streets.<sup>147</sup> Much was made of the final public spectacle, which took place on the newly improved piazza in front of St Peter's basilica, but, in fact, the bulk of Pius' account dwells on the collective effect of the ephemeral decorations and celebrations that marked the route.<sup>148</sup> Pius records that 'at all the crossroads and along all the streets' choirs sang and incense burned on temporary altars, which were decorated with sculptures and paintings brought out from private homes; meanwhile the grander houses of the elite were adorned with tapestries and other textiles hung from the windows.<sup>149</sup> That there was 'neither piazza nor street that did not offer spectacle' is borne out by an account by the Sieneese ambassador Agostino Dati, who reported that 'for more than two miles the street was decorated with cloth, covered with fronds and flowers [...] the streets were ordered with spectacles, marvellous artifice and splendid ornament.'<sup>150</sup> What stands out from the exceptionally long account that Pius provides in Book VIII of his *Epistolae et commentarii* is that while, of course, the focus of the celebrations was the relic of the head of St Andrew, the pope was the protagonist, leading the procession, delivering the orations and – after the solemn display of the relic on the high altar of St Peter's basilica – taking up a position 'where he could be seen by everyone' to issue his blessing upon the assembled crowds.<sup>151</sup> In this way, the procession forged a triumphal route through the city, which anticipated some of the new streets (such as the via di Ripetta) that were to take permanent form in the decades to follow, while linking together sites of particular significance (such as the cardinals' residences and the banking district of the pope's Tuscan supporters), thus celebrating the pope and his patronage network as much as the holy relic itself.

A few days later, the pope left Rome for the countryside and a rest cure at the thermal baths, before taking up residence in Viterbo in preparation for the feast of Corpus Christi (16 June). Interestingly, the pope's account of these events begins by recording that in Viterbo 'first of all [...] he commanded that the main street that leads from the castle to the cathedral [...] should be freed of all jetties and overhangs and returned to its original splendour', highlighting that permanent urban change was set in motion to ensure that the 'street would be restored to a standardised width'.<sup>152</sup> Documentary evidence bears this out, as sundry payments were made by the papal chancery to residents

along what was to be the ceremonial route for the Corpus Christi procession, between the papal residence in the fortified Rocca and the cathedral.<sup>153</sup> These payments were clearly intended to provide an incentive to facilitate the rapid transformation of the streets, in a strategy comparable to that deployed by the *ornato* officials in Siena, discussed earlier. While the incentives were paid to the property owners responsible for alterations to the buildings, it was the college of cardinals that stepped in to pay for significant ephemeral improvements along the route, as both the pope and the local chronicler Nicola della Tuccia reported: fifteen cardinals, as well as some of the city guilds, contributed to embellishing sections of the street with hangings and temporary displays, as well as staging a number of *sacre rappresentazioni* (a form of miracle play or holy *tableau vivant*).<sup>154</sup> It was at one such performance, played out on the lavishly decorated space in front of the residence of Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia, that the encounter described above, in which the pope proclaimed his identity as ‘Lord of the world’, occurred.

Just as we might understand the expensive decorative improvements paid for by the cardinals as, in some sense at least, an act of fealty to the pontiff, so the prevailing symbolism of the procession as ceremonial triumph was reinforced by numerous arches (‘*arcus multiplices*’) erected along the route, the grandest of which was placed in front of the cathedral.<sup>155</sup> It was on this square that the procession reached its climax, with an elaborate miracle play evoking Christ’s Resurrection enacted on a complex stage, observed from an open-air altar, before which the pope was seated on his throne flanked by the cardinals on benches, while a vast crowd of onlookers spilled out of the piazza onto an open field beyond.<sup>156</sup> Following this spectacle, as the local chronicler Nicola della Tuccia reports, the pope entered the bishop’s palace, from which he blessed the multitude (estimated at an improbable 150,000 people), promising a plenary indulgence to all those present.<sup>157</sup> So, just as in the St Andrew’s procession in Rome, the processional route in Viterbo explicitly marked out the main street through the city as a ceremonial axis, chosen to stage a papal triumph in which Pius II was protagonist; again, the celebrations ended with the pope performing the act of blessing the multitude.

On 21 June, a few days after Corpus Christi, as signs of plague were reported in Viterbo, the pope and his entourage of cardinals left the city, travelling north, first to the lakeside town of Bolsena, then to Monte Amiata at Abbadia San Salvatore, where they might enjoy the cool of the mountain air.<sup>158</sup> It was from there that, by means of a bull issued on 13 August, the pope raised the village where he had been born (Corsignano) to a city, the seat of a new diocese with a newly built cathedral, and renamed it Pienza, the city of Pius.<sup>159</sup> Land purchases and construction had already begun in autumn 1459, and by the summer of 1462 many of the principal buildings were nearing completion, so that when the court moved on to Pienza the final phases of the grandiose project were carried out under the watchful eye of the pontiff (fig. 36).<sup>160</sup> In elevating the village of his birth, and re-founding it through extensive architectural renewal, Pius also indulged a classical fantasy that chimed with his namesake, the pious Aeneas of Virgil’s epic, who also founded a new settlement that echoed his name.<sup>161</sup> More simply, the classical magnificence of the new city was plain for all to see, so that the humanist scholar and antiquarian

36. Piazza del Duomo (now piazza Pio II), Pienza, with the cathedral (left) and the Palazzo Piccolomini (right).



Flavio Biondo, visiting Pienza as part of the papal party that summer, noted that the Piccolomini pope resembled the Roman emperors Septimius Severus and Marcus Aurelius, who had renewed their own cities of Leptis Magna and Rome.<sup>162</sup>

Pius followed his act of imperial patronage by co-opting other patrons to participate in the project; during the summer of 1462, the presence of many of the cardinals in the vicinity provided ample opportunity for the pope to exert pressure on a number of them to contribute to the grand building project.<sup>163</sup> Papal munificence funded a residence for the canons of the cathedral and a new city hall, as well as contributing to new houses for local residents, so that it could be plausibly claimed that ‘nowhere in the city maintained its original appearance.’<sup>164</sup> Following the consecration of the cathedral in late August, as the summer heat dissipated, a special festival on 21 September marked the completion of the new town, before the papal circus moved on. To mark the



feast day of the local patron saint, Matthew, the pope ordered a town fair and a day of races (*palio*) held along the new city's streets, which was the last in this remarkable sequence of elaborate ceremonial events marking the spring and summer of 1462.<sup>165</sup>

The bucolic festivities at Pienza are again recounted in the pope's autobiography, which underlines how his lavish generosity increased the resources for the festivities: new livery was provided for the local councillors, and valuable prizes offered for the races, including bolts of cloth for the winners of those competed on horseback, on donkeys and on foot, while the winner of the children's running race was to be awarded a goose.<sup>166</sup> Marquees were erected outside the city gates, and a rich meal was provided to the gathered locals and rustics, with thirty oxen and various other animals consumed at one sitting; there followed the fair with its stalls, and entertainments that culminated in the races along Pienza's main street, described in some detail in an account that carefully records the prowess of those who won each race. In contrast to the urban ceremonials in Rome and Viterbo, however, the pope and cardinals kept an elevated distance. Pius' account concludes with the statement that 'the pope looked on from a very high window, in the company of his cardinals and not without pleasure, though not neglecting in the meantime to attend to the affairs of state.'<sup>167</sup> So, then, we can interpret the urban renewal of Pienza as an act of papal bounty bestowed on the small centre as an expression of his elevated status, which in turn gave physical shape to the dynamics of patronage that revealed the dependence of a number of cardinals on the pope's good will. For the festivities of St Matthew, however, the pope's eminence raised him above the crowd of local participants and onlookers, the 'very high window' providing spatial articulation to the power relations in the small town.

If we review these three carefully choreographed events that took place between April and September 1462 during Pius II's pontificate, it is possible clearly to discern how the ceremonial and ritual use of public space revealed the underlying motives of urban-scale development and renewal during this period. On each of these occasions, a carefully chosen route through the city offered an opportunity to display and to view the papal interventions that had reordered city space, etching papal authority onto the urban streetscape and in some cases anticipating through temporary solutions what would become permanent built architecture. While by no means all urban rituals expressed centralised or authoritarian dynamics of power (as we shall see, for example, in the next chapter), it is clear that triumphal processions of various sorts were increasingly used during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a means of communicating power relationships in a way comparable to that expressed through the creation of new streets. Popes, emperors, local princes and rulers, as well as civic authorities, increasingly adopted ceremonial practices in which streets were not simply routes, but became vectors of meaning, expressive of the authorities that had created them.



# Everyday Life on the Streets

## *Sociability and the Public Realm*

Unable to work out how events had transpired, Grasso [the Fat One] decided to leave his workshop for a while and go to Santa Maria del Fiore [the cathedral], to have time to think on his own affairs, and to certify better if he were Grasso or Matteo, through the recognition on the faces of the people that he met; even though on account of waking up in his own house [...] he was fairly sure of it.<sup>1</sup>

Antonio Manetti's well-known *Novella del grasso legnaiuolo* ('The novella of the fat woodcarver'), set in Florence in 1409, describes the elaborate trick played upon the unlucky intarsia master Manetto Ammannatini, nicknamed 'il Grasso', by a *brigata* ('gang') of his friends, led by Filippo Brunelleschi. The story takes place in an area no more precisely defined than the immediate environs of the Baptistery of San Giovanni Battista and the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore (the Duomo). It begins with Grasso missing a dinner at which all his other friends were present. As a way to revenge themselves for the perceived affront caused them by his absence, his friends hatched a plan to steal Grasso's identity by a complicated process that involved switching his name, residence, workplace and friendship network. A large cast of friends and neighbours collaborated in a complex ruse to make him believe that his name was actually Matteo, and that he lived in quite a different part of the city. In the space of twenty-four hours he was sent to the city's infamous jail, Le Stinche, for brawling with people who 'misidentified' him, was released on bail and brought to 'his' house in Oltrarno – south of the river and far from his own home, which was by the Duomo. During this time, he met with a number of people, including a nobleman whom he knew by the name of Giovanni di Francesco Rucellai, as well as a lawyer and a priest, all of whom confirmed his identity as 'Matteo'. Through these various means his very sense of self was eroded, as figures of authority failed to recognise him, and he was displaced to a residential neighbourhood far from his own.

At the end of the day, doped by opiates, he was returned to his actual home, so that when he woke up in the morning to the familiar sound of the Ave Maria bells of Santa Maria del Fiore, he could not understand how he was back in his own bed.<sup>2</sup> To test the reality of the situation, he picked up the key to his workshop near the baptistery, and went to work; confused and mesmerised by the

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37. Unknown Veronese artist, *Trajan and the Widow: I*, 1475–1500(?), tempera on panel, National Gallery, London.

elaborate trick (*beffa*), Grasso was unable to fathom what had transpired, and decided to seek public confirmation of his identity. He therefore left his workshop and moved into the city streets, walking to the cathedral, in the hope that recognition in the eyes and faces of the people he met would provide the public proof of his identity that he needed.<sup>3</sup> So badly did the *beffa* disconcert him, and – indeed – destroy his self-image by making him a laughing stock among his friends and in his neighbourhood, that Grasso decided to leave Florence and emigrate to Hungary to seek his fortune.

The novella of the fat woodcarver effectively reveals the profoundly spatial dimension of community and neighbourhood in the fifteenth-century city and the critical interaction of people with the urban environment that constitutes the experience of urban space. Grasso's predicament results from a trick played on him by the close-knit community of his male friends, his *brigata*, in which authority figures from the legal profession and the Church, as well as the urban elite, served to reinforce and confirm the deception.<sup>4</sup> Of equal importance with these human actors was the stage on which the tale was played out. While the story provides no precise details of the location of Grasso's home and workshop, these are firmly rooted in the historic core of the city, close to its religious and commercial–industrial centre between the cathedral and baptistery and the Mercato Vecchio. The identity of Grasso was challenged by his forcible relocation to a different area of the city, where no one recognised him and he was lost; more significantly, perhaps, it was the soundscape of his local environment (the bells of the cathedral sounding the Ave Maria) that first alerted him to the fact that he was back home.<sup>5</sup> Although the status quo was re-established, even his home and workplace were insufficient to reassure Grasso of his recovered identity, so he visited the cathedral – the heart of his neighbourhood, and of the city itself – where recognition by his neighbours restored him to himself.

Manetti's story has attracted numerous interpretations that place significance on different aspects of the *beffa*, but its underpinning structure relies upon socio-psychological aspects of community networks and the geo-spatial coordinates of the physical environment.<sup>6</sup> By undermining Grasso's day-to-day local environment, the trick highlights the crucial function of this element in building local community in the early modern city. Manetti's novella helps us to tease out some of the detail of urban life as it was lived on a daily basis – aspects of the past and its experience that all too easily evade description because they have left only slight traces on the historical record. Nevertheless, visual sources as well as surviving elements of the built fabric provide additional evidence that enables us to re-inscribe places with their original meaning and significance in the transactions of the everyday.

### *Getting around: Streets, movement and directions*

What was a street in Renaissance Italy? Although this may seem a redundant question, it is nonetheless one worth asking, as the urban street and its nature as a public space were contested and fashioned through the constant give and take between private interests and public authorities. While some degree of

similarity between the street layouts of antique settlements in a number of Italian cities might suggest that networks were fixed, this was only sometimes the case. Instead, the public infrastructure of street networks in cities was established and consolidated through the medieval period, often in direct opposition to the interests of magnate families, whose residential enclaves took the form of semi-isolated fortified urban bastions.<sup>7</sup> Urban streets came to take on more confidently articulated form during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and with this came the emergence of more expressive elite residential architecture, the façades of which contributed to fashioning the appearance of the streets themselves.<sup>8</sup>

Practical and legislative processes underpinned the emergence, development and regularisation of city streets in Italy,<sup>9</sup> but it was social practices, as much as legislation, that shaped the urban environment on and adjacent to city streets; a street's form and evolution gave physical expression to the movement of people engaged in trade, politics, devotional practice and life-cycle rituals. Streets encode the regular itineraries and actions of people, which through repetition are inscribed on the fabric of the city, and subsequently, themselves, become an amenity to be protected or improved.<sup>10</sup> We focus here on social practices that gave form to and were, in turn, structured by the built environment of the public realm. Looking at how people moved through the streets and experienced the city serves to counterbalance the concept of the street as primarily an architectural construct with a view of the street as a social environment.

In recent years, movement has become increasingly intrinsic to the analysis of everyday urban experience; indeed, recent sociology has coined the notion of a 'mobility turn' in the humanities, a phrase designed to echo the 'spatial turn' identified by cultural geographer Denis Cosgrove some time ago.<sup>11</sup> Historians of early modern Italy, adapting the ideas of influential thinkers such as Michel de Certeau, have started to incorporate everyday movement into an already vigorous scholarship addressing the spatialised politics of urban existence.<sup>12</sup> Theorists of the twentieth-century city have considered individuals as engaged in a solitary and alienated practice as they move in and act upon the urban environment; by contrast, for the early modern period, walking has been described as a practice through which city dwellers effectively produced urban spaces and forged communal relations in what was 'an intensely social activity', as Filippo de Vivo points out.<sup>13</sup> Walking was one of the critical ways in which identity was shaped. In the often crowded streets of the early modern city, people were constantly engaged in relocating and re-establishing their sense both of self and of community, in a physical fabric alive with personal and familial, local and civic resonances.<sup>14</sup>

One of the more absurd of the scabrous tales collected by Pietro Fortini in the sixteenth century tells of a Sieneese merchant whose travels had brought him to Venice, where he had had an affair with a Flemish woman.<sup>15</sup> On returning to Siena, he taught his wife some Flemish and, somewhat unaccountably, told her that the Flemish sentence 'Would you like to have sex?' meant 'Would you like to eat?' The consequences are almost too obvious to relate, but for the detail. The couple owned a shop near the Campo, the city's central piazza, where the man's wife ran a stall selling food to pilgrims. Fortini writes: 'as everyone knows, at that time of year [summer] many people go on pilgrimage, and on account



38. Odoardo Fialetti, *View of Venice*, 1611, oil on joined canvas, Eton College.

39. River traffic on the river Po at Ferrara, detail from Master of the 'Wide Eyes', *The Month of June*, c. 1467–9, fresco, Salone dei Mesi, Palazzo Schifanoia, Ferrara.

of the fact that it was pleasant weather and because it was a jubilee year, many people came by [Siena].<sup>16</sup> A group of Flemings, 'who were on the journey to St Peter's, and were going to Rome for the indulgence', happened by the Campo, and the husband's man-of-the-world prank predictably backfires.

This story captures various aspects that can be developed further. In Siena the north–south passage of those engaged in trade and pilgrimage meant that the local population were regularly in contact with people from outside the city. The traffic of pilgrims, in particular, which fluctuated widely in relation to the season and also to the calling of jubilee years in Rome, offered opportunities for local traders, whose shops and stalls clustered around the city's main streets and piazza. Here, both traders in luxury goods and service providers, such as the fast-food seller who is the subject of the story, jostled for custom. Mobility and sexual licence are also encoded in the story, in respect both of the husband who travels to Venice, and of the Flemish pilgrims passing through Siena. Within the city, movement was almost exclusively on foot, and was concentrated along the main thoroughfare, the strada Romana (a section of the pilgrim route known as the via Francigena), which channelled movement through Siena and on towards Rome.<sup>17</sup>

Such incidents as this, though exaggerated for comic effect by the author Fortini, provide a flavour of the everyday encounters that the street facilitated

and controlled. The street functions as a technology in the urban system, controlling access, regulating flows and encouraging rests and stops. Nowhere was this more the case than at points where the extra-urban road network met the dense urban fabric – locations that were usually marked by city gates, where new arrivals were policed and taxed, and around which services were provided for the accommodation of travellers.<sup>18</sup> These primary access points conditioned urban form. In Siena they imposed a strong north–south axis, while in Rome the primary access to the city was marked by the northern Porta del Popolo development, which by the later sixteenth century had adopted a complex *trivium* form of streets radiating from a large central piazza, punctuated by pilgrimage churches.<sup>19</sup> In spite of Venice’s exceptional setting on the lagoon, there relatively standardised access points were provided from the mainland along the Grand Canal and from the open sea into the Bacino di San Marco (the vast stretch of water between St Mark’s Square and the island of San Giorgio Maggiore); the wide open space adjacent to the ducal palace formed a piazza connecting the heart of the city to the sea (fig. 38).<sup>20</sup> Similar patterns can be observed throughout Italy.

Roads were not the only way to enter a city, and although Venice is the best-known urban centre in Italy where water played a central part in the transport infrastructure, it was by no means the only one. Waterways were significant for both trade and travel, whether by river or sea, to all cities built on or close to water. In Milan, a highly developed system of canals (*navigli*) connected the city to its neighbouring subject towns, as well as north to Lakes Como and Maggiore; the canals were the principal means for transporting goods into the city, and underpinned its flourishing industries from at least the fourteenth century.<sup>21</sup> The proper operation of the canal system was a recurrent concern for the city administration and rulers: expansion of the network, dredging and constant provision of water are all issues that recur in the documents. Barges of different sizes enabled goods to be transported on the smaller network of canals inside the city walls.<sup>22</sup>

Similarly, in the flat landscape of the Po’s catchment area, canals and navigable rivers were a central part of the infrastructure within and between cities, including Modena, Parma, Mantua, Ferrara and Bologna (fig. 39).<sup>23</sup> The best records we have of the use of these waterways document the progress of important individuals moving between one city and another, although wider patterns of usage are suggested by these itineraries. Thus, for instance, when Pius II made his journey to the Council of Mantua in May 1459, he travelled from Ferrara to Mantua by barge; similarly, when in 1487 the daughter of Ercole I d’Este travelled from Ferrara to marry Annibale Bentivoglio in Bologna, the party travelled by boat, as did the daughter of Giovanni II Bentivoglio when she went to Mantua to marry Giovanni Gonzaga in 1494.<sup>24</sup> This developed network of canals and rivers meant that, where possible, freight travelled by barge, and cities developed infrastructure to manage the transfer and taxation of goods coming into the city by water. In Bologna, for instance, considerable investment was made in developing the Canale Naviglio, which extended the reach of the waterways closer to the city centre, and in the creation of a new complex called the Porta Dogana (fig. 40).<sup>25</sup> By the mid-sixteenth century, this complex included a tavern, warehouses and offices for the *doganiere* (‘customs

40. Gate and customs house at the Porta Dogana on the Canale Naviglio, Bologna, after an etching by Pio Panfili, 1779, private collection.



official’) and the *catenarolo* (who operated a chain that closed the canal entry to the city); in 1667, a low-relief terracotta sculpture of the Madonna was placed on the customs house façade.<sup>26</sup>

River ports might function in a similar way, but raised the practical problem of how to regulate access to the city from quays that were often in quite central locations. In Rome the ports of Ripetta (in the north, close to piazza del Popolo) and Ripa Grande (to the south, sea-facing, in Trastevere) were regulated by detailed statutes, which gave sweeping powers over all imports to the tax officials operating from the customs house.<sup>27</sup> Although it was well positioned to supply the city, Ripetta backed onto a relatively rough district, and was flanked by the *ortacci* (‘bad-lands’) where the city’s waste was dumped in the river; a site of arrival and transit, the port had a tavern and was frequented by prostitutes.<sup>28</sup> Times of access to and from the ports were set by specific bells, and the customs officials were permitted to carry weapons night and day to enforce their authority.<sup>29</sup> Ripetta was evidently a dangerous part of town: when Juan Borgia, Pope Alexander VI’s son, was murdered in 1497, the boatman who found the body by the port reported that this was a not uncommon sight.<sup>30</sup>

Sites of transit, whether gates or port facilities, were places that attracted violence and disorder, and were increasingly policed and controlled. Gambling, prostitution and petty theft were common in the taverns and hostels that clustered around the edges of the city, and landlords were often required by the city authorities to keep records of visitors, thus providing a rudimentary form of surveillance and policing.<sup>31</sup> Gates, and the walls in which they were set, were intended to provide security for the city, through their defensive military structures and by regulating day-to-day access; they also established set points of entry, from which the city’s arterial system of streets converged on the commercial, political and religious centre. As such, gates also served to structure and regulate movement through the city, setting up the hierarchy within the street network; indeed, their monumental scale and symbolic presence often extended into the urban fabric, as the gates themselves and the streets leading





41. Porta Romana, Siena. Photograph by Paolo Lombardi, late 19th century.

to them might share the same name. A gate facing towards Rome might thus be known as *Porta Romana*, as in Siena (fig. 41), the street leading to it as the *via di Porta Romana*; in Romagna, the historic importance of the exarchate city of Ravenna was acknowledged in the name *Porta Ravegnana* given to gates and streets facing towards it. And so on. These central arteries tended to be the first to be paved; early city statutes from across Italy identify the fact that it was ‘useful and proper and beautiful’ for main streets to be surfaced, maintained and kept clear of projecting temporary structures.<sup>32</sup>

Paving accorded respectability to a street, which would be largely occupied by pedestrians; although elites frequently travelled on horseback, especially when moving outside or between cities, pedestrian traffic was unquestionably prevalent. The city was, therefore, first and foremost experienced on foot, and written accounts are generally informed by this vantage point, though this is rarely acknowledged since it was the norm. As sociologists and urban theorists have observed in relation to the contemporary city, walking in the city determines high levels of engagement by individuals with their surroundings.<sup>33</sup> The sort of encomiastic descriptive accounts of most cities that were common from the fourteenth century onwards were put together by local residents, whose cataloguing and quantification of features and landmarks were conducted through close observation.<sup>34</sup> Dense passages in these accounts mirror the quantity of information to be recorded, such as the great variety of trades that operated around market squares, or the number of revered devotional sites to be visited: they strongly suggest that the texts reflect the experience of moving through such locations. Likewise, foreign travellers, who often noted details, features and customs taken for granted by local residents, predominantly moved around the city on foot; they might do so in the company of a local guide or, by the sixteenth century, perhaps even with a guidebook in hand – another form of text that interpreted the city for visitors.<sup>35</sup>

Marcantonio Sabellico's description of Venice (c.1492) has been shown to be consciously structured to follow a circuitous tour of the city conducted on foot, starting from the western edge, proceeding to the eastern extremities beyond the Arsenal, and moving back to the centre at San Marco, where the account ends.<sup>36</sup> The itinerary effectively evokes the complex street network of the lagoon city, twisting and turning around waterways criss-crossed by bridges. And yet, of course, in Venice, as Marin Sanudo noted in his 1493 account of the city, 'one can go, and does go, in two ways: by foot on land, or by boat.'<sup>37</sup> Canals provided the privileged pathways favoured by elites and merchants, who could afford to move about the city by private boat, and whose residences often had access by water as well as by land – a degree of mobility that conferred prestige.<sup>38</sup> However, water was not a barrier to movement by less affluent citizens, as an efficient network of *traghetti* ('ferries') facilitated crossings of the Grand Canal and other waterways in the city, as well as providing connections with the outlying islands (fig. 42).<sup>39</sup>

As a city built on water, with an intricate canal system, Venice depended on its waterways for the movement of both individuals and goods. Gondolas developed as a specialised local means of transport for elites, and Marin Sanudo drew a parallel between the cost and status of owning one of these boats with those of owning a horse on the mainland.<sup>40</sup> The cost of a gondola varied according to the degree of luxury of its furnishings, as well as the number of oarsmen; competition between owners eventually led to sumptuary laws (1563) that regulated the degree of display permitted.<sup>41</sup> While men, of course, made use of gondolas, particular mention was made by contemporaries of the gondola as a good means of transport for women; it saved their having to walk in the street, and provided a private space that celebrated status while preserving honour.<sup>42</sup> Private water-borne transport facilitated transfers and reduced travelling time; it also restricted social encounters and circumvented the crowds at nodal points in the city, though scenes such as Vittore Carpaccio's *Miracle of the True Cross at the Rialto Bridge* (c.1496) suggest that busy sites provided enjoyable opportunities for sociability.<sup>43</sup>

Travelling by boat provided quite a different view of the urban environment, and throughout Venice there is evidence that, in the context of 'water-based urbanism', architects and patrons alike considered the water front of a building as equal if not superior in importance to the street façade.<sup>44</sup> While the ceremonial splendour of the unified façade of the Grand Canal may have been enjoyed in its entirety only by individuals able to travel along its length in a gondola, the fifteen *traghetti* that criss-crossed this principal waterway afforded multiple opportunities for pedestrians to experience the city from the water.<sup>45</sup> Water traffic was by no means exclusively made up of gondolas and *traghetti*: the city's congested waterways were also used to move the goods that fuelled its flourishing economy. Once unloaded from ships, goods were transported internally on barges, which connected the mainland and docks to the city's local markets and shops, as well as the main commercial centre around Rialto, where only the final stage of the journey would take place on barrows, which were designed to negotiate the city's narrow streets.<sup>46</sup> The ability to disentangle pedestrian from goods traffic was a remarkable feature of the Venetian land–water infrastructure system, and when Leonardo da Vinci proposed an

idealised transport network for Milan in the 1480s, he envisioned an arrangement whereby all freight travelled along the canals, while the raised streets were reserved for people.<sup>47</sup>

Even in centres where there were no waterways to provide alternative means of transport, walking was not the only way in which people moved around cities, although it was without question the most common. Horses and pack animals often appear in paintings of contemporary urban settings. In Ambrogio Lorenzetti's depiction of the city in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, the high status of the couple in the wedding procession on the left side of the scene is denoted by their riding on horseback, while two gentlemen with fashionable hats also ride along a street in the middle ground (see fig. 1). On the right-hand side of the scene three packhorses can be seen entering the city with bales of goods and bundles of wood; another has been relieved of its burden and is heading back out towards the gate, while a customer at a shoe shop holds his unloaded donkey by its bridle. Outside the city gate, the road through the countryside is busy with animals, and again the principal distinction is between those riding on horseback and pack animals transporting goods in and out of the city. Pack animals were evidently crucial for the transportation of goods; by contrast, riding on horseback had a long tradition of association with higher-status individuals, though by the fifteenth century in Italy it was by no means limited to noblemen and knights. The inclusion of iron horse-stays on private and public buildings attests to the practical need to provide a place to tether horses while their owners were engaged in business with shopkeepers whose *botteghe* faced onto the street, or within the offices housed in civic buildings and private palaces.

The risks of urban streets, where pedestrians shared often narrow spaces with horses and their riders, are brought home in a series of images depicting the *Justice of Trajan to a Widow*, a story drawn from the Golden Legend.<sup>48</sup> The story tells of a widow who turned to the emperor Trajan to seek justice for the death of her son, who had been mown down by 'one of Trajan's sons [...] galloping his horse recklessly through the city'; in return for her loss, Trajan gave her his own son, in addition to a considerable reward. In a panel from what is probably a dismembered *cassone* ('marriage chest') painted in Verona in the latter part of the fifteenth century, we see an urban scene in which the woman turns to the emperor, gesturing behind her to the lifeless body of her son, laid out on the street, while, close by, the offending rider and his shocked pages look on (fig. 37). A *cassone* panel by Giovanni di Ser Giovanni (known as 'Lo Scheggia'), depicting the same theme, dwells less on the dead son, and more on the widow's reward: we see her return to her humble home with the emperor's son on her arm, and assorted servants carrying her compensation, including the warhorse and a heavy chest, itself decorated with horses.<sup>49</sup> As a classical story emblematic of civic virtue and magnanimity, the tale circulated in both visual form (including,



42. Vittore Carpaccio, *Hunting on the Lagoon*, c. 1490–95, oil on panel, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

in Brescia, as a print of 1502 by Giovanni Maria da Brescia), and as an example in a number of late-fifteenth-century sermon cycles.<sup>50</sup> More prosaically, the visual representation brings home in a poignant way the real dangers posed by riders, and also underlines the implied immunity of high-ranking citizens when such traffic accidents involved weaker members of society, such as the poor, women and children.

Extending the transport divide still further, coaches were introduced to Italy by the latter part of the fifteenth century. At first used principally by elite women, by the middle of the following century, especially in Rome, they were adopted widely by the highest echelons of ecclesiastical and secular society; by the turn of the sixteenth century, they had become a defining status symbol among the city's elite.<sup>51</sup> Coaches were often luxuriously decorated, and had as many as six horses to draw them; the horses' trappings and the grooms' livery might identify the owner through the use of heraldic colours and symbols.<sup>52</sup> Like gondolas in Venice, carriages provided their occupants with a privileged position – in this case, raised above the street. The passengers in a coach or carriage were at once highly visible, but could also enjoy privacy if they wished; concealed behind doors and curtains, hot-headed violent youths, courtesans and their customers, or scheming ambassadors could move through the city unseen.<sup>53</sup> The growing numbers of such vehicles in Rome resulted in traffic problems, especially around the principal churches and on holidays.<sup>54</sup> Legislation sought to control these issues by establishing rights of way and precedence, determined by the status of the owners of the vehicles, though the criminal archives record numerous instances of brawls and conflicts that arose between rival coachmen and pages.<sup>55</sup>

At the other end of the spectrum of road traffic from elite coaches and carriages, carts used to transport goods were a prominent feature of the street, and were usually drawn by packs of oxen. These slow-moving vehicles could obviously carry considerably more freight than a single beast of burden, and were used for transporting agricultural produce such as grain and hay from the countryside, or building materials such as stone from quarries.<sup>56</sup> Their size and weight posed hazards for pedestrians, and even for riders; incidents involving carts are the subject of many *ex voto* commemorative paintings that record escapes from near-death encounters with these early modern behemoths. One simple image in the Madonna del Monte in Cesena records an accident in which the son of a carter, Bernardino Zavalune, was caught up by the rear wheel of a cart and risked being crushed.<sup>57</sup> A somewhat more exceptional image from the *ex voto* collection of the basilica of St John Lateran in Rome records the dramatic escape of Tommaso Fedro Inghirami, who, as he rode through the Arch of Titus in the Campo Vaccino (the Forum), collided with a cart loaded with sacks of grain and was thrown from his horse.<sup>58</sup> The remarkable image shows the drama unfold (fig. 43). In the background, through the arch, the portly humanist prelate can be seen riding away from his *vigna* ('suburban garden') in the company of two friends; the foreground is filled by the scene of the accident, while above (top right) Christ and Sts Peter and Paul are depicted, by whose miraculous intervention Inghirami is preserved from danger (*pericolo*), as the inscription underlines. The picture is filled with the large cart and its team of wild-eyed oxen, which the two drivers are violently trying to control,



while Inghirami's horse or mule stands riderless by the arch. The huge wheels of the cart roll over the Inghirami's black vestments, but having fallen between them he is miraculously unharmed as the cart trundles over his prone body, and his two friends bend down to help him up. Examples such as these give a glimpse of the nature of traffic that occupied the often narrow streets of the pre-modern city. We may note in passing that the use of simple stone quoining on the corners of buildings suggests the need to protect the structures from carts and other unwieldy vehicles, which left their mark on the physical fabric just as they posed a risk to pedestrians.

### *Way-finding: Locations and directions*

Whether people moved on foot or horseback, in a carriage or a gondola, it is worth considering how movement within the city operated at a practical level. Today we are used to finding an address using maps, street names and house numbers; postcodes and digital mapping technology help to bring us right to the doorstep of even the most obscure shops and private homes. But house numbers, and even street names in their regularised modern form, were unknown in early modern cities. So how did people move around cities in the past? How did they find their way or get instructions – all the more so if they were unfamiliar visitors from a different place? One obvious answer lies in the privileged pathways that were set out by the arterial routes from the

43. Unknown artist, *Ex voto of Tommaso Inghirami, Fallen under an Ox-Cart in Rome*, oil on panel, c. 1508, basilica of St John Lateran, Rome.

city gates, which channelled movement through the city. A tale from Franco Sacchetti's fourteenth-century *Trecentonovelle* describes a headstrong horse (*ronzino*) from Siena, whose owner lent him to one Alberto; reluctant to leave the city, the horse refused to step beyond the city gate, so the rider had to turn round, whereupon the horse trotted merrily back to the piazza del Campo.<sup>59</sup> St Bernardino of Siena made a similar point in one of his famous Lenten sermons, delivered on the Campo in 1427, commenting that 'he who should want to come to the Campo from outside the city of Siena, may enter from the gate of Camollia or from the Nuova [Romana] or Fontebranda gates: there are many ways in, but all arrive at the same destination.'<sup>60</sup> The horse without a rider, like the traveller, pilgrim, merchant or honoured visitor, followed a natural pathway that was carved through the dense fabric of the city.<sup>61</sup>

Much the same can be said for the privileged routes that emerged in other cities. In Rome, a limited set of arterial thoroughfares facilitated the movement of visitors to the city from the northern gate of Porta del Popolo towards the centre, while the east–west connections between the Vatican, Capitoline and St John Lateran, were along the main streets of the via Papalis and via Peregrinorum (see Chapter 1). In Venice, while the Grand Canal and Bacino di San Marco formed the principal ceremonial route through the city, pedestrian connections between the commercial district of Rialto and the administrative centre at San Marco formed the Merceria artery, densely packed with shops. Even in centres whose morphologies were shaped by grid layouts inherited from antiquity – such as Florence or Bologna – the city's main gates aligned to streets that tended towards the central squares. Often, indeed, the gates' names or the streets leading to them echoed the ultimate destination that travellers leaving or arriving might encounter; Porta Romana and via Bolognese in Florence, or Porta Ravegnana (for Ravenna) in Bologna.

And yet, of course, movement and way-finding in the city, for locals and foreigners alike, was not confined to these main arterial routes. As we have seen, the story of Manetto, the fat woodcarver, is based on the premise that city residents were most at home in their local neighbourhoods, whose topography they intimately knew.<sup>62</sup> The tightest social relationships operated in quite closely circumscribed neighbourhoods, and tended to endure over generations, as families of all social ranks frequently had long-term attachments with specific areas.<sup>63</sup> Orientation for local residents was simple enough, but what is perhaps less evident is the degree to which the relative stability of residence patterns and clustering of trades itself became a key factor in the spatial definition of the city. Family names, the names of particular trades, as well as the names of principal religious institutions and local parish churches were commonly associated with streets or districts in the city. Way-finding was bound up with neighbourhood knowledge and landmarks; churches, prominent family palaces with their coats of arms, illustrated shop signs, street-corner shrines or benches where men gossiped all contributed to the spatial practices of movement and navigation.<sup>64</sup>

The tale of the fat woodcarver plays on an exaggerated version of the hyperlocal networks in the life of an urban artisan in the fifteenth century, and there is plenty of evidence from many cities that reveals the degree of mobility required of workers and artisans, who might commute considerable distances from their homes to their workplaces on a daily basis.<sup>65</sup> While, in Venice, most

manufacturing industries were on the city's edges, in a city like Florence there remained a concentration in the centre, while industries such as tanning and dyeing gathered together beside the Arno because they required large quantities of water.<sup>66</sup> Trade tended to be focused around central market areas in most cities, where permanent shops, temporary stalls and street vendors vied for custom.<sup>67</sup> The degree of spatial specialisation and clustering of commercial and industrial activity did not necessarily align with the domestic arrangements of workers, the majority of whom lived in peripheral areas of the city where rents were lower.<sup>68</sup>

It is difficult to reassemble the daily journeys of workers from home to workplace. The absence of visual or written records documenting the daily itineraries of city residents as they went about their business can in part be made good from the written records of bureaucrats and officials, whose work was conducted from house to house along the streets of the city. Tax records – such as the *catasto* or *decima* in Florence, and the *lira* in Siena – were regularly compiled and reviewed throughout the fifteenth century, as all householders submitted a declaration describing the composition of their household, their property and their wealth.<sup>69</sup> These formulaic accounts locate each property with reference to administrative boundaries of districts or parishes, then quite carefully by listing the immediately adjacent neighbours, and they usually also name the *pubblica via* ('public street') onto which the property faced. Scholarly interest has tended to focus on the demographic and financial data, though more recently attention has turned to revealing the underlying social practices of the bureaucracies that created these documents.<sup>70</sup> Tax records and census practices can be understood as kinetic, experiential exercises in street-walking, through which we can capture a glimpse of the ways in which people navigated space and described proximity. In this regard, Nicholas Eckstein has coined the evocative term the 'prepositional city' to characterise the topographies of proximity expressed in tax documents that describe the neighbourhoods of fifteenth-century Florence: houses or shops were identified as being 'next to,' 'in front of,' or bounded on one side by the *pubblica via*.<sup>71</sup> The language adopted by individuals to describe the locations of their homes employed everyday vocabulary and usage to identify spatial coordinates defined by family, parish and neighbourhood.

Writing his account of Milan in 1288, Bonvesin della Riva reported 'the houses with doorways onto public streets have been found to number about 12,500, in very many of which several families cohabit', suggesting that census gathering corroborated these numbers, and that practices comparable with those documented more extensively from the fifteenth century were already in use.<sup>72</sup> The tax declarations that make up the Sienese *lira* series are, like the Florentine *catasto*, made up of declarations (*portate*) that adhere to a common formula: residents declare where they live, whether as owner or tenant, in which part of the city (Siena was divided into thirds not quarters), and which district, and then on which street. So, for example, in 1481 the grocer Antonio di Agostino di Domenico, a resident of the Casato di Sotto district close to piazza del Campo, declared that his house 'neighbours on one side with the property of Andrea d'Antonio the shoemaker and the convent of the friars of Sant'Agostino on the other, and on the other side the public street'.<sup>73</sup> Just as in Florence, individuals defined location by naming *confini* ('neighbouring

properties'), setting their homes in relation to the immediate environment they inhabited. However, since not all individuals used the same language and points of reference, it is very difficult to assemble these subjectively expressed place coordinates to create any objective map of the city from the written records.<sup>74</sup>

As the bureaucracies that assembled census and other data became more tightly controlled, so it becomes increasingly possible to reconstruct these subjective geographies into a spatial model of the city. For instance, the Decima Granducale census of Florence in 1561–2 was systematically compiled by a team of officials who moved from house to house, recording details of each household, down one side of a street, and back up the other.<sup>75</sup> As with the 1427 *catasto*, they described properties in terms of the proximity of one to another – as being ‘next to’, ‘above’, ‘facing’, and so on – but the volumes the officials compiled list properties sequentially, according to the itinerary they followed, and with occasional references to local landmarks like parish churches or street corners, so that it is possible to follow their routes quite accurately on a map. Similarly, as part of the public-health response to the plague that struck Florence from 1630, the confraternity of San Michele Arcangelo conducted a house-by-house survey (*visita*) of the working-class districts, where poor sanitation exacerbated the effects of the contagion.<sup>76</sup> Again, they used terminology of proximity to describe the streets and neighbourhoods that they surveyed, creating an eye-level walking map, as Eckstein has described it, of the most deprived section of Florentine society.<sup>77</sup>

Such walking-based, micro-spatial surveying practices were not, of course, limited to Florence.<sup>78</sup> Numerous types of archival document record the application of spatial descriptions to locations in a more piecemeal or geographically circumscribed way; for instance, notarised contracts for property transactions use text to map the boundaries of properties, listing neighbours as well as the street.<sup>79</sup> Likewise, documentation recording the activities of city officials who oversaw urban maintenance and improvement used a comparable system and vocabulary to pinpoint accurately the properties that were singled out for works.<sup>80</sup> In Rome, rent books were compiled by confraternities that managed large portfolios of domestic and commercial property from at least the fifteenth century, and in an increasingly systematic way from the late sixteenth century.<sup>81</sup> An early example of the written records of the hospital of San Salvatore lists all its properties in 1420; the records focus on the legal instruments by means of which the properties had passed to the confraternity, give the locations, briefly identified by district, and define their boundaries, listing the names of the owners of adjacent properties, as in the Florentine examples discussed above.<sup>82</sup> Interestingly, these textual accounts gave way in the sixteenth century to graphic surveys, richly annotated with additional information, which included details about neighbouring properties and whether they faced onto a street. More dynamic mapping practices indicated directionality in naming streets: in such cases, the survey plans were marked with labels that did not simply refer in general terms to the *pubblica strada*, but showed where the street led. Thus, a building might be listed as being on the ‘street that comes from the Collegio Romano and goes to the Piazza della Minerva’, a wording that captures the movement of the surveyor compiling the records *in situ*, while also indicating that the streets were acquiring names of their own.<sup>83</sup>



In spite of the growing hold of bureaucracies on the management of urban space, the processes and language used to describe location from the fifteenth on into the seventeenth century relied on a common vocabulary of proximity. This is not especially surprising, as a key finding of the twentieth-century urban theorist Kevin Lynch was that people navigate urban space through personal experience, which they describe with reference to perceived elements (on a larger scale, such as districts and edges) and visual elements (of a more localised kind, such as landmarks and nodes).<sup>84</sup> The ‘prepositional’ approach provides a point of entry to way-finding in the pre-modern city, where locals and foreigners alike moved through the space and described that movement with reference to a sliding and increasingly local set of coordinates. By contrast, the growing systematisation of census and surveying techniques through the latter half of the sixteenth century also coincided, of course, with technical developments that resulted in accurate city maps.<sup>85</sup> Eye-level, text-based mapping by individual citizens came to be replaced by centralised practices, and with these the street became another site for the centralised ordering of space and the exercise of government authority and control. It might therefore be suggested that practical instances of a changing optic from the street-level survey to the ‘celestial eye’ of the map align closely with the socio-political reading of urban space offered by Henri Lefebvre, as heterogeneous ‘representational spaces’ came to be replaced by normative ‘representations of space’.<sup>86</sup>

### *Sensing the city: Meaning and experience*

The street was the arena within which everyday urban experience unfolded through a variety of sensory encounters. It is possible to recover some of this evanescent experience of city life – what it was like to move around streets, to hear the sounds of bells and town criers, to absorb the complex social meanings associated with particular locations, and to feel the surprise that ephemeral changes to these could elicit from local residents and visitors alike. The urban sensorium can in part be recovered by adapting the subtle and nuanced methodological approach developed nearly fifty years ago by Michael Baxandall for the contextualised viewing of Renaissance Italian paintings – a method succinctly summarised in the concept of ‘period eyes.’<sup>87</sup> Contextualising objects by means of their careful analysis in relation to contemporary written sources, and decompressing the shorthand implicit in the forms and actions represented in the art of past periods, Baxandall sought to bridge the interpretative divide between past and present, and trained a generation of scholars to view art in a new way.<sup>88</sup> His approach to paintings focused on the subjectivity embedded in each authorial act, and offers an approach that transfers well to the interpretation of experience of other media, including that of the city as a whole.<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, the analysis of the ‘meaning and experience’ of urban space has an established place in contemporary urban-design practice: more than half a century ago, in the ground-breaking *Image of the City*, the town planner Kevin Lynch used interview-based analysis of contemporary cities to understand people’s experiences of the urban and their reception of city form.<sup>90</sup> More recently, various studies have explored the potential of phenomenological approaches to

urban space and the senses.<sup>91</sup> These studies usefully combine with the highly influential work that Henri Lefebvre and others developed around the concept of urban space and how it is socially constructed with particular meanings, collectively defined or hegemonically imposed.<sup>92</sup>

Historians are increasingly interested in looking at the experience of urban contexts in the past, and a large body of subjective evidence can be used to create an 'experiential' sense of the city and of urban space.<sup>93</sup> Lefebvre's view that space is produced by the interaction of people and place assigns a more than passive force to place, such that significant sites in cities can be claimed to have a kind of agency that enhances actions played out in them.<sup>94</sup> However, the focus of the 'spatial turn', has tended to be more on the actors and deeds played out in social space, than on the physical context that provides the 'stage' for such actions.<sup>95</sup> Similarly, while Richard Trexler stated that 'social spaces are central to the formation, expression and modification of individual and group identities', historians have focused more on the people (individuals and groups) and much less on the spaces themselves.<sup>96</sup> In fact, an engagement with the tangible, physical aspects of urban space and the social actors that perform in it reveals the street to be a public arena of performance, where the 'social construction' of space operates: here, streets emerge as physical places that enable, and indeed enhance, myriad everyday performances of identity formation.<sup>97</sup> Streets, in such a view, are more than 'things': they are carefully fashioned spaces that result from the negotiated relations between public and private ownership and the everyday and exceptional events that take place in them. Streets are also repositories of collective memories and rituals, and as such become imprinted with meanings that outlast the lives of individual actors on the urban stage.<sup>98</sup>

We turn now, therefore, to a view of the street as a collective expression of life in the city. As has been noted above, the *pubblica via* was a constant point of reference in archival descriptions of property, which indicated quite simply that a building faced the street on one or more of its boundaries. In this legal or bureaucratic context, the term *pubblica* indicates a binary distinction between public and private property; the street was a public space, and, as such, one that government institutions sought to protect, define and, where appropriate, improve.<sup>99</sup> However, this polarised opposition between public and private is one that is called into question by research showing far more fluid arrangements between the space of the street and the built spaces that connect to it, especially in relation to day-to-day patterns of use.<sup>100</sup>

Such ambiguities of use abound. Perhaps most obviously, buildings with public functions provided permeable boundaries between interior and exterior space. Thus, for instance, churches were open to the street for extended periods of the day, allowing such a degree of free movement that city statues and legal measures often extended to their interiors, legislating against such practices as carrying weapons, gambling, soliciting for sex and urinating.<sup>101</sup> Conversely, many churches actively addressed the street or piazza onto which they faced, appropriating those spaces for such occasions as the delivery of sermon cycles, the celebration of religious services on major feast days and the performance of other ritual events when the interior space of the church was insufficient to accommodate crowds of participants.<sup>102</sup> Outdoor pulpits and altars, such as Donatello and Michelozzo's pulpit on the cathedral at Prato (fig. 44), are



44. Michelozzo and Donatello, outdoor pulpit, 1433–8, on the south-west corner of the cathedral of Santo Stefano, Prato. From this vantage point the preacher could address crowds gathered in the piazza del Duomo.

physical markers of what were certainly widespread practices that blurred the boundaries between the church interior and urban public space. As has been frequently noted, such practices (more even than the physical marks that document them) had the effect of sacralising areas of the city, extending the reach of a church or monastery to a loosely defined catchment area around it. Small piazzas, a widening in the street, or the location of a church at an intersection are all ways that urban form shows an accommodation between built structures and the spatial practices inscribed on them. On occasion, these practices led to untraditional solutions, as at San Domenico Maggiore in Naples, where the main piazza is behind the church's apse, and the pulpit is raised up on a site that evidently afforded greater visibility and access than was possible on the front of the church.<sup>103</sup>

Sacred space was by no means confined within the walls of churches; a lasting trace of the informal and pervasive network of early modern devotion can be seen in countless street shrines, many of which still survive in cities throughout the peninsula (see Chapter 5). Furthermore, just as legislation was passed to control inappropriate behaviour within the sacred precincts of churches, quite complex legislative measures sought to delimit 'safe zones' around the sites of religious houses, especially nunneries, to protect conventual communities from 'contamination' by the deviant and immoral behaviour of prostitutes and their clients.<sup>104</sup> That religion and the sacred extended well beyond the walls of local

45. The *ringhiera* (raised dais) on the façade of the Palazzo della Signoria, piazza della Signoria, Florence, detail from Domenico Ghirlandaio, *Confirmation of the Rule*, 1483–5, fresco, Sassetti chapel, Santa Trinità, Florence.



parish churches and the monumental façades of cathedrals and mendicant churches is not at all surprising, and is repeatedly reaffirmed in textual and visual sources that document the widely distributed nature of the city's devotional life. The contemporary urban settings of so many religious images from the fifteenth and sixteenth century attest to the sacralisation of public space, as artists and their patrons envisioned Old and New Testament narratives, as well as stories from the lives of saints, taking place in the familiar environments of their own cities.<sup>105</sup> While, on the one hand, these images appear consciously to appropriate religious narratives in order to make them more present to contemporary viewers, on the other they also worked to reinforce the sacred as a seamless extension of the everyday life of the city. In so doing, images of this sort offer a pictorial gloss on the rituals that were repeatedly enacted in urban spaces, in accordance with the annual cycle of the Christian liturgical calendar.<sup>106</sup>

Just as the sacred percolated out of religious buildings to spread through much of the urban environment, so too, in a similar way, parts of the city were invested with the meanings associated with its principal secular institutions. Political meaning invariably permeated central squares, communicated visually through the monumental architecture of city halls and the civic iconography of heraldic emblems and sculptures. In Florence this manifestation took shape on the piazza della Signoria, where a designated raised dais (*ringhiera*) runs along the main façade of the city hall, the Palazzo delle Signoria, from where numerous aspects of the city's political life were performed in public for citizens to



see, hear and witness (fig. 45).<sup>107</sup> In the absence of government officials at the *ringhiera*, this quasi-stage was embellished with sculptures of the city's civic symbols, including the Marzocco (a lion holding a shield emblazoned with a lily) and, by 1504, Michelangelo's marble sculpture of David.<sup>108</sup> A similar model was exported to the city's subject towns, where central urban space, monumental architecture and public sculpture served to articulate Florentine dominion – as, for instance, in the central square of the Florentine new town of San Giovanni Valdarno (fig. 46).<sup>109</sup>

Comparable arrangements were adopted in cities throughout Italy. In Siena, the central piazza del Campo – which also doubled as the main market square – was dominated by the city hall (Palazzo Pubblico) and decorated with civic symbols, including the *balzana* (a black-and-white shield) and the she-wolf, which recalled the city's foundation legend linked to that of Rome; it was also the site of a chapel dedicated to Siena's principal patron, the Virgin Mary.<sup>110</sup> These symbols were exported to its dominions: for instance, in the small south Tuscan town of Montepescali, in 1468, the artist Francesco Alfei painted 'a lion [symbol of the popular government] and the *balzana* above the city gates' and 'a beautiful and dignified she-wolf between these two symbols and another above the entrance to the city hall'.<sup>111</sup> Throughout the Venetian state, the paired column arrangement adopted for the *piazzetta* that runs along the façade of the ducal palace, between the lagoon and San Marco, was replicated, with versions that retained the pre-eminent Venetian symbol of the winged lion of St Mark,

46. Palazzo Pretorio  
(now Palazzo d'Arnolfo)  
on the central piazza  
(now piazza Cavour),  
San Giovanni Valdarno,  
near Florence.



but replaced the early patron St Theodore with locally appropriate patron saints.<sup>112</sup> So, for instance, on the main piazza at Vicenza, St Mark is paired with Christ the Redeemer (fig. 47), while at Bassano he appears with St Bassianus and in Ravenna with St Apollinaris (fig. 48).

These carefully planned articulations of civic power projected politics onto the space of the piazza, where the repeated action of government left a permanent deposit or trace on the built urban fabric. On occasion, the centralised spatial practices that shaped these monumental spaces might be overturned, as the wider citizen community assumed an active role in the dialogue of government. Thus, for instance, in Florence at public meetings (*parlamenti*), when important decisions for the polity were taken, the entire citizen electorate was invited to the piazza to cast a yes/no vote.<sup>113</sup> As various contemporary commentators noted, allowing the public voice to be freely heard on the piazza was understood as a populist move that could quite easily be orchestrated to destabilise the status quo.<sup>114</sup> A comparable dynamic was at play on other occasions, such as the famous Ciompi revolt of 1378, or the bread riots of 1497, when the cries for bread ('Pane! Pane!') turned into cries for a return of the Medici to power ('Palle! Palle!'), so that the piazza became the pre-eminent stage for popular protest.<sup>115</sup>

In fact, the public spaces of the streets, and especially central squares, were a primary destination for rioting groups, for whom occupying the piazza was a means of contesting government authority. Numerous cases of workers' and peasants' riots documented throughout the latter half of the fourteenth century targeted the central squares of cities across Italy.<sup>116</sup> When the wool workers rioted in Perugia in 1371, the unrest 'began in the [main] square', while during a peasant revolt in Parma in 1385 'the armed crowd invaded the city and went to the town square searching to kill the tax collectors.'<sup>117</sup>



Such a pattern continued into subsequent centuries. In Bologna in 1513, after the death of Pope Julius II, a crowd of citizens attacked the bronze statue that he had had erected on the city's central piazza, dismembered it and gave it a ritual beating as they paraded it through the streets; in this case, a powerful symbol of papal authority became the eloquent vehicle for expressing popular unrest and relief that his pontificate was at an end.<sup>118</sup> In fact, Bologna provides a rich body of examples of the active use of the city's principal public spaces – in themselves, expressions of the changing regimes that controlled the city – as sites of resistance and contention. Put to these uses, the public spaces of the street, and especially the city's principal piazza, were invested with political meaning that was widely understood, and the acts of contestation or revolt committed in such locations took on a symbolic value as a challenge to the established order.<sup>119</sup>

In no way exhaustive, these examples drawn from the political and religious life of cities show that the boundaries between public and private space were porous. Religious ceremonies, as also government decision-making and civic pageants, regularly took place outside the buildings that were designed for them, and numerous architectural features are a testament to this. A similar case can be made concerning commercial and industrial zones within cities, and, indeed, local residential enclaves.<sup>120</sup> Throughout the city, as is widely documented, ritual actions performed in the streets regularly served to give a visual presence to individuals and groups on the 'stage' of public space, as government officials and church hierarchies, but also guilds, confraternities, local parish groups, family clans and powerful individuals vied for visibility. Parts of the city were invested with stronger associations as sites of local devotion, political arenas, zones of trade, or residential districts, though these often overlapped; architecture and, to an extent, urban design provide the visible traces of these associations, which were lived out on a daily basis in the spatial practices of movement through the complex and overlapping meanings of the urban environment. Moreover, all the bodily senses were implicated in the complex semiotics of the public realm. The foregoing discussion has sought to draw

47. Piazza dei Signori, Vicenza, with statues of the lion of St Mark and Christ the Redeemer set on columns.

48. Piazza del Popolo, Ravenna, with statues of St Apollinaris (left) and St Vitalis (right), which replaced an original statue of the lion of St Mark in front of the Palazzo Comunale.

out the relationship between built spaces and the associations they had with a variety of socio-cultural encounters, suggesting that to walk through a city was to traverse an environment that gave visual definition to the domains of work, trade, prayer, politics, sociability and the domestic.

This layered urban experience might primarily be navigated by sight, but was of course also affected by the other senses, including sound and smell. It is impossible to escape the conclusion that the early modern city was redolent with strong odours, by-products of various industries but first and foremost caused by human and animal excrement.<sup>121</sup> Smell, like sound, could overcome hard physical architectural boundaries, inevitably crossing the porous edges between public space and the interior of buildings.<sup>122</sup> Contemporary understanding of disease associated poor air quality with ill health, thus making bad smell into an important environmental factor in the design of cities.<sup>123</sup> Writing about Siena in his treatise on architecture, Leon Battista Alberti reported that:

the sanitation of Siena in Tuscany is poor, because there are no drains. As a result, not only does the whole town stink at the beginning and end of the night watch, when the refuse receptacles are emptied out of the windows, but during the day as well, it is filthy and offensively vaporous.<sup>124</sup>

The account appears in a discussion of drains, in which Alberti described ancient Roman drains as the ‘most astonishing’ of the city’s public works, but offered no modern parallels.<sup>125</sup> Instead he described the widespread modern use of ‘subsidence drains’ (cesspits). The fact that he pinpointed Siena in his comments about waste management by night soil – the practice of emptying waste onto the street at night – may well in part have been motivated by his adherence to traditional Florentine antagonism: the practice was by no means restricted to Siena but was widespread throughout Italy.<sup>126</sup> He may also have been echoing the overblown claims of Leonardo Bruni in his *Laudatio Florentinae urbis* (‘Panegyric of the city of Florence’; c.1403–4), who maintained that the city’s streets were both clean and dry:

what is more marvellous in a populous city than never to have to worry about filth in the streets? Moreover, however big a rainstorm, it cannot prevent you walking through the city with dry feet, since almost before it falls, the water is taken away by appropriately placed gutters.<sup>127</sup>

Sanitation was a vexed problem in most urban centres during the pre-modern period, and while legislative measures attempted to limit the insanitary disposal of waste to the night-time, the crude humour of novella literature from Boccaccio onwards underlines the inadequacy of legislation in this regard.<sup>128</sup> For instance, in a story from the *Decameron*, Andreuccio of Perugia visited Naples to purchase horses, and was lured into a trap by a cunning prostitute by the name of Fiordaliso, who took him home with her to steal his money. During the night, in the intimacy of the bedroom, Andreuccio stepped out of the room to relieve himself. As Boccaccio explains, the privy ‘was above a narrow back-alley, as is often found between two houses, bridged by two planks with a seat on top’, so that waste accumulated below. A loose plank saw Andreuccio fall into the



open-air sewer, while Fiordaliso helped herself to his money.<sup>129</sup> The fact that the story of Andreuccio takes these rudimentary domestic sanitary arrangements for granted suggests that they were common, which seems to be corroborated by statute provisions regarding waste removal, as well as architects' proposals for better infrastructure well into the sixteenth century. In Venice, for example, in spite of laws and officials to police them, excrement (*scoaze*) was regularly thrown out into the streets and canals, causing great inconvenience; one late sixteenth-century account suggested that only a third of the city's streets were passable, and that pedestrians had to hitch up their clothes to avoid them dragging in effluent.<sup>130</sup>

Francesco di Giorgio Martini's treatise on architecture offers the longest and perhaps the only extensive treatment of latrines in the fifteenth-century treatise literature, providing what amounts to a subsection of a chapter on their placement, orientation and design. Although quite extensive, his comments are somewhat circumspect and suggest a degree of embarrassment in dealing with the subject – indeed, he notes that 'it is dishonourable to discuss these matters'.<sup>131</sup> It is also curious that he does not engage with the wider implications of plumbing for such facilities. Instead, what he describes is a self-contained system, with a latrine linked by a pipe to what is almost certainly a private underground cesspit, the so-called *pozzo nero* ('black well'). Francesco describes an ideal pyramidal form for such waste pits, suggesting they should preferably be lined with a sand bed, 'as a result of which the urine, a powerful cause of putrefaction, will be drawn in, and the solid matter will remain without liquid and be less corrupted'.<sup>132</sup>

These comments suggest some of the reasons why organic waste was perceived as a problem – namely, that 'vapours' exhaled by domestic waste were injurious to health on a wider scale. As has been noted by most scholars of hygiene and health in the public realm for this period, there was a widespread association of bad smells with contagion and illness, which was supported by the Hippocratic texts.<sup>133</sup> Francesco's remarks appear to corroborate the practice, which had become widespread by the sixteenth century, of storing excrement in cesspits created in the yards or gardens behind houses, rather than disposing of it directly onto the street. In Florence, for instance, the chronic overfilling of these pits, which were rarely emptied on account of the cost involved, became the subject of public-health enquiries by the *provveditori alla sanità* in 1622 and again in 1630, when there were major outbreaks of plague.<sup>134</sup> Francesco di Giorgio's treatise seems, then, to document a widespread practice by which domestic latrines were connected to isolated cisterns or cesspits, though he proposed various possible design features intended to limit or diffuse the stench that they produced – for example, by connecting them to exhalation pipes sited on rooftops.

Stench was evidently a widespread issue in the early modern city, and besides the management of human waste there were attempts from at least the fourteenth century to banish industries that produced bad odours from the central city streets.<sup>135</sup> Butchers, tanners and fullers, among others, were repeatedly targeted by regulations intended to control the spread of disease; the imposition of zoning requirements sought to remove such unhealthy trades from city centres, but were also seemingly motivated by aesthetic considerations aimed at improving urban decorum.<sup>136</sup> Such measures literally pushed

49. Purpose-built premises for the butchers of Siena, in the Fontebranda area, away from the city centre.



undesirable professions to the city's edges, while at the same time encouraging the clustering of luxury retailers along the city's main arteries.<sup>137</sup> In Siena, a long campaign was mounted by government officials against butchers operating along the city's central streets; a series of government decisions from the late 1450s document the bid to ban them from central locations, which eventually led to their removal to purpose-built premises in the valley of Fontebranda (fig. 49).<sup>138</sup> Adverse comments by visitors to the city seem to have acted as a spur to government policies, as the butchers were required to move specifically because 'our city is much criticised by courtiers and other foreigners who are in the city [...] because they [the butchers] are in the main streets.'<sup>139</sup> The commune was concerned that Siena was being compared unfavourably with other 'well-governed cities', such as Mantua, so in 1460 a general ban was issued on butchers exercising their trade on the main streets.<sup>140</sup>

Likewise, in Venice repeated efforts were made to clean up the *piazzetta* and piazza San Marco, by clearing away butchers, cheese sellers and hostleries as part of Jacopo Sansovino's large-scale renovations that made way for the city mint (the *Zecca*) and the library (1536–7); the project also included the removal of latrines from the base of the columns on the piazza, which Giorgio Vasari remarked were 'something foul and shameful for the dignity of the palace and the public square, as well as for foreigners who coming to Venice by way of San Giorgio saw all that filthiness first'.<sup>141</sup> Later improvements sought to remove the meat market and *beccheria* ('slaughterhouse') to the far western end of the piazza, near Santa Maria del Broglio.<sup>142</sup> A mid-sixteenth century view of the area by Jost Amman (fig. 50) provides an animated view of the partially improved area, still dominated, however, by traders (butchers and sausage sellers on the left), while a hostelry fills the corner between the *Zecca* and the incomplete Marciana Library.

Human and animal waste, as well as the noxious by-products of industrial processes, contaminated the air of early modern cities, and appear to have formed a pervasive layer of substrate on the streets.<sup>143</sup> Unpleasant odours must have permeated the walls of churches, offices and homes, especially considering



that cesspits stored effluents practically within the close confines of the house. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, various strategies were developed to combat these smells and insanitary foul vapours, by overpowering them with more pleasant odours. Incense and other perfumed products were widely used in religious ceremonies, and in Florence and Venice there is extensive evidence of house fumigation using pungent perfumed products such as pitch, turpentine, storax or myrrh to counteract stench (as regulated and enforced in Venice in 1576), while cheaper solutions involved dousing walls with vinegar.<sup>144</sup> There is also considerable material evidence – particularly among the elites – of personal perfumes worn about the body in increasingly elaborate purpose-made jewellery and accessories.<sup>145</sup> Whether through the sensory and olfactory reappropriation of the building's interior, or the creation of personal, portable perfumed micro-environments, these measures sought to reaffirm the hard edges of built architecture that separated the outdoor public realm of the street from the interior spaces of buildings.

Smell is only one of several sensory factors that blur the boundaries between indoor and outdoor spaces, but it provides a helpful measure of the porosity that belies solid architectural edges. Sound, of course, is another of the senses that can overcome the boundaries of walls, doors and windows, and the noise of the street also penetrated into buildings (as is explored further in Part II). Whether the institutional marking of time by the complex chiming of bells that rang out over the city, or the trumpets and announcements of town criers, or the informal sonic networks created around street corners and market stalls where gossip flourished, or indeed the subversive cries of protest and uprisings, sounds made outside in the street filtered into homes and churches.<sup>146</sup>

50. Traders' stalls in the centre of Venice, detail from Jost Amman, *Procession of the Doge to the Bucintoro on Ascension Day, with a View of Venice, ca.1565, 1697*, woodcut, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

## *Everyday rituals and public space*

It is difficult to reassemble the sensory environment of the pre-modern city, the sounds and smells, as well as the day-to-day interactions that animated movement in and around public spaces. As we saw in Chapter 1, early modern public spaces can be understood as ceremonial sites, as theatres of civic and religious rituals, or as locations controlled and regulated by the authorities. Those same public spaces were also an arena for the expression of everyday interactions, not all of them structured by centralising authorities. A host of everyday rituals animated the streets and piazzas, from the quotidian movements around market areas to the devotional activities of confraternal groups that marked localised sacred networks on the urban fabric, or indeed the itineraries of workers between their homes and their places of work. Citizens appropriated spaces and public rituals, and re-elaborated them in autonomous and unforeseen ways to create ‘practiced spaces’ (de Certeau), defined by the everyday social activities associated with gender, work, family and religion enacted by individuals and groups, and to make the public spaces of early modernity ‘spaces in motion’.<sup>147</sup>

At the other end of the spectrum from commonplace actions and interactions, structured by the built environment, the streets were the site of rituals and performances, both religious and civic. A quite remarkable type of ritual event was a kind of spontaneous demonstration that took place around the time of earthquakes, which deployed the city’s public spaces as the natural setting for mass gatherings. In contrast to the tightly regulated ceremonial rituals that shaped such events as triumphal entries or papal processions, the collective reaction to these sudden destructive events showcases the appropriation of public spaces by the community for its own purposes.

On 4 December 1456, a cold, wet winter night, disaster struck in Naples, as a devastating earthquake – possibly the strongest earthquake of the second millennium in the Mediterranean area – hit the city and most of the towns and villages of the Regno (the Aragonese Kingdom of Naples), razing to the ground hundreds of churches and houses and killing at least 12,000 people.<sup>148</sup> The first shock lasted about two minutes, and was followed by aftershocks in the following days, one of them, on 30 December, especially significant. As a major political centre, the capital of the Regno was home to numerous merchants and ambassadors, whose correspondence provides a major source documenting the events.<sup>149</sup>

Among these, the most detailed account is that of Doctor Bindo de Bindis, the Sienese ambassador to the King of Naples, who wrote a long report of the earthquake in a letter of 7 December to the Sienese Signoria.<sup>150</sup> His letter begins:

My Lords, on the 4th of this month [December], after the XI hour had rung out, an earthquake came, which lasted for the space of a tenth of an hour, or perhaps more; and it was so great that all this land is ruined, starting from the temples of God [...]

and ends:

It seems here that at night and during the day you hear nothing but the noise of people shouting: 'misericordia'. Considering how many bells there are in this city, there are only seven that can still ring. From Naples, on the 7th day of December 1456.

It is notable that bells, their sound and the marking of time, play a significant part in Bindo's account, signalling the hour after which the earthquake took place, and suggesting a measure for the length of the quake, while the silencing of the city's bells is the last point he makes before signing off. The regular ringing of bells formed part of the complex soundscape of the pre-modern urban environment, as bells rang out at distinct hours from specific sites across the city; the breaking of this stable and regular pattern of soundmarks was shocking, remarkable and worthy of note.<sup>151</sup> So too was the fact that in a city of countless churches only seven functioning bells remained when the disaster was over. The regular cadence of bells, marking the rhythm of the day, and the secular and religious activities that they signalled gave way to the constant noise of the anguished cries of the population, begging for divine forgiveness. These crowds of desperate people are the subject of another passage in Bindo's account:

Truly it seemed that the sky had opened up to hear the bitter, harsh and tearful cries, at which point they all commended themselves to God, believing they were about to die; it was cause for sincere sympathy to see friars, priests, women, girls and boys of all ages, throughout the day going about the city crying in a disorderly line, just like little sheep without a shepherd harried by wolves: 'Misericordia, misericordia'; and the noise was so great that it seemed the stones were crying.

Bindo provides a vivid and harrowing description of a frightened and forlorn population walking through the city in an impromptu, ragged procession; their wailing cries, echoing through the mangled ruins of buildings, help to explain the unusual simile of the stones themselves crying out.

Much of the rest of Bindo's letter dwells on the material damage to the city's buildings, though he makes a brief reference to news coming in from the rest of the Regno of the death and destruction that had struck a huge geographical area. He starts by describing the damage wreaked on the city's many churches, beginning with 'Sant'Agostino, a noble church, larger than ours [in Siena]', remarking that it has been damaged so extensively that 'no one dared go inside, nor the friars to celebrate [the liturgy]'. He then goes on to list the city's main churches – San Giovanni Maggiore, San Lorenzo, the cathedral and so on – summarising in a final sentence the fate of 'many other parish churches, all of them open to the sky and wrecked, for which it would take too long to write about them one by one'. After the churches, he notes damage to secular buildings, stating that 'an infinite number of palaces and houses were ruined to their foundations, so that it is impossible to walk or even pass along many streets, on account of the piles of rubble.' He reports that, on account of the continued risk from collapsing buildings during the aftershocks, as many as 4,500 tents, pavilions and other temporary shelters had been erected outside the city walls –

more than any besieging army would need – where people afraid of returning to their homes were taking shelter.

The Sienese ambassador's account is echoed by other diplomatic correspondence, which adopts a similar format. Most accounts focus first on the devastation of churches and religious complexes, moving on to discuss secular buildings and then to the population's response to events.<sup>152</sup> In a long account, Giannozzo Manetti, ambassador to the Florentine republic, reported on massive damage, and commented that spontaneous processions, involving large numbers of people, were taking place to ward off any further quakes: 'as a remedy not for the past scourge – as many have suggested – which is incalculable and cannot be remedied, but on account of the fear of another similar incident, each and everyone is assiduously participating in processions day and night'.<sup>153</sup> It is clear from his report that people of all ages were taking part in the processions, many of them barefoot, while some wore penitential clothing, and others quite simply sackcloth or rags as they walked the streets, wailing.<sup>154</sup> Similarly, the Venetian ambassador Bertucci Contarini, reported that 'day and night there are processions, with all people as well as children barefoot and pleading for mercy'.<sup>155</sup> Outside the walls, frightened residents sought safety in temporary shelters, while, inside the walls, Naples' main squares at San Giovanni in Carbonara and the market were filled with tents, where people took refuge in open spaces away from buildings; the wealthy banker Filippo Strozzi fled from his palace and sought safety in one of his galleys in the harbour.<sup>156</sup>

While the Naples earthquake of 1456 was exceptional for its violence, and the scale of destruction that it caused, Italy has always been subject to seismic activity and the incidence of earthquakes during the Renaissance period provides an interesting measure of how populations responded to such risks.<sup>157</sup> As emerges clearly in the accounts from Naples, penitential processions were the primary form of response, and drew widespread participation. No accounts indicate specific routes for these processions, which instead are described as filling the city and its streets – those same spaces that were largely occupied by the rubble of collapsed buildings. As such, processions appear to have reclaimed the city and reasserted the *pubblica via* as a safe and devotional space. Furthermore, as a direct consequence of the diplomatic correspondence from Naples in 1456, processions were held in numerous Italian cities to invoke protection and prevention – for example, in various cities in the Papal States, including Perugia, Bologna and Rome.<sup>158</sup> In Bologna, indeed, an extraordinary Lent was imposed: butchers and numerous other shops were closed and prostitutes prevented from working.<sup>159</sup>

Collective ritual actions were a common response to strong earthquakes.<sup>160</sup> Processions and penitential activity predominantly occurred in the public space of streets, and were intended to overturn the divine judgment of which, loosely speaking, such events were widely seen as portents.<sup>161</sup> So then, during the earthquake swarm that struck Aquila around 1462, the aftershocks were marked by processions night and day, and the bishop Amico Agnifili ordered a temporary altar to be raised on the square in front of the ruined cathedral for mass to be said and regular devotions to be observed; bells were used to call citizens to make repeated prayers to the Virgin.<sup>162</sup> In Siena, processions were a primary response in the summer of 1467, when a series of earthquakes struck the city, causing



51. Francesco di Giorgio Martini, *The Madonna Protecting Siena at the Time of the Earthquakes*, 1467, tempera on panel, Museo delle Biccherte, n. 34, Archivio di Stato, Siena.

considerable damage and forcing many to leave their homes for temporary shelter in the city's piazzas, or tents and pavilions outside the walls.<sup>163</sup> A remarkable painting by Francesco di Giorgio Martini depicts the city 'at the time of the earthquakes' (AL TENPO DE TREMUOTI; fig. 51); undamaged in the centre ground, the city appears under the protection of the Virgin Mary, while in the foreground the population finds refuge in hastily erected temporary shelters.<sup>164</sup> As local chroniclers Tommaso Fecini and Allegretto Allegretti noted, numerous processions around the city followed the event. So then, while practical measures such as evacuation were adopted, the Siense response to the events of summer 1467 was mainly located in the sacred and enacted through devotional practices. These accorded with the primary motives widely identified for the events: as Allegretti reported, many 'say that our sins are to blame, which is more to be believed'.<sup>165</sup>



52. Unknown draughtsman, *The Earthquake of 1505*, pen and ink drawing, Palazzo Comunale, Bologna.

Francesco di Giorgio's image, and the response to earthquake that it records is not unique. A natural parallel with it can be seen in Francesco Francia's fresco *Madonna of the Earthquake*, painted on the wall of the Cappella degli Anziani in the Palazzo Comunale of Bologna, in the wake of the earthquake swarm that hit the city from December 1504 (see fig. 6).<sup>166</sup> While the damage caused to the urban fabric by this extremely severe sequence was considerable, and has, indeed, been credited with contributing to the fall of the *signoria* of the Bentivoglio, Francia chose to show the city undamaged, or in its pre-quake state, with its tall towers prominent on the skyline.<sup>167</sup> The brief Latin inscription at the base of the fresco makes it clear that this is an *ex voto*, and that the Virgin's intercession on behalf of the city was renewed through it.<sup>168</sup>

Of the same date, and related to the same events, is a crude ink drawing, showing Bologna at the time of the earthquakes, as the text on the right makes clear (fig. 52).<sup>169</sup> Here, it is not at all obvious whether we are seeing the city before or after the events: no buildings reveal structural damage (though this was, in fact, widespread), the towers are not truncated, and their inclination survives to modern times, so does not seem to suggest that we are watching them *as* they fall. In the foreground, however, filling the space between the walls and houses, what appear to be tents can be seen, revealing that the Bolognesi had left their homes for temporary shelters, in spite of the cold winter conditions.<sup>170</sup> Also clearly visible in the foreground are groups of figures, many of them bearing crosses and perhaps a rosary, kneeling in prayer, and facing in the same direction; a mass of chronicles and documents confirm that a primary response to the disaster took the form of devout, penitential processions.<sup>171</sup> To the left of the sheet (the direction in which the figures face) are the arms of Bologna above the legend *GLORIOSISSIMAE VIRGINI NUNCIATAE. MDV* ('Most glorious Annunciate Virgin, 1505'), proclaiming the city's devotional response to crisis, and the fact that the people specifically addressed the Virgin as their intercessory divine patron.

These images and the ceremonial activities that they record – 'visual prayers', as Michael Bury has described them – document the means by which urban communities reacted to collective threats to the polity.<sup>172</sup> They reveal a collective response, sometimes mediated by a specific confraternity, but often commissioned by the local government administration on behalf of the urban community as a whole. The representation of the city in these and many other



images was a common feature, used to signal the collective nature of the threat, and in so doing to invoke the aid of the patron saint, who is commonly shown carrying a model of the city. Notwithstanding the inclusion of this attribute, however, such images tend to represent a physical and spiritual distinction between a city and its heavenly intercessor; after all, the prevalent interpretation of such cataclysmic events was that they represented divine judgment, so it was appropriate to indicate submission and penitential separation from the divine. That such was the case is brought home in comments relating to an earthquake that struck Bologna on 20 December 1455, of which the diarist and architect Gaspare Nadi reported:

the tower of the church of the Santa Maria del Monte collapsed, and many chimneys fell down in the territory of Bologna, where there are some very well-built houses, and the vault [*chiave*] of the Ospedale della Morte broke, and many pregnant women miscarried. [The earthquakes] were so powerful that I think that, but for the holy bodies in the churches in this land, it would certainly have been destroyed [*se non fosse per li churpi santi che sono in le chiesse de questa terra certamente seria aporfondada*]. The Lord be praised, always.<sup>173</sup>

Reference to the miraculous survival of people, buildings and sacred objects abound in the chronicles and diary accounts of events of this sort. However, this particular passage eloquently engages the reader in the powerful physical and metaphorical linkage that existed between buildings, physical bodies and protective ‘holy bodies’. In this instance, it is interesting to note that comments on the quality of buildings in the area serve to reinforce the severity of the damage done, while it is surely significant that the devastating collapse of the tower at the shrine of the Madonna del Monte (which housed a miraculous image of the Virgin) is juxtaposed with the multiple miscarriages suffered by the women of Bologna. The coincidence that it is the vault of the Ospedale della Morte (‘hospital of death’) that is destroyed is again richly evocative, while, most importantly, Nadi notes that the city has been protected from further damage by the ‘holy bodies’, the relics of the saints, preserved in the city’s churches.

Experience and embodiment are here presented through the eyes of a contemporary viewer, in an account that reveals the seamless way in which individuals and communities responded to major events of this sort, by describing physical experiences that were inextricably bound up with devotion and belief.<sup>174</sup> Just as the ‘holy bodies’ saved living bodies and protected built walls, so too their painted ‘visual prayers’ served a similar purpose. These paintings capture the embodied survival of the experiences that they depict and the processes urban communities participated in at such times of crisis.



# Surveillance and the Street

## *Urban Form as an Instrument of Control*

On 11 July 1501, as Antonio Rinaldeschi passed through the small piazza of Santa Maria [degli] Alberighi, he picked up a handful of horse (or rather donkey) shit, and when he had left the piazza and reached the narrow alley that leads to the street of Porsanpiero, he turned towards the image of Our Annunciate Lady that is painted over the side door of said church, and threw the shit at her [...] Antonio wasn't seen throwing said muck at the said Annunciate, and as it pleased her that the events should be discovered, so the office of the *otto* came to hear about it, and so they issued a warrant for him and severe penalties for anyone who knew where he was and didn't inform on him [...] and he was instantly tried by the *signori otto* who found him guilty, and he too considered himself to be deserving of the death penalty for such excess as he had perpetrated; and so they sentenced him to death, and he was hanged that very day from the window of the Palazzo del Capitano [Bargello], and he was left there dead, his body hanging until the following day.<sup>1</sup>

What was life like in the streets of the Renaissance city, and how might we get a sense of the lived experiences of these remote yet familiar spaces? A good place to start is the extraordinary nine-piece panel, usually described as the Rinaldeschi altarpiece, which tells the story of a hapless gambler, Antonio Rinaldeschi, and his demise in Florence at beginning of the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

### *Policing public space*

By all accounts, Rinaldeschi was not an especially pleasant character; he accumulated considerable debts, and is reported to have beaten his father, who in turn sought to cut him out of his will, which in turn led to a drawn-out legal battle with his siblings over inheritance.<sup>3</sup> He was a gambler, and it was this that led to the events depicted in the remarkable painting by the minor artist Filippo Dolciati, which shows scenes from the final ten days of Rinaldeschi's life, from 11 July 1501 to the day of his execution on the feast day of Mary Magdalene, 22 July (fig. 53).

**FACING PAGE:**

53. Filippo Dolciati, Rinaldeschi altarpiece, 1503, tempera on panel, Museo Stibbert, Florence.

In a sequence resembling a cartoon strip, the cautionary tale unfolds, describing Rinaldeschi's multiple blasphemy against the Virgin Mary, following an unlucky spell of gambling, and culminating with his ultimate punishment by hanging from a window of the Bargello. At the top left, Rinaldeschi takes his leave of his gambling companions at the tavern, where their dice are left tellingly on the table; the cloak that perhaps he has lost gaming is already worn by the seated figure on the right. Rinaldeschi's mouth is open, and he has a devil at his shoulder, suggesting that this is probably the first moment he curses the Virgin Mary. In addition to the two seated men, a small figure in the tavern doorway to the left is busy handling food, and would appear to be a direct witness to the events. This first scene is essential for setting the context of the crime. The location is unmistakable, as the tavern is identified by the fig tree visible on the back wall as the 'Fico' (the Fig Tree), one of the best-known taverns in central Florence, while the date is prominently inscribed on the roof tiles of the building that frames the action.<sup>4</sup> The next scene shows Rinaldeschi twice, both times in the company of the devil who seems to tempt him (right) to bend down and pick up a handful of dried horse manure from the street (left). The building colours and types are broadly similar to those in the first scene, so we can assume that he has not walked far from the tavern: in fact he is just around the corner in the small piazza of Santa Maria degli Alberighi. In the next scene, Rinaldeschi's right arm is raised, the dung prominent in his hand, ready to be thrown violently at the painted image of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary – the Madonna de' Ricci – that adorns a side door of the church. It is significant that the defiled state of the sacred image is not shown, but only the moment immediately preceding its profanation.

In the second register, Rinaldeschi's passion begins. The action transfers to the countryside where he has fled from justice; we see him as he tries to commit suicide (the dagger is in his hand) to escape punishment, and is restrained by the armed guard of the *podestà*, who have tracked him down. In the sky, tiny angels chase off the devils that have attempted to compound the sin of blasphemy with that of suicide.<sup>5</sup> In the next scene, Rinaldeschi is marched off to prison in the Bargello, while in the third panel he is shown behind bars in a pose of penitence, and then being taken to trial. It has rightly been argued that the iconography of this central section is heavily dependent on sacred representations of Christ's Passion – the arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane – and the imprisonment of John the Baptist.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, a remarkable transformation occurs to Rinaldeschi as an individual, as he abandons despair and self-harm (which tempted him under the influence of the devil) and becomes contrite, as is evidenced by the full-sized angel standing behind him as he goes to face his trial.

In the third register, a visibly serene Rinaldeschi confronts his fate. He stands trial at the court of the *otto di guardia*, the magistracy that by this time in Florence had assumed most powers in criminal cases; the eight officials are seated in judgment, while a scribe stands behind Rinaldeschi, pen in hand to keep a record.<sup>7</sup> By the second scene the *otto* have handed down their sentence of capital punishment; we see Rinaldeschi receiving the last rites in the Bargello chapel (left), and then in the company of the black-robed and hooded Compagnia dei Neri ('Company of the Blacks'; right), the confraternity that assisted and comforted criminals being led to execution.<sup>8</sup> Rinaldeschi carries his own noose

wound round his arms, and his quiet composure is again rewarded by the prominent presence of an angel behind him.

The final scene of the panel shows Rinaldeschi's hanging, directly out of a corner window on the first floor of the Bargello, where he could be seen by passers-by and assembled crowds who might have attended this brutal implementation of public justice.<sup>9</sup> To the left side of the window can be seen the top of Rinaldeschi's head, with the noose already around his neck and tied firmly to the window colonette, as well as, below, the hanging body at the moment of the execution itself. Here, inscribed on the wall beside the hanging figure is the only authentic text in the panel except for the date shown in the first scene (all the other inscriptions are later); they are Rinaldeschi's last words of contrition 'Signor mio Giesu Christo, abbi misericordia del'anima mia' ('My Lord Jesus Christ, have pity on my soul'). One of the Neri holds a reliquary to bless him in his final agony and Rinaldeschi has an amulet belt of corals around his waist. From the window on the right, page boys look on, while below them a final battle is played out for the soul of Rinaldeschi, with angels triumphing over devils.

As scholars have noted, at first sight Dolciati's panel is a cautionary tale of performative justice.<sup>10</sup> Rinaldeschi's terrible act of blasphemy and sacrilege – both spoken and physically enacted by defiling a sacred image with animal excrement – is justly and visibly punished as an example to others. Execution was only rarely applied for blasphemers in this period, and William Connell and Giles Constable have noted how unusual and extreme Rinaldeschi's punishment was; they suggest that not only was the crime compounded by the attempted suicide but that its punishment is to be understood in the context of the populist regime that ruled Florence at this time, and the revival of Savonarolan fervour for popular devotion, which resulted in the more severe prosecution of such crimes as blasphemy, sodomy and gambling.<sup>11</sup> However, while Rinaldeschi's punishment is prominently shown, it is not the sole subject of the nine-scene panel; it can, in fact, be convincingly argued that the subject of Dolciati's panel is Rinaldeschi's redemption (as played out by the narrative of angels prevailing over devils), and, by association, the miraculous agency in this process of the very image of the Virgin that Rinaldeschi had defiled. As Connell and Constable have shown, a significant cult sprang up around the Madonna de' Ricci, and led to the construction of an oratory around the image, abutting the church of Santa Maria degli Alberighi.<sup>12</sup> As such, the image itself contributed to the foundational legend of a local devotion to the Madonna, and exercised agency in the conversion of the gambler to penitent.

On account of the local significance of the events around the Rinaldeschi case and the importance they assumed for Marian devotion around Santa Maria degli Alberighi, a rich documentary trail allows a thorough reconstruction of the circumstances and effects of this gambler's moment of blasphemous fury. However, for present purposes, it is useful to draw back from the details of the example to see what this case tells us about the public space of city streets at this period. Since the painting describes actual events in real places, we are presented with a record of the visual experience of those places, and indeed the whole story may be understood as inextricably linked with the typology of the places through which the narrative moves. We can thus observe the sequence of scenes from the small piazza (*chiassolino*), which accommodated the tavern

of the Fico, to the narrow street by Santa Maria degli Alberighi, to the *canto* ('corner') where the Madonna de' Ricci was painted, out to beyond the city walls, and then back into the city, where the final five scenes are all played out in and around the Bargello, the palace of justice.

Moreover, given the nature of the events that unfold in those places, the painting is a valuable document for understanding the nature of the various spaces in the city, and how each of these favoured or facilitated particular actions and behaviours. Thus, it is possible to propose a spatial interpretation of the events and how they were represented by Dolciati that parallels Connell and Constable's symbolic reading of the three tiers of the image as showing sin (above), redemption (middle) and salvation (below). A first-level spatial reading of the narrative would contrast the urban public spaces of licence and sinful behaviour (top tier) with the middle scene of escape from the city (capture scene), circling back to urban order restored through the intervention of secular and religious authority in the self-contained space of the Bargello, the site and symbol of the Florentine judiciary. While such a reading of urban space may suggest a juxtaposition of unregulated public space and the repressive control of the Bargello, this very much misses a key point: Rinaldeschi flees the city in the fourth scene precisely because the public spaces in which he performed his sacrilegious act were so heavily regulated, controlled and policed. In the tavern scene, his two companions, as well as the boy working in the tavern, are witnesses to his actions; one of the accounts of the events even singles out a boy as having seen the act of sacrilege take place.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, we should not overlook the fact that the image of the Virgin had agency of its own, such that the records of the shrine for the Madonna de' Ricci specifically stated that 'Antonio wasn't seen by anyone throwing said muck at the said Annunciate [Virgin Mary], and as it pleased her that the events should be discovered.'<sup>14</sup>

Thus, in addition to the material witnesses in the area and the possible viewers from nearby windows (all the shutters are shown open), the key witness is shown to be the Virgin Mary herself. It is therefore more accurate to suggest that Rinaldeschi's attempt to escape justice by leaving the city and to circumvent it by committing suicide was a recognition of the combined power of collective self-surveillance, sacred control and judicial powers exercised on public space in the city. As much as a tale of sin, redemption and salvation, this is a story that reveals the complex layering of community, devotion and authority, exercised on all urban public space in this period. It thus serves as a fitting starting point for exploring further the nature and meaning of public spaces and how everyday life was played out in them.

The spaces through which Rinaldeschi's story moves were familiar ones: small piazzas, taverns, local churches, street shrines and street corners were among the main features of the physical space of any neighbourhood. In this instance, the area is circumscribed to a few narrow streets, a stone's throw from Florence cathedral, and tucked behind the main east–west axis, the Corso, that cut through the heart of the city from the central market (Mercato Vecchio) area out to the east towards the hills of Settignano. This was an especially densely packed part of the city, where trade and industry jostled with places of leisure and housing, as well as – of course – monumental public and religious buildings. Away from the centre, the situation was not very different, though the

urban fabric was less dense and there were fewer grand buildings; nonetheless, the neighbourhood was shaped around a similar set of key elements, which again imposed order on urban space. It was for this reason that Rinaldeschi sought to evade the controlling power of the city by escaping to the country (where he attempted suicide), only to be returned to the heart of the city, where he faced capital punishment performed in public as a cautionary execution, from a prominent window of the palace of the city judiciary.

Although the capital punishment that Rinaldeschi faced was an unusually extreme response to blasphemy, the events as they are recorded in the nine-scene panel and various documentary accounts provide a vivid illustration of how urban space was controlled through a complex interlocking system of surveillance – both secular and divine, centralised and diffused. We can observe how the Madonna’s gaze was empowered with agency and reinforced by the evidence of material witnesses, and how retribution was rapidly enacted through the city’s police and court system. Urban space is shown to have been a public arena within which public acts were seen and judged, even when they appeared to have taken place in narrow alleys hidden from the gaze of institutional authority. Although seemingly exceptional, the incident and its visual record make apparent the architectural, urbanistic, legislative and social structures that functioned to control and police behaviour in the public spaces of Renaissance cities.

The Rinaldeschi incident reveals how significant it was for events to be seen and, indeed, suggests an interesting overlap between the all-seeing eye of divine justice and the operations of the city police and legal system. Sites such as the corner window of the Bargello in Florence were prominent in the urban fabric, and thus highlighted events that were staged there, as powerfully as did the images and symbols – such as the coat of arms also shown in the painting – that were displayed for passers-by in the street to see. Such highly refined design techniques were adopted to improve the visual and communicative strategies of the key monumental buildings that formed the core of late medieval and Renaissance Florence, and it is reasonable to assume this was the case in other cities too.<sup>15</sup> Urban-scale interventions were focused as much on major public structures as on adapting the adjacent environment of streets and public spaces; and such adjustments to the cityscape were often made with the specific intention of enhancing a building’s visibility and its ability to represent with appropriate impact the institutions it housed. In turn, of course, urban-scale design and modification were a powerful expression of governmental power; as Chapter 1 showed, retroactive improvement and *ex novo* creation of streets was a complex process, strongly identified with a government’s authority and power.

However, it is also worth considering how the urban fabric, and the significant changes to it that were increasingly made from the fifteenth century, served to control movement through the city, and shape behaviour in public space, and how this was policed. To what extent might we see streets, especially the straightened and widened main arteries that were fashioned through significant urban-scale interventions, as having particular functions in both articulating and facilitating the exercise of government authority? Furthermore, to what extent were citizens and residents implicated in the process of managing the urban environment, its modification and policing? While the dynamic for the exercise of authority may apparently conform with Michel Foucault’s

formulation of disciplinary power as being exercised vertically – that is, by a central authority upon a body of citizens – it is important also to consider its horizontal expression – as a collective process in which communities were implicated.<sup>16</sup> This chapter goes on to explore both aspects, first by considering street improvements as an expression of the top-down exercise of power, and then by turning to look at evidence of social practices that reveal the horizontal exercise of surveillance as it operated in, and was enabled by, public space.

### *Urban space as dynamic structure*

Walls and gates were – except in Venice – the defining elements of the urban perimeter throughout the Renaissance period; they circumscribed the area inhabited by citizen populations, regulated access to it and symbolised the strength of the city to stand against external threats.<sup>17</sup> With the rise in the use of firearms during the sixteenth century came widespread attention to geometrical, bastioned fortifications, a development described by Martha Pollak as the emergence of ‘military urbanism’.<sup>18</sup> This later phase of urban defence is characterised not only by the massive scale and geometric forms employed, but also the extensive use of printed city views as a means of disseminating the large-scale interventions that reordered urban perimeters, and represented a form of propaganda intended as a deterrent to siege warfare.<sup>19</sup> Such prints updated the tradition of urban iconography of the late medieval and Renaissance periods, which frequently represented the city as bounded by its walls, pierced by gates.<sup>20</sup> Pollak has described the ‘tight imbrication of street, entry and fortified perimeter’ as defining a new urbanism, structured around ‘the straight street, the regular square, and monumental gate’.<sup>21</sup> While the confluence of these three factors and their symmetrically ordered designs may have come to characterise the later sixteenth- and seventeenth-century city, it is nonetheless evident that these same elements of urban infrastructure (walls, gates, streets) also served to structure and discipline the city in earlier centuries.<sup>22</sup>

While walls had a symbolic and practical function of enclosure and protection, the gate is perhaps the most obvious architectural feature of the pre-modern Italian city to function as a clearly recognisable technology for surveillance and control. In early modern Italy, the gate was a variously porous diaphragm that controlled access to the city, physically and fiscally, regulating the penetrability of urban space by outsiders and setting the diurnal and nocturnal pulse of entries.<sup>23</sup> The image of *Securitas* that hovers over the city gate of Ambrogio Lorenzetti’s idealised peace-time depiction of Siena and its countryside (see fig. 1), menacingly bears the hangman’s gallows, indicating (as do the scales of justice on the adjacent wall) that urban safety is assured by punishment and control (fig. 54).<sup>24</sup> As various studies have shown, the practical functions of medieval and Renaissance gates were loaded with metaphorical language and meanings, which also made them into the city’s ‘frontispieces’, projecting images of collective urban identity outwards to incoming visitors.<sup>25</sup> Thus, gates might reveal the protective agency of a religious patron, or, by the sixteenth century, might adopt the massive forms of classical architecture, endowed with their own metaphorical language of protective strength or signorial rule, or they might do both.<sup>26</sup>



Urban gates were almost always aligned with the principal thoroughfares that connected cities to neighbouring towns and beyond, and within the walls these roads became the main connective streets that ordered a city's layout and circulation.<sup>27</sup> Logically enough, those streets leading directly from the gate to the city centre tended to acquire greater significance than those that simply served a neighbourhood, though, as Pollak has noted, streets that connected to the city's entry points 'carried the effect of military order inside the city'.<sup>28</sup> The strategic significance of streets as a military technology, expressive of centralised authority, was not unique to the rulers and designers of the late sixteenth century, however, and can be traced in numerous instances from the fifteenth.

An interesting illustration of this connection is reported in relation to the visit to Rome of King Ferrante of Naples on 6 January 1475 to take part in the jubilee year that had been called by Pope Sixtus IV della Rovere. Stefano Infessura, a law professor at the Rome *studio* (university), reported on the visit in his diaries, commenting on the king's large entourage of noblemen, and the rich gifts of cloth (*palii*) that he brought to the main basilicas and gave to the city's leading citizens, before touring the city's antiquities, including the Pantheon.<sup>29</sup> At the end of the visit, Ferrante was received in the papal residence, where he is reported to have advised the pope that if he wished to control the city of Rome he should clear its streets of porticoes and the overhanging structures that cantilevered out from the buildings fronting onto them, which rendered the streets too narrow to defend.<sup>30</sup> Ferrante suggested that, if the pope needed to move troops through the city, the streets needed to be wider and less encumbered with projecting structures, while he also commented on the need to be able to block streets to impede free movement about the city. Infessura suggested that subsequent demolitions and improvements, which followed on Ferrante's advice, were carried out with the stated objective of improving civic image (*allustrare la terra*) by paving the streets, though the ultimate aim was to strengthen papal control (*signoreggiare*) of the public realm. Infessura was not the most unbiased of commentators, as Sixtus' building campaigns repeatedly resulted in papal raids on the university budget, which paid professors' salaries.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, the direct link between street improvements and papal authority is further evidenced by expressions of 'papal indignation' and sizeable fines imposed on anyone who resisted demolitions.<sup>32</sup>

As is well known, Sixtus was especially active in improving the city's street network, with a particular focus on facilitating the movement of citizens and pilgrims through the city and across the Tiber to and from the Vatican precinct.<sup>33</sup> Plans included the construction of a magnificent new bridge – the Ponte Sisto (see fig. 29) – to ease congestion in preparation for the jubilee, but also significant remodelling of the area around the Ponte Sant'Angelo, the principal access point to the Vatican from the city's tightly packed residential and



54. The figure of Securitas, detail from Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *The City at Peace* (or Good Government in the City), 1338–40, Sala della Pace, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena (see fig. 1).

commercial quarter in the *banchi* district.<sup>34</sup> The diarist Jacopo Gherardi of Volterra reports that in March 1482 Sixtus was returning from one of his regular visits to the church of Santa Maria del Popolo and stopped to observe ongoing work around the bridge, where numerous porticoes and shop fronts were being demolished; confronted by a reluctant owner, Antonio di Marcello Cenci, the pope commanded that Cenci's shops as well as his house should be razed as a punitive measure, and the shopkeeper be thrown into jail.<sup>35</sup> This severe and public punishment underlines the single-mindedness with which the pope pursued the reorganisation of the approach to the bridge around the piazza di Ponte, and perhaps intimates that there was at least some strategic purpose to the plans beyond the stated ambitions of *urbis ornatum*.<sup>36</sup> The old bridge over the Tiber to Castel Sant'Angelo was the site of a much publicised stampede, which cost the lives of hundreds of pilgrims during the jubilee of 1450, after which a succession of popes, from Nicholas V onwards, invested in improvements to the area.<sup>37</sup> These changes, which included the erection of chapels and monumental sculptures framing the bridge on the south side of the Tiber, certainly improved the appearance of the approach; at the same time, the significant widening of the streets and open space adjacent to the bridge on that side made the site much easier to control from the axially aligned, fortified papal complex of the converted Mausoleum of Hadrian on the north (Vatican) side of the river (fig. 55).<sup>38</sup> This stance, equating ordered streets with political control, became explicit with the development of the Canale di Ponte *trivium* during the sixteenth century (see fig. 27). From the piazza di Ponte, a major venue for public executions (see below, fig. 63), the new *trivium* funnelled movement from the *abitato* (the main inhabited area of Rome) towards the Vatican, and conversely served to project the authority of the massive papal fortress of the Castel Sant'Angelo onto the whole city.<sup>39</sup>

The policy of demolishing porticoes, which Sixtus significantly extended, eventually led to the removal of the majority of overhanging structures in Rome; the rare instance of the construction of the sixteenth-century Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne to include a portico is a reminder that these structures had not only previously been widespread, but were also closely associated with the image and architectural self-representation of Rome's patrician families on the urban stage.<sup>40</sup> As such, while Sixtus' policy may have had public order at heart, it also set out to establish and amplify papal control over the city of Rome, wresting power and authority from the *romani cives*, for whom porticoes were identifying spatial markers. Such policies were not unique to Sixtus, nor indeed were they part of a continuous assertion of papal power over that of the local Roman elites; rather, as various studies of papal urbanism show, they participated in a complex process of give and take, in which power relations were repeatedly asserted, contested and negotiated. Significantly, in a city such as Rome, where power relations between the Church and Vatican hierarchies and the local nobility were not always easy, this resulted in particular attention being directed at sites of political or geographical significance, such as the Ponte Sant'Angelo 'hinge', which connected the Vatican to the city, and the Capitoline hill, the traditional site of the city's secular republican government, where urban interventions were clearly intended to be understood as visibly etching political changes on the fabric of the city.<sup>41</sup>



55. Piazza di Ponte and the approach to Ponte Sant'Angelo, Rome, detail from Jacopo Siculo (attrib.), *The Apparition of the Archangel Michael to Pope Gregory the Great*, 1533–4, fresco, church of the Trinità dei Monti, Rome.

Even in urban centres where there was a less complex relationship between rival governing elites, urban interventions tended to pit the collective interests of the city's ruling authority against the particular interests of individuals and families. Here, the highlighting of the significance of particular urban sites could be achieved through government-sponsored interventions in public space, which altered its forms and meaning. A clear example of this process is the policy of street improvement – often achieved through the demolition of overhanging structures from the street elevation of domestic properties (*ballatoi*) – enacted in a number of Italian cities, with increasing rigour from the mid-fifteenth century. Statutes from numerous central Italian cities had demanded the removal of such structures from at least the fourteenth century; yet, as so often with legislative measures, statutes more often tell us about the problems of urban living

than they document the actual process of resolving these.<sup>42</sup> Although legislated for from the fourteenth century, the demolition of overhanging structures, for the most part, seems to have begun noticeably to take effect within the urban fabric of central Italian cities only during the fifteenth century, as a result of quite persuasive policy enforcement and the use of economic incentives. Thus, for example, Siena's fifteenth-century urban renewal along the sinuous central artery of the strada Romana was promoted through an insistent policy of *ballatoio* demolitions, overseen by a group of officials called the *ufficiali sopra all'ornato*; their numerous interventions contributed to fashioning a street that showcased civic image, promoted through the public enforcement of invasive urban-renewal policies.<sup>43</sup> Over the course of twenty years (c.1460–80), a concerted effort was made to improve the street with new palace and house façades, for which minor public subsidies were offered as an incentive to support what were frequently quite considerable building costs, as is shown in a map documenting *ornato* interventions (see fig. 19).<sup>44</sup> Enforced by a government office over a relatively prolonged period, the Siennese focus on the city's main street created a ceremonial axis leading towards the civic centre on the piazza del Campo; the street projected a shared urban identity, through the strategic placement of civic sculptural symbols and coats of arms, framed at either end by city gates facing north towards Florence and south towards Rome. Just as in Rome, there were citizens who pushed back against the forceful requests for changes to their façades, while others took advantage of the opportunities made available to patrons willing to step in to renovate tracts of central urban real estate.<sup>45</sup> It is tempting to see the resistance to the urban-renewal process in Siena as resembling the critiques of modern-day gentrification, which tends to favour the residential preferences of socio-economic elites in contexts of urban renewal over the concerns of long-term residents, who face more serious consequences from high building costs and rising rents.<sup>46</sup>

The work of Siena's *ornato* officials, which began in earnest from 1463, may well have taken its inspiration from similar policies enacted by the Siennese Pope Pius II Piccolomini in Viterbo.<sup>47</sup> Pius had actively promoted the renewal of the main street of Viterbo in the previous year, as part of the preparations for the Corpus Christi celebrations in June, and financial incentives ensured the speedy execution of demolitions to straighten and widen the street that was to be used for a religious procession led by the pope.<sup>48</sup> Documents from the papal accounts reveal that significant charitable (*limosina*) payments, ranging between 2 and 10 gold ducats, were awarded to barbers, shoemakers, locksmiths and other residents along the ceremonial route; overhanging structures were evidently torn down in some haste to make way for the ephemeral displays prepared by as many as fifteen cardinals, who paid for them from their own budgets.<sup>49</sup> Pius was clear about the value of the work undertaken, stating that: 'the main street that goes from the castle [Rocca] through the city to the cathedral church, which was once cluttered with walls, overhangs and wooden porticoes, was freed of all superstructures and returned to its ancient splendour.'<sup>50</sup> It was along this refashioned urban artery that Pius expressed the principle of sovereign papal authority, presenting himself (as he recorded in his autobiography) as the 'powerful Lord of the world'.<sup>51</sup> While, of course, the elaborate procession provided the ceremonial context for this ambitious pronouncement, it is



56. Via Maggio, Florence, from the south side of Ponte Santa Trinità. Photograph by Ralph Lieberman, 1988.

nonetheless significant that Pius associated his claim with an urban space that had been shaped at his command, linking the event and its renewed urban setting in his personal account of the Viterbo visit.

A similar instance of radical urban renewal imposed by planning legislation that sought to create privileged processional pathways through the city is documented in the lead-up to Pope Leo X de' Medici's famous entry into Florence in 1515; in this case, the demolition of overhangs belonging to working-class wool workers in the via Maggio dealt a final blow to the commercial activity of that street, which subsequently emerged as a prime site for elite housing.<sup>52</sup> The via Maggio improvements definitively gentrified a labouring district; the removal of overhangs accentuated sightlines that cut through a swathe of urban fabric, as was implicitly acknowledged by the subsequent careful placement of columns at either end of the street, on piazza San Felice and on piazza Santa Trinita (fig. 56).<sup>53</sup> The creation of such processional routes for ceremonial entries was often the occasion for significant and rapidly executed urban renewal campaigns;<sup>54</sup> where previously these had tended to focus exclusively on the



57. Castello Sforzesco, Milan.

immediate environs of religious and secular monuments and adjacent public spaces, increasingly from the mid-fifteenth century they were directed at the improvement and beautification of entire streets, so extending the visual influence of ruling authorities over the city's streetscape.

Demolition, clearance and improvements to streets and infrastructure thus came to be associated with a ruler's authority. As Evelyn Welch noted for Milan under the Sforzas, Galeazzo Maria and his brother Ludovico received flattering praise from the city's encomiastic court humanists for their extensive plans to pave Milan's streets.<sup>55</sup> While such interventions might redound to the honour of the dukes, practically speaking, street improvements could be achieved at a relatively low cost to ducal finances, as the established practice in Milan was that costs would be shared among frontagers.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, Galeazzo Maria was quite precise in his allocation of costs for the replacement of brick with stone paving in 1470, insisting that in rented properties the contribution should be divided, a third share falling to the owner and two-thirds to

the tenant.<sup>57</sup> Such obligations appear to have been universally applied, so that in 1471 Federico da Montefeltro stated in correspondence with his ambassador, Camillo de' Barzi, that he was willing to pay for the paving of the street adjacent to his Milanese residence in borgo San Maurilio, a building that he had, in fact, received as a gift from his sometime employer, the Duke of Milan.<sup>58</sup>

Instances such as these reveal how the Sforza dukes capitalised on mutualised urban improvements to promote a narrative that highlighted such interventions as expressions of seigniorial authority and just rule.<sup>59</sup> As Welch has documented, this was, of course, a similar strategy to the one adopted for the construction of the massive new residential fortress on the north-western edge of Milan, at Porta Giovia (Castello Sforzesco, fig. 57); here, construction was largely funded by levies on the ducal subject towns, as well as the city of Milan as a whole.<sup>60</sup> However, in 1492, an attempt by Ludovico 'il Moro' to open up a piazza and improve the street façades leading to the Castello by removing loggias and overhangs – the same elements targeted a few years earlier in Rome by Sixtus IV – was less successful; the plans were, at least in part, thwarted because no compensation was provided to owners.<sup>61</sup> Such interventions to improve the city street network in the environs of the Castello may have been motivated by aesthetic principles of *ornato*, but it is also evident that the desire to create clear vistas and access between the city and the urban front of the Sforzas' fortified residential enclave represented a threat to the city and its citizens. This was acknowledged by a late-fifteenth-century local historian, Bernardino Corio, who looked back on Francesco Sforza's plans to rebuild the Porta Giovia fortress from 1450 and commented that:



the most prudent prince did not wish to carry out this [the reconstruction] out of his own wishes, so that his subjects might not believe that the restoration of these powerful walls implied that he trusted them little [...] his desire to reconstruct the fortress [arose] not because he doubted their [the nobles' and citizens'] faith at any point, but only as an ornament to the city and for security against any enemy who might attack at any time.<sup>62</sup>

58. Castel Sismondo, Rimini.

Corio's text, full of double negatives, reveals the degree to which architectural interventions of this sort carried powerful meanings that gave unequivocal visual expression to the articulation of power, authority and rulership.<sup>63</sup>

Demolitions and street improvements, then, could do much to raise the status of a ruler; they made sense of larger monumental projects, which they supported by making them more visible, while the implementation of such all-encompassing urbanistic interventions expressed the capillary reach of the ruler's authority over the city as a whole. Rome's Canale di Ponte reorganisation was by no means unique in having a more overt intention of articulating the reach of a ruler's power and, indeed, assuring his protection through design tactics that made public space more open, visible and subject to scopic control. So, for example, the ruler of Rimini, Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, had also engaged in a campaign of demolitions of porticoes, balconies and overhangs, focused particularly on opening up the city's narrowest streets.<sup>64</sup> In the name of 'splendour, ornament and clarity', new city statutes issued in 1457 decreed that no new overhangs or other elements that invaded the street should be permitted, and required that smooth façades (*simplex et pulcher*) be built in their place.<sup>65</sup>



59. Piero della Francesca, *Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta before St Sigismund*, 1451, fresco, church of San Francesco (or Tempio Malatestiano), Rimini.

These regulations may be understood as part of ambitious plans that led to the large-scale clearance undertaken to create an open area around the fortified courtly residence of the Castel Sismondo, on the side facing towards the city and its principal institutions, gathered around the communal piazza (fig. 58).<sup>66</sup> These plans resulted in the demolition of various earlier Malatesta buildings, but also the city's ancient baptistery, a convent and part of the bishop's residence near the ancient cathedral of Santa Colomba, whose bell-tower was also reduced in height for defensive purposes.<sup>67</sup> The resulting open space, which forms the foreground for Piero della Francesca's portrait roundel depicting the castle in the *St Sigismund* fresco in the Tempio Malatestiano, and was also depicted on commemorative medals, gave the Malatesta residence a commanding position in relation to the city, powerfully expressing Sigismondo's control in visual and political terms (fig. 59).<sup>68</sup> The castle's new prominence gave it a role comparable to that of many other seigneurial fortified residences in late medieval and Renaissance Italy – making it equally a secure seat in the face of external threats and an expression of dominion over the local population.<sup>69</sup>

These few examples – and there are, of course, many others – help us to see that urban improvements might have multiple agendas, and that there were always winners and losers in the process. In Siena, government-sponsored collaborative processes of collective patronage unquestionably benefited some more than others: butchers and several other trades were zoned out of the centre, and a number of less wealthy citizens were forced to abandon their centrally



placed homes because they could not afford the high costs of rebuilding. The political significance of street renewal campaigns was more evident where a seigniorial power was involved, as the underlying rhetoric of encomiastic texts and visual symbols combined to communicate a clear message, although this also applied in republican centres. A key theme in all these interventions is the exercise of centralised control on the public space of streets, and the heightened visibility afforded to particular buildings where secular power resided.

In urban renewal and beautification can thus be seen the controlling hand of authority, expressed at its most essential level by the enhanced visibility such interventions afforded. Civic governments as well as despotic or enlightened rulers promoted such urban renewal policies and processes in Renaissance Italy, and the political implications of the decisions that underlie them should not be underestimated.<sup>70</sup> These interventions facilitated movement around the city, but the preferential channels that they created tend to reveal the underlying distribution of power within a city at a given period. New streets or street layouts can thus be read as the physical sedimentation of power relations, and the underlying meaning of these adaptations to the fabric were most explicitly manifest on ceremonial occasions, when the power relations that shaped them were physically articulated through ritual movement.<sup>71</sup> At such times, political agents became actors in the dynamic structures they had fashioned: in 1462 Pius II used the Corpus Christi processional litany in Viterbo to reject conciliarist Church governance in favour of papal supremacy, while in 1515 Leo X entered Florence triumphantly as Pontifex Maximus.<sup>72</sup> At other times, too, city streets served a key function in the articulation of power structures in the city – often made apparent through symbols, signage and other permanent markers – while also providing the vital infrastructure for the effective exercise of that power.

### *Eyes on the street: A pervasive network?*

The term ‘surveillance’ emerged in the early nineteenth century and perhaps the concept’s best-known analysis has been the work of Michel Foucault, whose study of the power relations exemplified by the gaze in Enlightenment Europe explored the architectural and mental panopticon as a form of – and metaphor for – social control.<sup>73</sup> Recent concerns with closed-circuit camera surveillance (CCTV) and the so-called ‘surveillance society’, as well as heightened attention to issues of the ownership – or lack of it – of urban public space have focused the debate on the city and the place of individuals in relation to surveillance by government and institutions.<sup>74</sup> Contemporary discourse on surveillance relies on Foucauldian themes of power and the role of technologies in the exercise of discipline and control, notwithstanding that these have been further complicated by the fragmented and overlapping authority of private and public systems and governance, which some observers have described as creating a ‘honeycomb of jurisdictions’, resembling pre-modern or medieval conditions.<sup>75</sup> Surveillance technologies are seen to offer the impression of one overarching authority, while at the same time the everyday practice of their deployment and management is often rather more piecemeal, distributed among various

security agencies, police forces and private providers.<sup>76</sup> CCTV cameras, especially, have been invested with the collective belief that they can provide absolute protection, but it is not clear that, in fact, they can entirely replace what the influential urbanist Jane Jacobs described as the ‘eyes on the street’, previously afforded by the social networks of neighbourhood self-policing.<sup>77</sup>

While there are analogies between our modern understanding of surveillance and the strategies at work in the urban public space of streets in early modern Italy, some caution is, of course, needed in translating the term and the practice to a period before that of its theoretical formulation. Famously, Foucault’s *Surveiller et punir* opens with a lengthy account of the public torture and death of Robert-François Damiens in Paris in 1757, a striking illustration of the spectacle of public punishment, which, Foucault argued, was to be replaced by the ‘disciplinary society’, reliant on varied forms of panoptic surveillance; pre-modern forms of exemplary punishment would be replaced by capillary networks of the ‘faceless gaze that transformed the whole social body into a field of perception’.<sup>78</sup> While this polarised contrast is compelling, its rhetorical power does not necessarily match the historical evidence. As we saw in the last section, urban interventions in earlier periods may be understood to have facilitated the centralised exercise of power and its performative display (through processions and displays of punishment), while at the same time functioning as panoptic technologies that exercised a permanent control over urban populations. Furthermore, as we shall see, the complicit participation of citizen populations in the policing of public space anticipates elements of the disciplinary society that Foucault identified as a later phenomenon. What is proposed here, therefore, is a reading of early modern urban public space that adopts categories and distinctions from Foucault’s discussion of surveillance and disciplinary control, but adapts these by considering the concurrent deployment of the vertical exercise of power (by few upon many), with the more distributed or participatory horizontal model (many to many).<sup>79</sup>

In seeking to understand how urban public spaces were managed by city authorities, the attention in this section shifts from a primary focus on the physical ordering of the public realm to a consideration of the practices that were adopted to control and police these spaces. While, of course, it would be quite incorrect to suggest that urban space was subject to control only when crimes took place, it is fair to say that we know a good deal more about how people and their actions were managed when there were breaches of the law, resulting in prosecutions that have left a significant trace in the archives.<sup>80</sup> Such rich seams of evidence provide a primary source for social history, but have tended to be overlooked by historians of the built environment; here, selected examples will be employed to examine how citizens were implicated in the day-to-day surveillance of the neighbourhoods where they lived and worked, in order to understand how these spaces were regulated by day and at night.

In Siena during the fifteenth century, there was a practice of offering occasional amnesties – usually on the Marian feast days of the Annunciation and the Assumption (and sometimes Christmas) – that led to the release from the city’s jails of prisoners held for relatively minor crimes. A series of accounts from the second half of the fifteenth century summarise the nature of the crimes that had been committed, offering an interesting cross-section of cases: the petty

criminals had been detained predominantly for assault and knife crime, theft, gambling and blasphemy.<sup>81</sup> Although these were offences of varying gravity, they had, for the most part, taken place in the city's streets and squares, where they were sometimes heard or seen. However, what stands out from among the numerous cases is how many took place at night (*nocte tempo*) when they might more easily go undetected; indeed, so greatly was night-time preferred for criminal activity that by law the penalty for a crime committed 'after the bell that marks the evening has sounded' was doubled.<sup>82</sup> Night, of course, offered the cover of darkness, making it easier for criminals to move about the city, and as a result curfews and night patrols were widely used to mitigate the risk of night crime of all sorts throughout Italy.<sup>83</sup>

An amusing tale of a couple of bungling burglars gives some impression of the ease of movement that could be provided by the cover of night in the city. In November 1467 in Siena, Giovanni di Benedetto was sent to prison and fined 150 lire for having attempted to steal silver jewellery to the value of 200 florins, including rings and belts, from the shop of one Biagio di Pietro.<sup>84</sup> The attempted crime was carried out with an accomplice, Giovanni Battista from Parma, with the aid of a jemmy for breaking locks, which neither was apparently particularly expert at using. One night they went to Biagio's shop, where, despite repeated attempts, they failed to break in; the following night they tried a different strategy by attempting to break into the neighbouring barber's shop, belonging to one Ristoro, where they planned to steal money and then break through to Biagio's shop by knocking through the wall that separated the two premises. Having again failed, they planned to return to try again the night after, and while the account does not record how they were caught, their comings and goings around the shops cannot have gone unnoticed. Although it appears in a volume of criminal records, the story is more suited to a collection of novellas; the hopeless thief Giovanni ended up behind bars from 5 December until the Annunciation amnesty of March the following year.

We have to read a little beyond the somewhat summary account of the pardoned crime to get a sense of the events, where they played out and what they tell us about urban space and how it was policed. The small-time crooks, Giovanni and Giovanni Battista, moved around the city's streets at night, targeting a shop selling luxury cloth and other goods (*a lignittiere*), hoping to break in by using a piece of specialist equipment that they were not very good at handling. The shop was almost certainly on a central street close to Siena's main square, an area closely packed with luxury shops of this sort, as well as amenities such as the neighbouring barber.<sup>85</sup> While the details of how their plan unravelled are not documented, it seems likely that one of the night patrols of the city's *podestà* legal office caught them and brought one of them, at least, to justice; night patrols carried lamps and were thus able to see wrongdoers, removing the cloak of darkness that protected these two thieves from their fumbling lock-breaking on the street.<sup>86</sup> Night-time was, indeed, central to the events that unfolded: bells established the boundary between night and day, raising the stakes for criminals, while also providing protection from the everyday surveillance that operated during daylight hours.

All manner of theft is reported as having taken place during the hours of night, for which offenders were imprisoned but were eligible for release on the

Marian amnesties. So in January 1467 Giovanni di Simone from Perugia was jailed in Siena for multiple thefts from a food shop, as well as from the hospital of Santa Maria della Scala, and was then released in August on the feast of the Assumption.<sup>87</sup> The same amnesty saw the release of Giovanni di Bartolomeo from Florence, who had absconded with a rather more valuable haul of 22 papal *carlini* and a gold ring worth a further ten *carlini* from one Magdalena at the Albergo dell'Ocha.<sup>88</sup> Thefts from taverns and inns were quite common, and hostelries were evidently a favourite haunt for small-time thieves like Cristoforo di Nanni, again a Florentine, convicted twice for multiple thefts in shops, taverns and the city brothel in 1468; jail sentences of three to six months would seem to be quite a high price to pay for minor returns in the form of sheets, eiderdowns and other items of domestic linen.<sup>89</sup> Domenica, the wife of Luca di Antonio di Becco, was jailed for a couple of months for her night-time incursions into a vegetable garden belonging to Francesco di Giovanni, where she took onions and other vegetables to the value of a florin, which she shamelessly took to market on the piazza del Campo the following day!<sup>90</sup>

What examples such as these and countless others indicate is the degree to which attempts were made to police the streets and other spaces at night; while shops were at risk, it was the more permeable spaces of inns and taverns that were most prone to thefts, as access to them was necessarily easier (as, indeed, was also the case for urban vegetable gardens). Moreover, taverns were – as emerges so clearly from the exemplary case of Antonio Rinaldeschi, discussed at the outset of this chapter – attractors of a range of other restricted and illegal activities, particularly prostitution, gambling and blasphemy. So, for example, a beneficiary of the Assumption amnesty in 1463 was the Sienese Antonio di Iacomo, nicknamed 'Nibbio', jailed for playing card tricks in a tavern on the via Francigena, south of Siena in the village of Torrenieri, where he cheated a passing traveller called Cristoforo out of his horse and 30 ducats.<sup>91</sup> Nibbio was evidently something of a card-sharp, and in 1472 he was again pardoned for swindling. On this occasion it emerges that he was operating with a small gang (Francesco di Ferrando Spagnuolo, Stefano da Milano and Agostino da Verona are named); having spotted an easy target in a hotel outside Siena's northern city of Porta Camollia, they took their victim off with them to play cards in a nearby field, where they lured the unnamed Lombard into a sense of security by playing with false coins (*monete d'ottone*), and then swindled him out of the considerable sum of 4 *ducati larghi* and 10 *carlini*.<sup>92</sup> Heavy gambling losses might result in an explosion of anger, but this too could carry the risk of considerable penalties. On 11 January 1467, Lorenzo da Rosia was heard blaspheming the Virgin Mary after losing 18 ducats at gambling; he was jailed on 18 March and was fortunate to be pardoned just a week later at the Annunciation amnesty.<sup>93</sup> What is somewhat surprising, in this case (and others) of blasphemy, is that the records report the precise nature of the verbal crime: in this instance, Lorenzo damned the Virgin and called her a whore.<sup>94</sup>

Instances of reported speech of this sort convey some impression of how the evidence for the prosecution of such petty crimes was assembled. In recording the blasphemous language that Lorenzo used, the account suggests the presence of a witness who presumably reported the crime, whereas in cases of swindling or robbery it was almost certainly the victim who went to the

law-enforcement authorities. In some instances, one of the city's legal or policing officials directly witnessed events, as in December 1467, when Filippo di Marco, known as 'il Perugino', and his sidekick, Francesco Berti, nicknamed 'il Genovese', traded insults and a few punches with the city official Antonio del Piemonte in the tavern of Donna Ysea di Spagna on the centrally located via Diacceto in Siena.<sup>95</sup> Similarly, a misguided desire for revenge for a gambling fine he had received from the local magistrate of Sinalunga, Lorenzo di Nanni, led Giuliano di Antonio to sharpen a knife and lie in wait for him near the town's castle, with the intention of killing him; Lorenzo escaped and went on to prosecute his assailant for attempted murder.<sup>96</sup> On another occasion, on 24 February 1468, a night-time scuffle during the Carnival season between a hot-headed group of Siennese noblemen and the city police (*cavaliere del podestà*) on Siena's central crossroad, adjacent to the Campo, was evidently prosecuted directly by the officials present at the scene.<sup>97</sup>

The relatively small number of police and officials who patrolled cities, however, meant that other methods were essential for law enforcement, and a number of mechanisms existed to facilitate the process by which citizens could report crimes. Among these, the *denunzia* ('denunciation') was the most widespread system of social control and self-regulation in early modern Italian cities.<sup>98</sup> In Venice news and information circulated widely in the public space, and denunciations to the authorities – including, by the seventeenth century, the Inquisition – were frequently based on intelligence supplied by spies and informants, who acquired it by associating with gatherings (*bozzoli*) that took place at street corners and other informal meeting places around the city.<sup>99</sup> A similar process operated in the transfer of other forms of informal knowledge – for example, gossip – which was gathered by observation and listening in public places, and communicated to sites of authority, where it might assist decision-making or the application of sanctions.<sup>100</sup> This sequence, whereby information as a commodity was created and shaped in public space, and transferred to an authoritative body, where it would be elaborated and acted upon by government institutions and officials, reveals an important aspect of the public sphere in the pre-modern city, and the role of citizens in the process of what might be described as self-surveillance.<sup>101</sup>

*Denunzie* existed in various degrees of formality, and were a key component of the legal system; they ranged from formal accusations brought by publicly appointed officials to far more informal and apparently anonymous reports submitted by citizens, usually on slips of paper, for scrutiny by government officials.<sup>102</sup> While the former were a frequent prelude to the court proceedings that fill countless volumes of countless archives, documentary evidence for the latter is rather rare, as the slips of paper that were deposited were expendable, and thus tend not to have survived in the archives. Nevertheless, we know that in a number of cities a network of denunciation boxes was distributed at various locations – usually associated with the seats of government offices – where citizens could deposit their testimonies. So, for example, in Florence what Allie Terry-Fritsch has described as a 'focused inner ring of surveillance' was articulated through the central placement of denunciation boxes (*tamburi*) in or outside the cathedral, Orsanmichele, the Palazzo della Signoria, the Palazzo del Podestà (Bargello) and the church of San Pier Scheraggio.<sup>103</sup> In Venice there



60. One of the network of *bocche di leone* in Venice, by the door of Santa Maria della Visitazione. The inscription invites citizens to deposit ‘denunciations regarding public health’.

was a network of *bocche di leone* boxes, sculpted in the form of the head of a lion to evoke the civic patron, St Mark (fig. 60), a number of which were placed around the Palazzo Ducale, with others at churches and various locations in the city’s *sestrieri* to facilitate local depositions.<sup>104</sup> Similarly, in Bologna in 1509, following the re-establishment of papal control over the city, a box (*tamburo*) was placed on the piazza Maggiore to encourage citizens to speak out against anyone who supported the exiled Bentivoglio family, though it appears to have attracted only ‘nonsense’.<sup>105</sup> In Siena the boxes (known as the *cassettine delle denunzie*) existed in at least two locations in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, one by the high altar in the cathedral and another at the

doorway to the *podestà*’s residence on the left side of the Palazzo Pubblico.<sup>106</sup>

What these examples show – and similar practices were adopted in other cities, where denunciations boxes were often in or near the city’s principal churches – is that while denunciations were purportedly anonymous, the process and setting adopted for the transaction was, in fact, often very public.<sup>107</sup> The locations of the denunciation boxes, attached to the principal sites of secular and divine authority in the city, imposed a very public performance for the depositing of slips, which was perhaps also intended to ensure that the procedure was not abused.<sup>108</sup> The submission of a *denunzia* in so prominent and populous a location became a visible and public transaction witnessed by the polity. This, in turn, might be regarded as evidence to suggest that *denunzie* were not lone private acts carried out by individuals, but rather more an expression of citizen participation in the exercise of disciplinary power, implicating the citizen body in the exercise of law and order.

Besides the process of deposition used for such denunciations, the actual information that they reported was frequently collected in the streets, as they often documented infringements of regulations. It is impossible to know how many of the beneficiaries of the Marian amnesties discussed above had found themselves in jail as a result of citizen denunciations. However, a rare set of surviving cases of *denunzie* from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Siena provides evidence of the variety of misdemeanours that were reported; the archives contain a number of volumes related to the prosecution of breaches of regulations that pertained above all to sumptuary laws, prostitution and sodomy (also, from the sixteenth century, failure to comply with rules about the treatment of plague victims).<sup>109</sup> The overwhelming majority of denunciations in a volume for the period 1470–90 are complaints of fiscal impropriety among those in public office – an expression, it might be suggested, of the polity policing its public officials – though there are occasional instances of other categories of infringement.<sup>110</sup> There are reports of illegal gambling dens, a scattering of infringements of sumptuary laws and a few cases of Jewish moneylenders not *portando il segno* (‘wearing the mark’); in the case of Elia di Salamone from Poggibonsi, whose *banco* was in front of Fontebranda, this appears to have been an excuse to complain of the high interest rates he charged for a loan.<sup>111</sup> In one

instance of 20 April 1478, an unidentified denouncer opens with ‘You officials are fast asleep!’, and goes on to refer to a series of infringements of sumptuary laws:

Punish the wife of Francesco di Quirico and the daughter of Ristoro di Notto – the one that isn’t married – [...] because on the past 28 March each of them wore a bird embroidered with pearls, as all Siena can bear witness many times, as well as Paulo di Gherardo. Also the wife of Danese Saracini who wore two jewels on various occasions this past Janaury, as Paulo di Iacomo di Ser Angelo and Ser Tommaso Biringucci and various others can testify. And the wife of Lodovico di Pietro Carli wore three jewels with pendants as Gheri Borghini, [and] Gabriello di Bartolomeo di Paulo will witness.<sup>112</sup>

While it is not clear whether the denouncer was one of the named witnesses, the account is outspoken in stating that these infringements of regulations restricting the wearing of jewels had been observed by various respectable people. More significant still is the claim that ‘all Siena’ – the whole city – could testify to the facts, confirming the very public nature of these women’s flouting of the rules. Denunciations thus created a feedback loop, revolving around public space. Like the small sample of crimes in Siena discussed above – thefts, assaults and other unlawful acts – the infringements reported by the *denunzie* took place in public space and were witnessed by citizens, who reported their observations through a public mechanism that transferred their adjudication to the authorities.

In fact, as has recently been shown for Florence, citizen denunciations often filtered through government offices and found their way back onto the streets through the actions of the town crier (*banditore*), whose pronouncements regularly sought to identify the perpetrators of local petty criminal acts.<sup>113</sup> While one of the *banditore*’s tasks was to announce, regularly and repeatedly, various measures regarding public order – such as rules on observing the night-time curfew, the prohibition on carrying weapons, bans on gambling and so forth – much of his business was evidently made up of appeals that came through from denunciations and other citizen requests.<sup>114</sup> Thus, for instance, in October 1514, Florence’s town crier was sent out to the very spot at canto alle Macine where Jacopo Giachetti from Sesto had been sleeping under a butcher’s table and had his purse stolen from under his hat, to seek information on its return.<sup>115</sup> In describing fugitive slaves, missing children or wanted individuals (memorably, for example, Niccolò Machiavelli and Benvenuto Cellini), the town criers crowd-sourced their search, calling on the polity to recover individuals who sought refuge in the relative anonymity of the city’s streets and public spaces.<sup>116</sup> Announcements of even less importance, concerning the loss or theft of jewellery, livestock, or items of smaller value still, such as linen or clothing, were made with specific reference to the locations from where the goods had been taken.<sup>117</sup> As noted above, theft and assault often took place at night, and the town crier’s synthesised accounts frequently reported this; such was the case in the unusual incident of early 1482, when graves in front of Santa Maria Novella were robbed and desecrated overnight and information was sought the following day to identify the perpetrators.<sup>118</sup>

Everyday incidents such as those reported in the *denunzie*, or for which the *banditore* records provide second-hand accounts, reveal a sort of database of public knowledge, on which the polity relied. Because most of the evidence they present relates to criminal activities of a somewhat minor sort, they offer a glimpse of the everyday interactions between people and the public spaces of city streets and squares, and the ways in which citizens were actively involved in managing these spaces. As such they constitute a valuable counterpoint to the vertically exercised control of public space, articulated through operations such as street straightening and beautification operated by central government authorities; by contrast, they provide a view of public spaces as the key arena within which the citizen body acted in the horizontal exercise of disciplinary power.<sup>119</sup> In line with the observations of Jane Jacobs, who noted the central role of neighbourhood or community networks in the policing and management of local areas in modern cities, *denunzie* document a process of regulating behaviour in which local residents were active participants, as opposed to passive subjects or bystanders.

### *Regulating spatial confinement*

In order to explore this process further, it is worth considering perhaps the most spatially determined and contingent activity in the early modern city: prostitution. A number of studies of prostitution in Italian cities have begun to explore the spatial dimensions of its legislative controls and practice.<sup>120</sup> As is widely known, prostitution was closely controlled in pre-modern cities, and copious legislation survives to document how sex workers were confined to specific areas and required to wear distinguishing clothing or marks in order to separate them from 'honest' women. Controlling sex was considered so important that many Italian cities appointed groups of officials specifically tasked with seeing that legislation was applied, and prosecuting offenders; in many cities they were known as *ufficiali dell'onestà*, in recognition of their primary function of protecting morality and decorum.<sup>121</sup> Streets, taverns and bath-houses were closely associated with prostitution, and the prosecution of this activity was increasingly street-specific, as well as being associated predominantly with night-time, which, as we have seen, was a time of generally heightened security controls – to the point that in Florence there was a specific office, the *ufficiali della notte* ('officers of the night').<sup>122</sup> Moreover, while many prostitutes registered their profession with the authorities, in line with the statutory requirements of most cities, others did not, giving rise to an almost unending stream of denunciations levelled against women.

While such denunciations often turned out to be defamatory accusations brought by unscrupulous neighbours, the accounts of these cases tell us a good deal about how prostitution might be located and identified in the urban environment of cities, large and small. Although cities such as Venice and Rome were infamous for the high numbers of prostitutes who operated in the service of large populations of mobile males, even a small provincial subject town such as Arezzo had a sizeable red-light district, as emerges from the sixteenth-century accounts of the officials in charge of honour (*ufficiali dell'onoranza*).<sup>123</sup>



In Arezzo, as in most cities, the city statutes required that prostitutes should live and work in the public brothel or in a clearly defined neighbourhood adjacent to it; relatively high fines were levied for every breach of this law, and citizens who allowed prostitutes to operate from their properties could be fined as well.<sup>124</sup> The statutes also specified that public opinion (*pubblica fama*) was enough to establish whether someone was working as a prostitute – a measure that was again widely applied throughout Italy, and gave rise to many accusations that were brought to trial.<sup>125</sup>

In line with prostitutes operating in other cities, the majority of those who registered in Arezzo were not local, but had migrated there to work; leaving home was evidently the first spatial consequence of working as a prostitute.<sup>126</sup> Perhaps because it was a relatively minor centre, and consequently the potential to make a decent living was less than in larger cities, lists drawn up in 1565 and 1571 indicate that most prostitutes working there came from small towns quite close to Arezzo, whereas prostitutes working in Florence, Rome or Venice travelled far greater distances from their places of origin.<sup>127</sup> While some of the women working in Arezzo had moved from Florence, Rome and Perugia, the majority were from smaller and more local towns such as Borgo (San Sepolcro), Castiglion Fiorentino and the Casentino villages of Talla and Catenaia.<sup>128</sup> Once they arrived in Arezzo, prostitutes were faced by the second spatial consequence of their trade, as they were required to take up residence in the city brothel or one of the houses that packed the narrow street of borgo a Piano, on the north-eastern side of the city, not far from the walls and Porta Crocifera, yet only a short walk from the city's commercial centre.<sup>129</sup> By the second half of the sixteenth century, they also had to wear a yellow ribbon as an identifying mark, as was reported in November 1570, when Elisabetta and her daughter Cassandra from Montepulciano were accused of hiding theirs with scarves.<sup>130</sup>

Prostitutes were therefore confined to precisely defined locations in the city, with the specifically stated aim that they should not 'corrupt the honesty and goodness of the other [women]'.<sup>131</sup> Consequently, many of the denunciations that were reported through the *onoranza* officials relate to topography, as they described incidents perceived as evidencing the illicit activity of prostitutes operating outside the area to which they were meant to be confined. Such was the case with Flaminia di Giorgio from Rome, accused of working as a prostitute from a street close to the monastery of San Francesco in January 1566; in her testimony to the *onoranza*, she claimed to have moved out of a tavern facing onto a small piazza, where she had previously lived and presumably worked, as she wished to 'live well'.<sup>132</sup> Similarly, Betta di Francesco del Cortesia from Cicigliano lived in the central via della Bicchieraia, close to the piazza Grande and Pieve di Santa Maria, described as an 'honourable area' (*luogho honorato*); various witnesses described street brawls, men hanging around her door, and outbreaks of shouting and other loud noises at night, which led one neighbour to declare that he 'considers and believes her to be a public whore'.<sup>133</sup> In addition to discussing the noise created around the houses of women accused of working in the sex trade (*fare copia del suo corpo*), most of the evidence presented was visual, and relates to what neighbours perceived as the comings and goings around the houses of those they accused, both at night and during the day.

So, for instance, a remarkably long-drawn-out case, lasting almost two years, was recorded in November 1564, when Antonia di Bernardino del Lepre, alias 'la Binacchiona', and her mother, Madonna Nanna, were accused of working as a prostitute and procuress respectively, on the borgo Maestro, not far from the permitted street.<sup>134</sup> The denunciation stated that the respectable way of life on that street, 'where citizens and honourable people live[,] is not compatible with such dishonest people', whose conduct 'sets a bad example'. Among many witnesses who came forward for both sides, one Iacopo di Piero reported that he had seen young men go in and out of the house at all times of day and night, and that there was a constant stream of men knocking loudly on the women's door, or throwing pebbles at the windows to get their attention.<sup>135</sup> A local dispute between the women and their neighbours was evidently raging, but in January of the following year the case took a new turn when a prosecution witness from one of the city's leading families, Matteo di Francesco Bacci, came forward, claiming that the two had *pubblica fama* as prostitutes and 'that for at least a year to date he has heard people speak and judge them in the city of Arezzo in the shops, the public street corners and where people gather to gossip'.<sup>136</sup> By June they were identified as 'shameless, dishonest women, leading a bad life' and required to join the registered prostitutes in borgo a Piano.

Whatever the truth behind the accusation brought against 'la Binacchiona' and her mother, Nanna, the episode speaks clearly to the spatial dynamics that operated in such denunciations of *pubblica fama*. Clear distinctions were drawn between licensed and prohibited areas: the pair were eventually required to move no more than 50 metres to the permitted street, indicating the hard boundaries that were evidently clearly understood by neighbourhood residents. Moreover, the behaviour that some of the witnesses described – knocking on doors, throwing pebbles, men shouting and hanging around doorways – reveals that acoustic marks underlined how the sex trade blurred boundaries between public and domestic space. It is significant that witnesses were providing accounts of what they saw and heard on the street – presumably from the windows of their homes as well as from the street itself – thus documenting the ways in which public space conspired to shape reputations. Finally, as the testimony of Matteo Bacci shows, it was from the public spaces of the city where men socialised – shops, street corners and other places – that the collectively assembled verdict on the women's activities was delivered.

This evidence from Arezzo conforms with findings by scholars for numerous other Italian cities. Confinement of prostitutes to a public brothel or adjacent carefully delimited streets was a common practice, as was the selection of a location that was relatively easy to access and yet not prominently visible. In Florence the *ufficiali dell'onestà* established the focus for the sex trade in a relatively large enclave in the city centre, right at the heart of the Mercato Vecchio, an area also densely packed with taverns (fig. 61).<sup>137</sup> Plans in the early fifteenth century to establish additional purpose-built brothels in the working-class districts of Santa Croce and Santo Spirito were never enacted, and by the mid-sixteenth century a list of eighteen streets that prostitutes could work on was drawn up in recognition of the fact that their activity was no longer confined to the central market area alone.<sup>138</sup> Likewise, in Siena, the city brothel was located at a regulated site behind the city hall near the market, to some extent



61. The Mercato Vecchio, Florence, between the Baptistery (top left) and Orsanmichele (bottom right), detail from an engraving by Stefano Buonsignori, *Nova pulcherrimae civitatis Florentiae topographia accuratissime delineata*, 1584 (repr. Rome, 1690), Harvard Map Collection, Harvard University Library, Cambridge, MA.

out of sight, but certainly under the strict control of city authorities, who also maintained the gallows in the same area.<sup>139</sup> Evidence throughout the fifteenth century shows that prostitutes worked more widely around the city; in January 1462, for example, new rules drafted by the *ufficiali di custodia*, a group of officials charged with policing public space, banned prostitutes from operating out of two inns, the *Albergo della Corona* and *Ospizio dell'Austro*, both of them near the church of San Donato, close to the city's main street.<sup>140</sup> The following year further measures were taken to remove the 'dishonest' activities of prostitution and gambling from the area behind the piazza Tolomei and the church of San Cristoforo, with the threat of property confiscation for any offenders who did not vacate their premises or desist from their activities.<sup>141</sup>

In Ferrara a rather complex picture emerges in the fifteenth century, where there were at least three main brothels, on the northern, southern and western edges of the city. These were quite small establishments, often attached to taverns, which provided insufficient rooms; proposals were therefore made in 1490 and 1491 to create a larger, purpose-built brothel that might be more effectively managed.<sup>142</sup> Following the demolition of the tavern and associated brothel of El Gambaro to make way for one of Ercole d'Este's urban expansion and street-straightening projects in 1498, it appears that the main area designated for prostitutes emerged around via delle Volte, on the city's southern edge. Here the focus of the city's sex trade appears to have found a more permanent setting, among the taverns and bath-houses, and far from the grand new *Addizione Erculea* urban expansion to the north. That such was the case is reinforced by a provision of 1501, reported by an anonymous diarist, that 'public whores must stay [in the area] behind the Hospital of Sant'Agnese in Ferrara [around via delle Volte], and those who own the houses can rent them to whores, but they cannot live elsewhere, on penalty of being whipped through [the streets of] Ferrara.'<sup>143</sup>

While accusations and prosecutions show that prostitutes continued to operate outside specified areas, the gradual process that sought to restrict their activity to specific parts of cities continues to be documented throughout the sixteenth century. An interesting example comes from the port city of Genoa, where the historic brothel in Montalbano – a working-class district on the northern edge of the city – was displaced in 1551–2 as part of the large-scale patrician urban renewal project that led to the creation of the palace-lined showpiece of the *strada Nuova*.<sup>144</sup> The city authorities funded the construction of a new brothel in the relatively nearby area of Castelletto, adjacent to the city walls, despite opposition from the friars of San Francesco, who complained of the dishonour that would be brought to their neighbourhood.<sup>145</sup> Copious legislation, echoing the concerns expressed in other cities, determined that prostitutes should be confined to this designated space, which was carefully regulated and taxed by communal officials; however, evidence indicates that, as elsewhere, prostitution continued to flourish in other parts of Genoa, including centrally located streets such as *vico Stella* (behind the *strada Nuova*) and *vico Mezzaglera*.<sup>146</sup>

The situation in Rome matches the same pattern, albeit the high numbers of prostitutes and the unique position of the city as the centre of the Church and capital of the Papal States led to more extreme expressions of the urge to confine and prosecute the sex trade. Before the mid-sixteenth century, prostitution in Rome had not been concentrated in any one area, though the situation changed rapidly with the election of reformist pope Pius V (1566–72), who sought to create a single ghetto-like precinct to which all the city's prostitutes were required to move.<sup>147</sup> *I luoghi* ('the places') where they were confined centred on the area of Ortaccio, around *piazza degli Otto Cantoni*, a part of the Campo Marzio between the Tiber and *piazza del Popolo* that was increasingly urbanised through the sixteenth century; initial implementation included the creation of a fully gated area, though, after this was abandoned, prostitutes remained concentrated in this precinct well into the seventeenth century.<sup>148</sup> City census documents from 1600 show that the majority of the city's prostitutes were resident in *i luoghi*, while a sample of 1607 interestingly shows a process of internal stratification, with smaller numbers of wealthier courtesans living on the more elegant streets (for example, *via Ferratina* and *via Lata*) and larger concentrations at the heart of the Ortaccio area, in the proximity of the *Porto di Ripetta*.<sup>149</sup>

In all these cases, then, we can observe a tension between the creation and maintenance of establishments or zones designated for prostitutes to work in and the erosion of these by non-compliance. Purpose-built brothels appear in the majority of cases to have given way to designated zones, the spatial and sensory boundaries of which needed to be policed. New forms of control were required to manage the revenue derived from the permits issued to prostitutes, as well as, of course, to maintain decorum. So, for example, in Florence during the fifteenth century, Nicholas Terpstra has persuasively argued that, as prostitution ceased to be contained in the designated enclave in the *Mercato Vecchio*, significant concerns emerged to separate those areas lived in by prostitutes from the urban blocks occupied by religious houses; in 1454 a law was passed forbidding prostitutes from operating anywhere within 300 *braccia* (c.175 metres) of convents and monasteries, and this was reissued repeatedly

through the 1470s and 1480s.<sup>150</sup> By the following century, as multiple streets where prostitutes could live and work were listed, the boundaries were reduced to 100 *braccia*, creating ever harder edges for the spatial control of the city, by both elected officials and citizen denouncers.<sup>151</sup> Terpstra has suggested that this reduction in distance should be viewed as evidence of a growing concern on the part of the authorities to reduce the day-to-day impact on religious and secular residents living in the proximity of prostitutes, as expressed particularly through the prosecution of noise.<sup>152</sup> As opposed to concentrating on licences, sumptuary rules or other legal requirements, prosecutions by the *onestà* from the early 1560s reveal an overwhelming drive to pursue charges resulting from shouting, insults, brawls and assaults that disturbed neighbourhood life – very much the same sort of issues that motivated the activities of the *onoranza* in nearby Arezzo.<sup>153</sup>

In the spatial tussle for access to and use of the streets, we can again observe – as in the wider practice of *denunzie* discussed earlier – how legislative measures and formal policing were heavily dependent on the distributed network of citizens, who observed and reported on what was happening in the streets and houses around them. We see, then, how social practices and the uses of urban space might be regulated by the centrally imposed, vertical exercise of authority, which was to a degree dependent on pervasive and horizontal community practices of surveillance.

There was, moreover, a visual language of urban space – signs and symbols that communicated this mutually reinforcing process of exclusion and surveillance. As has been shown here, the streets – often well-defined areas of narrow alleys – could themselves be defined as zones of confinement, and from the sixteenth century a similar model was adopted for the segregation of faith communities, especially of Jewish residents in a number of cities.<sup>154</sup> The creation of these designated residential areas – which eventually took the name ‘ghetto’ from the well-known Venetian example – can be seen to follow a similar process to the one documented here for the confinement and control of prostitution. Street-level anxieties led from a relatively open spatial regime in at least some fifteenth-century cities to more systematic bricks-and-mortar enclosure in many cities during the following century. These areas might have fixed edges – gates or streets that could be closed off – but their perimeters could also be marked by signage that established the boundaries for certain practices and behaviours.<sup>155</sup> More generally, the everyday forms of urban residential architecture – with windows and balconies overlooking the open spaces of streets and piazzas – created the natural conditions for observation, as part of a horizontal and distributed practice of enforcement exercised by many.<sup>156</sup>

Returning to the example of Antonio Rinaldeschi discussed at the outset, an analysis from street level frames surveillance in the city as a complex overlapping system, where architecture, institutions and participatory systems of self-surveillance controlled behaviour. The urban fabric of city streets in early modern Italy provided the dynamic structure for the performance of everyday life – a ‘representational space’ as Henri Lefebvre would have it – and this was an arena subject to the collective gaze of the polity.<sup>157</sup> Surveillance of urban public space has been discussed in terms of observation and visibility – from above and below – and the control that it exercised also worked in multiple directions.

Rather than follow Foucault's neat break between the performative violent justice of the Middle Ages and the subtle surveillance of the Enlightenment state, we should instead consider both to be at work in the early modern city.<sup>158</sup>

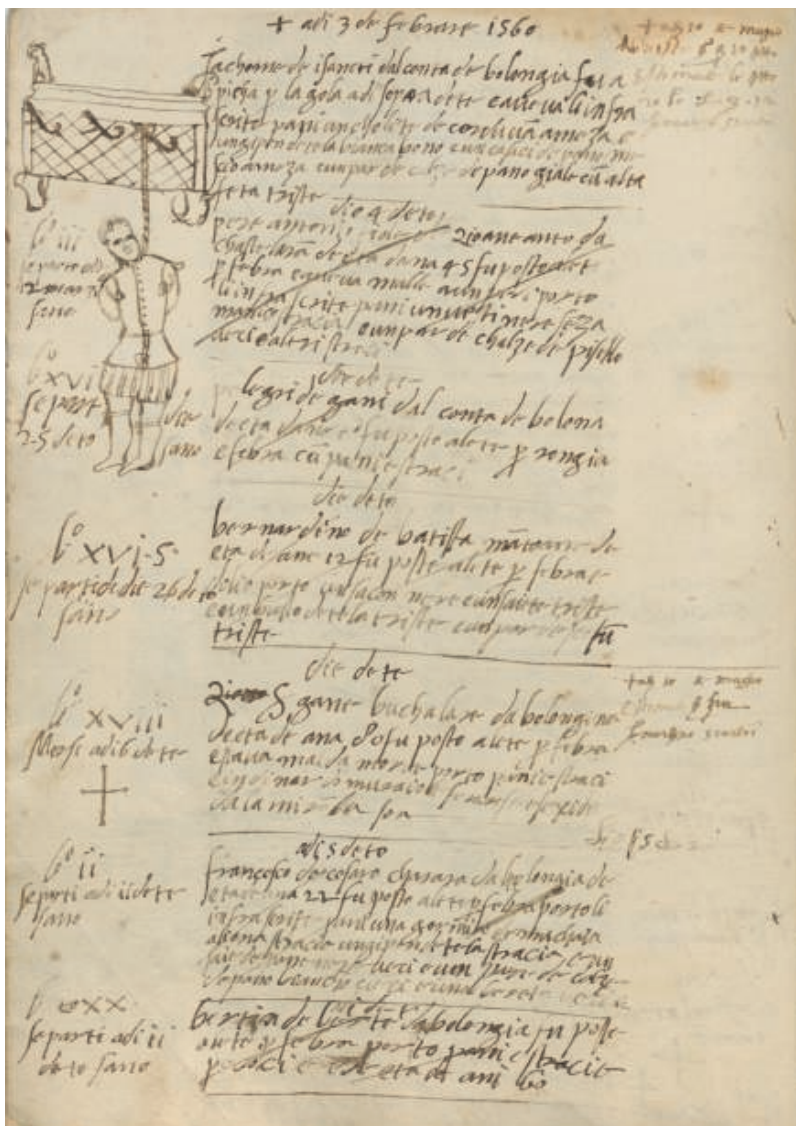
### *Performative justice and city streets*

The workings of distributed horizontal networks of surveillance in coexistence with the vertical exercise of authority and its performance in public space, are revealed in a remarkable incident that took place in Bologna after the reconquest of the city by Julius II in October 1506, and the exile of the ruling Bentivoglio family.<sup>159</sup> Extensive resistance to the papal presence in the city, and the punitive force with which the Bentivoglio and their allies were exiled while their properties were expropriated and even demolished, is well documented.<sup>160</sup> One less well-known manifestation of resistance appeared in the form of anonymous notices (*scrittardini*) that were distributed around the city during 1507; in August of that year one diarist recorded that such papers were 'spread about the city, affixed to various public places', bearing 'rough and unguarded verses, of an extremely satirical nature'.<sup>161</sup> The verses addressed issues such as food shortages and the city's loss of liberty, bemoaning the fate of the Bentivoglio and accusing the pope and ecclesiastical authorities – described as *pritaci* (a pejorative form of 'priest') – for these and other problems.

The ruling authorities were quick to crack down on the perpetrators of these subversive texts and their public distribution throughout the public spaces of the city (*scriptarinos seu cedulas per civitatem*): a provision of 2 August promised a 200 ducat reward to anyone who provided information sufficient to unmask and bring the offenders into custody. Evidently unsuccessful, it was followed by a further provision, on 28 September, specifically describing the 'one or more individuals who have spread and continue to spread throughout the city of Bologna' these seditious texts.<sup>162</sup> The town crier was charged with announcing the legislative measure and (now) a 100 ducat reward for the capture of the perpetrators.

Thus, in this first phase, we can observe the war of words played out in the streets of the city. Here, the threat posed to the authorities was not only that of critical and subversive utterances, but the fact that these were expressed in the form of the written word, distributed and affixed in urban public spaces for all to see. Though ephemeral, this public and visual contestation of authority was fiercely opposed by the new ruling authorities, and the legislative response was also communicated publicly through the pronouncements of the town crier. In turn, of course, the action of the town crier (and the reward) appealed to the established distributed networks of citizen surveillance to secure information that could not otherwise be gathered. As such, it was the public space of the street – as the space within which information, gossip, and reputations were formed and exchanged – that was both the venue for the criticism of the new regime and for its policing.

In the event, at least one perpetrator was identified, a notary and supporter of the Bentivoglio faction called Ercole Ugolotti, who was captured and brought to the chief of police (*podestà*) on 2 October 1507; he was tried immediately and



62. Stefano de' Corvi, pen and ink sketch depicting the hanging of Jacome dei Sancti on 3 February 1560, from a book of the dead recording executions in Bologna, Fondo Ospedale, Ms. 7, fol. 70v, Biblioteca Comunale, Bologna. The criminal is shown with his hands tied behind his back, hanged from the balcony of the Palazzo del Podestà, the traditional site for the public execution of criminals in Bologna.

punished with the highest available penalty of execution, enforced by public hanging on 4 October.<sup>163</sup> This very public punishment took place on the feast day of San Petronio (a significant date in the civic devotional calendar, as the Bolgnese chose Petronio over Peter as their patron saint) from the balcony of the palace of the *podestà* on the piazza Maggiore facing the monumental church dedicated to the city's patron (fig. 62, and see fig. 21). The macabre spectacle of Ugolotti's hanging body was invested with additional communicative meaning by two signs attached to his feet; these spelled out his crimes, including the distribution of the *scrittari* and damage to public papal insignia. Clearly this act of performative justice was particularly effective, as it took place on one of the city's most important feast days, when crowds of citizens would have passed through the main civic public space as they made their way into the church of



63. Annibale Carracci, *Study for an Execution Scene*, c.1595, pen and ink on paper, Royal Library, Windsor Castle.

San Petronio. Displayed from the prominent balcony of the palace that represented the city's law enforcement, Ugolotti's body and the written texts affixed to it made a powerful show of papal authority as a deterrent to its critics.

As with the crime and punishment of Antonio Rinaldeschi, so too with the events involving Ercole Ugolotti, the public arena of the city's streets was both the site of the initial crime and the mechanism through which the authorities were able to gather information that led to the capture of the offender; from this distributed, urban-scale network, the operation of justice then moved to an institutional, centralised site of authority, where punishment was enacted as a public performance, to be observed by the urban community from the level of the street. Not all capital punishment in Italian cities at this period was enacted in central locations, but it is notable that executions whose purpose was most to act as deterrents (where there was often a political dimension to the crime) tended to be performed in these more central urban settings.<sup>164</sup> In Rome, for instance, while multiple sites were used for executions, the two most common were on the Capitoline hill, the site of secular civic authority, and at the piazza di Ponte, across the river from the Vatican precinct and the papal fortress of Sant'Angelo.<sup>165</sup> Public executions might also be meted out at the actual site of the crime, but the majority tended to be performed at these two main sites, and during the sixteenth century the latter emerged as the primary venue for capital punishment, in line with the concentration of authority in the hands of the papacy.<sup>166</sup>

There is some evidence that the urban design of the bridgehead location, dominated by the mass of the increasingly militarised Sant'Angelo on the Vatican side and the projecting trident of streets leading into the city on



the other (see fig. 27), was consciously developed to accentuate the visual impact of the piazza di Ponte as the site for the macabre ritual spectacle of executions.<sup>167</sup> The nearby prison of Tor di Nona made this a practical location, but the papal symbolism of the huge sculptures of Sts Peter and Paul that flanked access to the bridge, and the purpose-built compound where executions took place and bodies were displayed, suggest a deliberate purpose to increase the exercise of papal authority in a visible location projected towards the city (see fig. 55). A fast-growing number of executions were performed at the site through the sixteenth century, in which the confraternity of San Giovanni Decollato managed the ceremonial process of accompanying and comforting the condemned.<sup>168</sup> It was such confraternities that managed the ‘horrific performance’ of complex ceremonies, in which offenders were brought in procession from their place of incarceration to the site of punishment; these events formed a regular part of urban ritual life (fig. 63).<sup>169</sup>

The same kind of procession was common in cities throughout Italy, and an array of centrally located sites of punishment inside city walls, as well as outside city gates, became well-known landmarks in the urban topography. Sites of execution tended to be chosen for their visibility, and the routes to them and public spaces around them accentuated the efficacy with which they communicated the strong arm of justice to urban communities. Confraternities such as San Giovanni Decollato (Rome), Santa Maria della Morte (Bologna), the Compagnia dei Neri of Santa Maria della Croce al Tempio (Florence) and the Scuola di San Fantin (Venice), as well as numerous others across the peninsula, were established as *comfórterie* (‘comforters’), and the processions they arranged made tangible the connections between the multiple sites of authority in the city.<sup>170</sup> It has been noted that executions in Bologna tended to take place on market day to ensure good crowds, and, in this context, one of the tasks of the confraternities was to provide what Terpstra has described as a ‘sensory cocoon’ between the condemned and the ruckus of the procession of which they were the focus; the need for this service is itself evidence of the volume of crowds that gathered on these occasions.<sup>171</sup> With the public hanging of criminals such as Ugolotti, then, the primary site of the administration of everyday justice and law enforcement became the stage for the performance of the ultimate expression of that authority. Here, the centralised workings of authority structured space and its use, a representation of space – in Lefebvre’s terms – that articulated clearly where power resided and how justice was administered.<sup>172</sup> On these occasions the meanings and purpose of government-promoted urban renewal became explicit, so that streets and public spaces became a recognisable technology of surveillance and control.

## Streets, Neighbourhoods and Spatial Networks

A little-known fresco from a now demolished palace in Perugia depicts a fairly unremarkable street scene in the first half of the sixteenth century. Attributed to the local artist Giovanni Battista Caporali, the fresco forms part of a cycle that was produced in 1535 for a ground-floor room of the house of a celebrated lawyer, Guglielmo Pontano.<sup>1</sup> The Pontano family had long been active in the legal profession and the cycle depicts other members of the family who had been lawyers (Paolo, Ludovico and Giovanni), as well as a scene of Guglielmo teaching a group of students, perhaps in the city's university (Studium Generale) or in the law school that he had established in the family palace itself.<sup>2</sup> This building – the Palazzo Pontano – forms the main subject of what is undoubtedly the most interesting of the frescoes, a street scene, which proudly depicts the family home on the right side of the composition (fig. 64).<sup>3</sup>

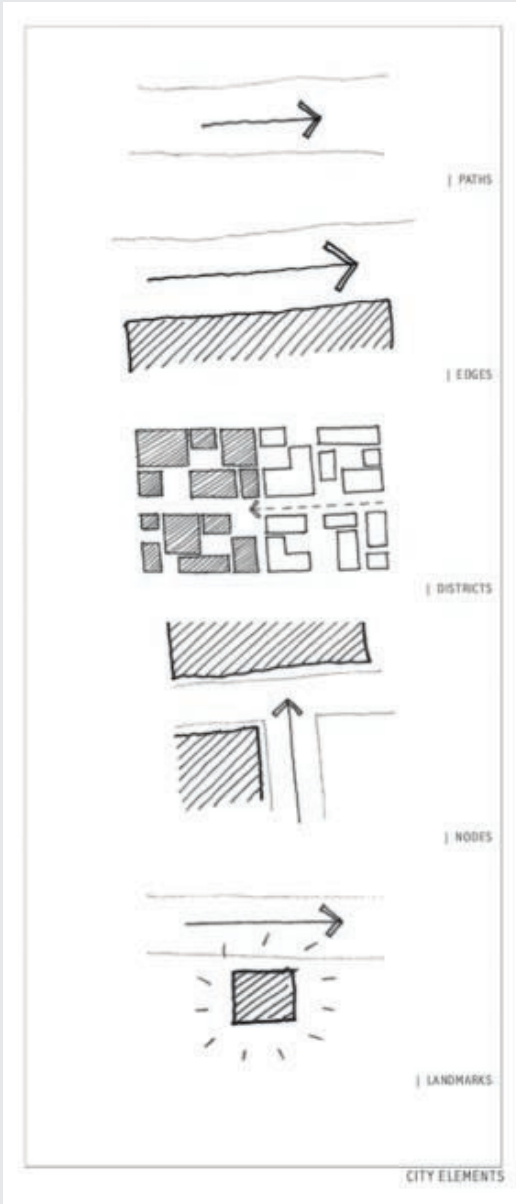
Everyday life on the street is the protagonist in this scene, with the city's residents and visitors going about their daily activities, busily occupying much of the foreground. Eight horses and pack animals can be seen: horses are the means of transport for most of the individuals around the Palazzo Pontano, and one is held by a page boy or attendant. On the opposite side of the street three of the four animals carry bales of goods, and so are clearly identifiable as working animals. The social life that gravitates around Palazzo Pontano underscores the status of the building and its owners; two figures who appear to be lawyers, one of them holding a document, stand close to the front door of the palace, while the three men walking down the street towards the palace could be students making their way to Pontano's law school. On the left side, by contrast, various people go about their business, carrying goods perhaps for sale at market; one woman, in the centre foreground, carries farm produce and may be identified as a *treccola*, a street seller.<sup>4</sup> The time of day that the picture captures is uncertain, though the fact that most of the traffic is moving towards the city centre suggests the morning. Shops are open, and small groups of people are assembled around some of these, while others hang around by doorways, or sit on benches that face onto the street. While there are some women on the street, a greater number can be seen looking down on the scene from numerous windows and an elaborate balcony on the Pontano residence.



Palazzo Pontano stood on the via Romana or via Papale, one of the city's grander streets, facing the church of Sant'Ercolano and overlooking the steep descent of borgo San Pietro towards San Domenico (where Guglielmo Pontano was eventually buried) and the ancient church of San Pietro, whose bell-towers are visible in the background, to the left.<sup>5</sup> The street itself is paved with bricks laid in a herringbone pattern, with no distinction marked between the street and the houses that line it; only some buildings are subtly separated from the roadway by stone steps, or have benches and stalls that project outwards onto the street. This is a mixed-use neighbourhood, where elite houses such as that of the Pontano stand side by side with more middling residences, such as the two houses with white stone rectangular framed doorways to the extreme left and right of the composition. Excepting these three grander homes, much of the rest of street is made up of humbler buildings. Across the way from the Pontano palace a house with steps raising the entrance off the level of the street and two overhanging jettied balconies was probably occupied by more than one family. The borgo San Pietro, which forms the centre of the view, is lined with undistinguished houses, many of which contain ground-floor shops facing onto the busy street.

In his ground-breaking analysis of urban form, *The Image of the City* (1960), Kevin Lynch identified five key elements that defined how people understand and experience movement through the urban environment. The elements he pinpointed were: 'paths', or the streets and other routes that people use to move around the city; 'edges' as the boundaries that limit movement (for example, walls or watercourses); 'districts' a term he uses to describe larger urban areas with shared characteristics or identity; 'nodes', which are the significant

64. Giovanni Battista Caporali (?), *View of the Porta Romana*, early 16th century, fresco from the Palazzo Pontano (dem.), Perugia, now in Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria, Perugia.



65. Five key elements that define people's experience of the urban environment, based on Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1960; redrawn by Alex Hibbert).

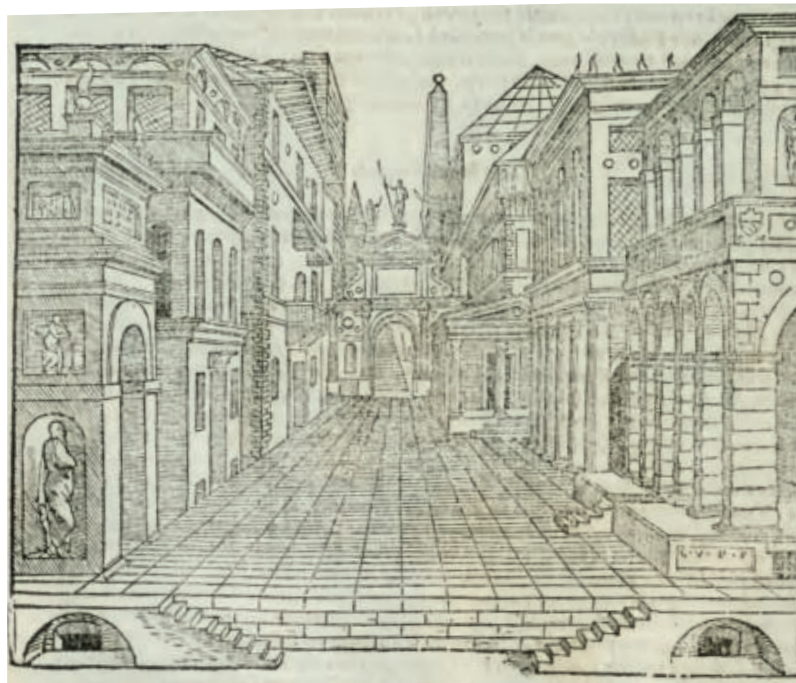
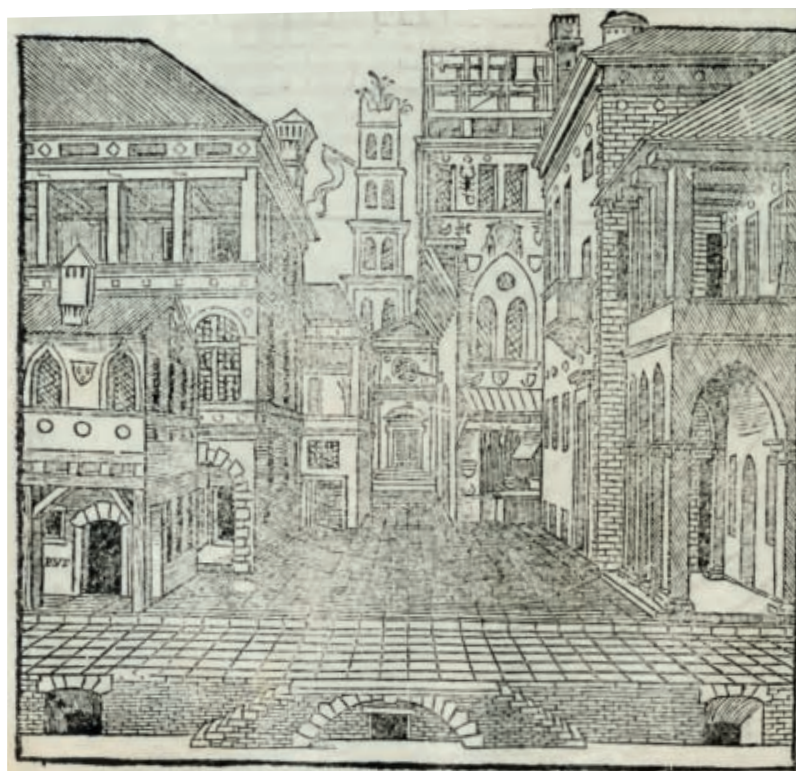
intersections or meeting points that stand out in the street network; and finally 'landmarks' – the principal sites and objects in the cityscape (fig. 65).<sup>6</sup> These elements were derived from interviews that Lynch conducted with residents in American cities, and privileged the perspective of the everyday user on the street to describe and analyse what made a city 'imageable' – that is, memorable through lived experience, in contrast to the objective knowledge of cartographic representation. In this respect, we might say that Lynch's method (which has influenced generations of urban-design theorists) offers complementary analytical tools for describing de Certeau's 'practiced space', discussed in the Introduction to Part I, by identifying distinct spatial conditions in relation to experiential practices.<sup>7</sup> While Lynch's analysis was based on an ethnographic approach to the contemporary city, his observations and conclusions can nevertheless be usefully applied to the study of urban environments in the past.<sup>8</sup>

In the light of Lynch's five elements, we can now usefully turn back to the Palazzo Pontano street scene and reassess it. Paths structure the composition: the main thoroughfare of the via Romana (or Papale) forms the foreground of the image, while the sloping borgo San Pietro creates a perspectival funnel leading out of the city towards the countryside, visible in the distance. The hard edges of the scene are formed by the architecture of houses and palaces that frame the street; while doorways suggest a degree of permeability between residential interiors and the public street, social conventions carefully define rights of access. The scene can be said to depict a district, a unit of the urban environment, here defined by the central placement of the residence of the Pontano, a leading family around whose house neighbourhood life revolves. The very focus of the scene is a node: the intersection of

two streets, and particularly the street corner marked by the family palace, is revealed to be a site busy with social interactions, encouraged by the flow of traffic converging there. Again, landmarks are in evidence in the composition: a focus on the Palazzo Pontano is obviously justified through the family's patronage; the scale, height and strong architectural accenting of the palace's corner, with its stone quoining, the multiple residential and commercial ground-floor openings and the animation of figures in and around it all mark it as the focus of the composition. Beyond it, the local church steeples dominate the skyline, providing a visual marker for destinations outside the painted scene, yet significant to the family and neighbourhood.

In fact, secular subjects, including populated street views, are significantly less common in art of the Renaissance period than they were to become from the mid-seventeenth century, when topographic accuracy in the portrayal of neighbourhood scenes became a characteristic of the very popular *veduta* genre, which distributed the image of Italian street scenes throughout Europe by means of widely disseminated paintings and prints.<sup>9</sup> Painted records of ritual and devotional practices, set in topographically accurate settings, are not uncommon from the fifteenth century, though, as we shall see, purely secular subjects are quite rare.<sup>10</sup> This makes the Pontano fresco all the more remarkable, as it offers a very rare insight into everyday urban life, and shows the degree to which spatial and architectural meanings are clearly and inextricably associated with social practices and behaviours. As such, and as has been briefly discussed above, the scene's meaning derives as much from the built environment as from the animated groups of figures that populate it. The fresco reveals how distinct urban elements serve to define discrete forms of human action in, and experience of, the built environment; in both pictorial and textual representations, a range of perceptions can be discerned, from the district-level understanding of defining landmarks to the far more localised conditions that shape movement along thoroughfares and encourage gatherings at nodal points.

It is this range of spatial and architectural conditions that is the subject of Part II. In the three chapters that follow, the discussion is structured around Lynch's categories of imageability, as we move from the wide-frame consideration of streetscapes (paths and edges), to a discussion of street corners (nodes), and end with a re-evaluation of the domestic residential palace (an example of what we might consider a local landmark). The discussion of the social fabric that populates the urban environment also adopts a narrowing frame of focus, from the large-scale patterns of urban zones and regions in the city towards the more personal interactions facilitated by specific sites and building types within it.



# Paths and Edges

## *The Street Ecology of City Centres and Neighbourhoods*

The buildings should be those of private persons, as it might be of citizens, lawyers, merchants, parasites and other similar sorts. But above all there should be a prostitute's house, you shouldn't forget a tavern, and a temple is very important.<sup>1</sup>

Writing in Book II, 'Di prospettiva' ('On perspective'), of his treatise on architecture (first published 1545), the Bolognese painter and architect Sebastiano Serlio is describing here the first of three main types of stage-set design for classical theatre: comic, tragic and satyric (or pastoral).<sup>2</sup> He goes on to discuss in greater detail the variety of building types chosen, and their arrangement to create a fixed scenery, in which the lower houses appear at the front, while complex massing and careful arrangement of porticoes, balconies and jetties create a sense of movement and space appropriate to the sorts of drama that play out in comedies. He contrasts the *scena comica* with an alternative urban stage set suited to tragedies, in which:

the buildings should be of grand personages, on account of the fact that the accidents of lovers, ill-fated events, violent and cruel deaths [...] always take place in the houses of lords, dukes, great princes and indeed kings [...] there will be no buildings that are not in some way noble.<sup>3</sup>

If we turn to the woodcut illustrations that accompany Serlio's text, these contrasts are thrown into sharper relief (figs 66 and 67). Both scenes are presented in what was to become the familiar format for a perspectival or fixed stage set – a rigorous gridded paving system, set out to convey a tight geometric composition, depicting a streetscape receding towards a central point at the back of the stage.<sup>4</sup> The 'comic scene' stands out for its architectural variety, where a rich mix of Gothic and classical forms combines to shape a diverse urban environment. The scene is closed off in the background by a medieval bell-tower attached to an elegantly classical church or 'temple'. At the front, to the viewer's left, is a rather humble house, largely built of wood, and yet decorated with a simple coat of arms between the upper floor windows; it is labelled 'RUF' (an abbreviated form of *ruffiana*, 'prostitute' – the word Serlio

### FACING PAGE:

66. Sebastiano Serlio, design for a 'comic scene', woodcut from 'Di prospettiva', Book II of *Tutte le opere di architettura* (Venice, 1619), fol. 45v, Getty Research Institute, Getty Center, Los Angeles

67. Sebastiano Serlio, design for a 'tragic scene', woodcut from 'Di prospettiva', Book II of *Tutte le opere di architettura* (Venice, 1619), fol. 46v, Getty Research Institute, Getty Center, Los Angeles.

uses in the text) by the door, marking it out as the brothel. On the other side of the street, in the foreground, a wide Gothic-porticoed structure supports a wood-beamed upper-floor balcony, perhaps to be understood as a useful feature allowing actors to enter the stage from this raised vantage point. Most of the other buildings resemble Quattrocento palaces, with the exception of the most prominent of those in the middle ground, a complicated building containing a shop counter on the ground floor and a grand two-light Gothic window on the first floor, and topped by a jettied upper level. The whole building is liberally decorated with coats of arms (one of which may be that of a Medici cardinal), while the shop counter is probably arranged to serve food – it is a tavern, identified in Serlio's text as the 'hosteria della luna' ('At the sign of the moon').

In marked contrast, the 'tragic scene' draws on a far more uniform architectural vocabulary. The scene recedes to a focal point comprising a triumphal arch topped by statuary, behind which can be glimpsed an obelisk and a pyramid in the immediate background. The foreground is framed by classical arcaded structures. On the left, what appears to be an arch with an attic bearing an inscription is decorated with full-figure and low-relief sculptures, while, on the right, a two-storey loggia may serve a similar function to its Gothic counterpart in the 'comic scene', providing a prominent point for dramatic action. The architecture all seems to be made of stone, and echoes the classical style prevalent in elite circles by the mid-sixteenth century.

The two textual commentaries, with their respective illustrations, present a contrast between the 'comic scene', where the mixed use and varied styles of the architecture imitate the streetscape that would have been prevalent in the cities of the time, and the 'tragic scene', where a far more uniformly applied classical style would have resonated with some of the most up-to-date urban-renewal projects of the period. Serlio's comments appear to imply a moral distinction between the lowly goings-on of comedic drama and the more exalted actions that were the subject matter of tragedies, and in so doing make a case for the primacy of the classical style of architecture.<sup>5</sup> Serlio's advice resonates with the changing forms of urban-scale architectural intervention and street design in the mid-sixteenth century, as he champions the uniform application by ruling elites of classical design to the built environment, with the result that the city itself became a visual expression of rule by 'lords, dukes, great princes and indeed kings'.<sup>6</sup> To an extent, this view was shaped by the priorities of patronage, as Serlio acknowledged by referencing the liberality of princes as central to the production values of revival classical theatre.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, it is more than coincidental that fixed stage designs created during the sixteenth century were predominantly in the classical style and were made for ruling elites and princes, whose magnanimity was reflected in the splendid new theatres themselves.

Serlio's text, as we have seen, offers additional commentary regarding the design and purpose of the buildings, but dwells more on the practicalities of stage design, directed at architects who might follow his advice. An interesting passage on this subject considers the inclusion of human figures in the painted fictive architecture, such as women on balconies or looking out from windows.<sup>8</sup> The author disapproves of the practice, stating that 'they cannot move, and yet they represent life', and suggests that inanimate or motionless objects should be depicted instead, such as statues or sleeping animals.<sup>9</sup> In addressing the issue of



how the *trompe l'œil* deceives the viewer, he raises the distinction between the architectural setting – the stage set – and the live action played out by the actors on stage. This brings home the degree to which the proposed fictive architecture of the stage set marks the edges of the frame that is a stage, making the street the main field within which the dramatic action of the play is performed. While this is, to some extent, of course, obvious, Serlio's comments offer an interesting gloss on the public-facing nature of urban design in the sixteenth century, where built façades address the street, framing the everyday and exceptional actions that play out in the public realm.

As will be argued in this chapter, during the two centuries between 1400 and 1600 street design became a key instrument of urban renewal, and with this the built form of streets changed significantly. While we have already addressed in some depth the legislative measures and bureaucratic offices that supervised this renewal process (Chapter 1) and the social interactions that shaped those spaces (Chapter 2), this chapter turns to the architectural interventions that altered the built form of streets. It considers the gradual process of urban specialisation and segregation, which operated through the early modern period, as mixed-use urban environments gave way to spaces that were increasingly socially and professionally stratified. The discussion will focus on the buildings and large-scale renewal projects that modified or radically transformed parts of the city, so as to reveal how architecture came together on an urban scale to create distinct environments and street ecologies, defined not simply by single units, but by the collective association of multiple parts.

### *Mixed-use streets: Living and working around Renaissance streets*

Serlio's 'comic scene' provides valuable clues as to the appearance of the street-scapes prevalent in Renaissance Italy, mixing, as it does, styles, functions and social groups. The view undoubtedly condenses and simplifies the urban scene; nevertheless, a combination of a local church, a tavern and some shops, in addition to a range of housing types, would have been standard in most neighbourhoods, and is, indeed, reminiscent of both painted depictions of contemporary urban environments and extant examples of built centres across the peninsula. It offers a hybrid between street and piazza; the foreground stage (which is six paving modules deep) offers a clean edge, behind which the scene's property line recedes by jagged steps, narrowing into little more than an alley leading to the centrally placed church portal. This is a built environment that has evolved over time. The Romanesque *campanile* ('bell-tower') has outlived the church it was built for, which has been replaced in a classicising style common in the latter part of the fifteenth century; a range of ground-floor porticoes provides continuity of function, delivered through a range of styles spanning as much as three hundred years.<sup>10</sup>

The urban process – that is, the gradual transformation of urban environments – tends to be slow, and as such the *ex novo* creation of streets (such as that presented in the 'tragic scene', and examples of which are discussed later in this chapter) was an exception, albeit these instances have tended to receive greater attention in the scholarship.<sup>11</sup> More usually, streets were shaped by a process of

68. Arcade, along via Broletto towards piazza delle Erbe, Mantua.



subtraction and addition, as individual buildings, property boundaries or sight-lines were modified or substituted; institutional interventions worked to make streets wider or straighter, but individual patrons might intervene to transform specific buildings. It is this two-pronged action that was most commonly responsible for urban-scale transformation of districts and neighbourhoods, yet the predominant condition across cities as a whole was surely one of consolidation and evolution as opposed to one of dramatic transformation.

Continuity, then, was a dominant trait in the city fabric and the urban life transacted on a day-to-day basis in the streets. Broadly speaking, patterns of urban use were already well-established within cities by the fifteenth century; it was around the city centre that the most important religious and government institutions were housed, usually in monumental buildings facing large open public spaces.<sup>12</sup> City halls and cathedrals were relatively permeable buildings, to which significant numbers of citizens had regular access for the purposes of bureaucracy, governance or devotion. Many of the city's trades and professions also clustered in the centre, with shops, workshops and more ephemeral benches and stalls lining the streets around centrally positioned marketplaces; it was in these largely outdoor spaces that most everyday life and socio-economic interaction took place.<sup>13</sup> While the scale of city centres varied, a common arrangement tended to result in the grouping of the city's dominant families in these same areas, so that the more important streets were often made up of buildings that accommodated both residential and commercial functions. By contrast, further from the centre, neighbourhoods gravitating around, perhaps, a local church and the more limited services provided by bakeries and taverns, were predominantly residential, even though artisan housing often incorporated spaces for work and production.<sup>14</sup>

These broadly defined patterns of urban use were subject to change, as civic authorities or local rulers sought to rationalise or improve parts of the city, particularly around the centre. So, for instance, revisiting an example



69. Palazzo del Podestà (right), Mantua, viewed from piazza delle Erbe.

of street improvement discussed in Chapter 1, we shall start by considering the changes made in Mantua by Marquis Ludovico II Gonzaga. This project renewed the street network, extending south beyond the fortified Gonzaga palace enclave on the large open space of piazza San Pietro (now piazza Sordello), to create a thoroughfare from Porta San Pietro in the north, through the civic centre, past the church of Sant'Andrea and on towards the new church of San Sebastiano near the bridge across the lake in the south-eastern extremity of the city (see fig. 10).<sup>15</sup> The area benefited from prolonged and steady investment, promoted by the marquis from around 1460. Besides the improvement of the infrastructure, the architecture was also subject to significant changes during the same period. Starting from Porta San Pietro, which formed part of the city's oldest stretch of walls (pre-dating the twelfth century), an arcade runs along the north-west side of the street for more than 200 metres (fig. 68). About forty arches create a continuous covered pedestrian walkway, parallel to the street, each bay of which contains a shop opening; the arcade, in turn, supports housing on the upper floors and has the effect of creating a unified façade addressing the street. The columns and capitals that form the arcade are all made of the same white stone, and, although many are carved in the *all'antica* style dominant in the second half of the fifteenth century, some adopt a simpler Doric style that would appear to date to the first half of the sixteenth century. Simply moulded terracotta egg and dart cornices run along below the roof guttering, and some of the arches are finished with quite finely worked *all'antica* decoration. While documents confirm that the arcade formed part of Ludovico's plans for the urban improvement of this central commercial district, stylistic evidence indicates that it took some decades to complete.<sup>16</sup> Although Gonzaga will pushed through the project, and some architectural oversight controlled its appearance, it is unclear who funded the actual execution of the building work; it was probably financed by the owners of the properties along the street, who stood to benefit from the rental income from

70. House of the merchant Boniforte da Concorezzo, 1455, piazza delle Erbe, Mantua.



the well-placed shops in the city's commercial centre.<sup>17</sup> A new merchants' loggia, which formed part of the arcade, faced onto the piazza del Broletto and presided over the business activity concentrated in the area.

Facing the arcade on the south-east side of the street, a sequence of piazzas opened up – first the piazza del Broletto and then the larger piazza delle Erbe beyond; these were framed by buildings that had housed the city's administrative institutions from as early as the twelfth century. Here, too, Ludovico modified the existing medieval fabric, rather than rebuilding from scratch. Thus, the city's judicial offices, originally housed in the Broletto, were remodelled to form part of the new Palazzo del Podestà; these interventions rationalised the internal arrangement of the building, though greater attention was afforded to the exterior façade towards the large open market space of piazza delle Erbe (fig. 69).<sup>18</sup> Here, a severe brick-built façade, punctured by stone-framed, rectangular windows, gave order to the piazza, reinforced by a new arcade lining its eastern edge, along the front of the Palazzo della Ragione. The renovated piazza was completed by the erection of a clock



71. Church of Sant' Andrea, 1472–94, Mantua.

tower on its southern corner, furnished with a state-of-the-art clock installed by Bartolomeo Manfredi 'dell'orologio' in 1473.<sup>19</sup> Combined with the continuous arcade on the north side, these interventions significantly regularised the piazza, marking with some emphasis Gonzaga authority over the political, legal and commercial life of the city through the promotion of this renewal campaign.<sup>20</sup>

Clearly, then, a concerted effort was made during the two decades before Ludovico's death in 1478 to reorder this central urban area, made up of a sequence of piazzas linked together by a street. While large-scale building campaigns were undertaken, much of the earlier built fabric was maintained, some of it subsumed into the masking façades of new buildings, while significant portions of medieval architecture also remained visible. For example, at its south end the piazza delle Erbe was closed off by the remarkable house of the merchant Boniforte da Concorezzo, a richly decorated, three-storey structure completed in 1455, a few years before the Gonzaga interventions began (fig. 70).<sup>21</sup> The unusual house fuses classicising innovations with late Gothic flourishes; an open loggia on the ground floor differs from surrounding buildings

72. The arms of the Gonzaga and of the city government, set up as markers on the corner of the piazza Sant'Andrea, Mantua.



in using an architrave, as opposed to the arcading favoured elsewhere in the piazza and the city more generally. It is supported on graceful free-standing columns of pink Verona marble, topped with *all'antica* capitals embellished with the owner's coat of arms, while the architrave is charmingly decorated with examples of the luxury items sold in the shop. The rectangular frames of the upper storey windows, formed of elegantly moulded brickwork, are set with late-Gothic ogival windows. Neighbouring properties to the east of the house continue the architrave solution to the ground-floor arcades, introducing an element of variety to the buildings framing the piazza.<sup>22</sup>

Beyond the piazza delle Erbe stands the small piazza Sant'Andrea, which became the focus of perhaps the most ambitious of the marquis' plans, begun only in 1472 with the start of work on the massive new church of Sant'Andrea, designed by Leon Battista Alberti (fig. 71).<sup>23</sup> The porticoed façade onto the piazza was among the first elements to be completed (by 1494), and the rigorously classical design, modelled on a Roman triumphal arch, is interestingly flanked by the only surviving element of the earlier church, a Gothic bell-tower completed in 1414.<sup>24</sup> The remaining three sides of the small piazza are lined with undistinguished buildings, most of them having a ground-floor open arcade; architectural elements such as capitals and columns indicate re-use of salvage materials from

earlier centuries, which make it difficult to date the portico, though it seems logical to consider this as having formed a part of the Gonzaga plans. Stone markers on the corner of the piazza, dating to the first quarter of the fifteenth century, show the arms of the Gonzaga accompanied by those of the city government; they define a boundary of the market area (fig. 72), and confirm that the commercial vocation of the site pre-dated Ludovico's renewal campaign.<sup>25</sup>

South from the piazza facing Sant'Andrea, the street continues to be lined with arcades (along the modern-day piazza Marconi); again, a number of the capitals appear to be salvaged materials, though a preponderance of late-fifteenth-century *all'antica* Corinthianesque capitals indicates that this area was also subject to improvements during the period. Here, too, a remarkable survival stands out from the streetscape – the Viani house, whose frescoed façade of *putti* and classical motifs includes a much damaged scene of the *Clemency of Alexander*, executed towards the end of the fifteenth century as part of a more extensive restoration of the house.<sup>26</sup> The building may offer an insight into a wider practice of fresco and *sgraffito* decoration of plaster façades in the city, though it is also interesting to note that, in spite of the splendid exterior, the house is no larger than its neighbours and conforms to the standard two-bay design prevalent in the area.<sup>27</sup>

In short, we can conclude that the large-scale architectural intervention along a section of Mantua's central street network almost half a kilometre long was achieved by a carefully managed integration of previously existing buildings, with remodelling and new construction. A predominant style can be identified in the *all'antica* forms prevalent during the latter part of the fifteenth century, but this was not uniformly applied, and various buildings stand out as being from earlier periods. Although individual elements – or set pieces, as we might consider them – emerge as 'monuments' of Renaissance design, the overall picture is rather more complex. From a classic perspectival photographic viewpoint, Sant'Andrea can be seen as an isolated and magnificent example of the renewed language of classical architecture, chiming with Alberti's description of the design, in his architectural treatise, as having been inspired by the Etruscan temple.<sup>28</sup> And yet the building dominates a relatively small, irregular and crowded piazza, bounded by a variety of quite ordinary buildings, and retains a Gothic bell-tower that is mismatched with the severe classical façade. Much the same might be said for the regularised piazza delle Erbe, framed by the new façade of the Palazzo del Podestà and the portico connecting it to the symmetrically aligned Torre dell'Orologio. Here again, a set piece of institutional architecture needs to be qualified by the less regular forms of the portico on the south and west sides of the piazza, which hug the flank of Sant'Andrea, providing precious shop space around the market square. Thus, if we consider the new buildings within the wider urban context into which they were inserted, the variety of building types and styles, and the collective image these create for the viewer moving through the spaces, the resulting urban environment has much in common with the varied formulation of Serlio's 'comic scene'.

Nevertheless, it is also essential to remember that, as Marquis Ludovico pushed through his plans to renovate the centre of Mantua, so simultaneously he expressed his power upon the canvas of the city, bending the local authorities that presided over local government and trade to his interests, and crushing the

resistance of the monastic congregation of Sant'Andrea by securing a papal intervention to place the church under the direct control of his son Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga. Further, by directing his attention beyond the fortified precinct of the family's sprawling court residence, he ensured that the street renewal served a programmatic function by extending the family's influence in capillary fashion across the city as a whole, and, in particular, towards the new construction sites around the San Sebastiano complex.<sup>29</sup> In the light of these motivations, we might say that the path etched by the enhanced street network served a political function, while the buildings that line its edges retained a variety of purposes, primarily characterised, in this central area of Mantua, by the commercial vocation of the extended market precinct.

The Mantua example is interesting for highlighting the multiple and overlapping uses of urban space and the varied purposes that might be attributed to urban renewal campaigns. While the Gonzaga family accrued status from the political, diplomatic and ceremonial functions of the reordered space, on an everyday level an outstanding improvement was made to the way the space functioned as a commercial hub, with fixed shops and comfortable porticoes for its users. As Kurt Forster has noted, it therefore serves as a reminder that, all too often, analysis of urban planning interventions privileges idealised formal qualities over an understanding of the complex socio-economic factors shaping both their design and their everyday use.<sup>30</sup> This, in turn, has led to a tendency to attach greater significance to radically transformative urban interventions than to the more gradual or iterative processes that nevertheless altered countless streetscapes during the Renaissance.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, the Mantua example problematises the simplistic separation of street and piazza as distinct units of urban design; as we have seen, the interventions in Mantua affected a sequence of spaces, including small and large squares, but also street intersections along the central spine of a main street. Documentary records, as well as the built evidence, reveal the different elements of the project to have been understood as a coherent whole, so that when Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga visited the ongoing works in January 1464 his review was accomplished as an urban walk rather than a site inspection, and 'the route he took was along the street through the town to see those new buildings.'<sup>32</sup>

The cardinal was especially impressed by the porticoes lined with shops, and it is certainly the case that trade and the permanent improvement of the built infrastructure that supported commerce was a major factor in urban change from the second half of the fifteenth century. In Ferrara, for instance, a series of interventions around the cathedral and the ducal residence facing it were carried out in 1473, as part of widespread improvements to the city fabric in preparation for the arrival of Ercole d'Este's bride, Eleonora d'Aragona (daughter of King Ferrante of Naples), on 3 July.<sup>33</sup> Significantly, it was at this time that the distinctive shops lining the south flank of the cathedral were rebuilt in stone, giving a more dignified and permanent home to the *strazzaroli* ('silk merchants'), who had plied their trade from this site from the fourteenth century (fig. 73).<sup>34</sup> This permanent arrangement created a raised stone base for the handsomely carved marble viewing balcony of the Loggia dei Merciai, on the south-west corner of the cathedral. In turn, from 1492 a stone loggia was erected along the front of the Palazzo Ducale, backed by shops that were





73. Loggia dei Merciai, Ferrara, 1473, and the flank of the cathedral of San Giorgio.

let out to tenants, many of them in some way or another employed at court.<sup>35</sup> Here, too, rent-generating income from shops remained a priority in the city centre, and the ducal palace tenants included a carpenter, bricklayers, a draper and a tailor.<sup>36</sup> Above these shops, on the *piano nobile* of the ducal palace Corte block, the vast new Sala Grande reception room faced out onto the street and piazza, providing a dominant viewpoint over this central space. It is this regularised urban space – at once a street and a piazza – that forms the centrepiece of the late-fifteenth-century woodcut view of Ferrara in the Biblioteca Estense Universitaria (see fig. 24); continuous shop arcading can be seen along the southern façade of the cathedral as well as along the front of the ducal palace complex, while distinctive shop openings are also visible at ground-floor level along the axial street leading towards the gate that encloses this central precinct. While the bird’s-eye perspective provides a synthetic view of the city as a whole, there can be little doubt that the paved central area is intended to stand out as a well-ordered centrepiece, albeit one that it is composed of varied architectures and stepped alignments in the streetscape, again reminiscent of the mixed-use and stylistically varied ‘comic scene’ later depicted by Serlio.

### *Shops and streets*

In privileging the redevelopment of central streets through the provision of well-ordered infrastructures that supported trade and industry, Ferrara and Mantua were far from unique. Growing attention to consumption in the early modern period has led to a great deal of new research on the locations and

74. Via San Giovanni, San Gimignano. Photograph by Ivo Bazzecchi, c.1960.



practices of shopping in Italy before 1600.<sup>37</sup> As shown in the examples of Mantua and Ferrara, mixed-use building types were the norm in many central urban areas, as residential property was confined to upper floors, while ground floors (and sometimes mezzanines) were occupied by shops. Municipalities' growing attention to the fostering of trade was heavily conditioned by urban morphology, so that legislation regulating the distribution and clustering of trades, industry and commerce in cities tended to segregate these on sensory (aesthetic, acoustic, olfactory), rather than purely functional grounds; such measures led increasingly to the concentration of luxury trades along cities' main streets. Consequently, the ground floors of buildings lining these principal arteries frequently contained shops or other spaces that functioned in the economic cycle of industry, trade and exchange, such as warehouses or artisans' workshops.<sup>38</sup>

To an extent, of course, this was a long-established situation in Italy's industrial trading cities. An aerial view of the town of San Gimignano provides a useful guide to understanding the power of streets in channelling movement and focusing commercial activity, with a hierarchy of streets developing in relation to centrality and the resulting traffic flow of users.<sup>39</sup> San Gimignano, like nearby Siena, is a 'daughter of the road', a town whose flourishing medieval trade owed everything to its location on the via Francigena, the primary trade and pilgrim route linking northern Europe and Rome.<sup>40</sup> During the peak



75. Loggia della Mercanzia, on the Croce del Travaglio, Siena.

of the city's merchant fortunes from the twelfth into the fourteenth centuries, the ground floor of almost all the properties lining the main street contained shops and warehouses (fig. 74).<sup>41</sup> Although perhaps an extreme case, the town's location on the most important north–south pilgrimage artery to Rome and the socio-economic practices associated with its position were instrumental in defining its commercial success and its urban form, as well as the typology of the architecture along its central street.<sup>42</sup>

Much the same can be said for the main street running through San Gimignano's southern neighbour, Siena, another city with an urban morphology determined by the predominance of north–south traffic and likewise dependent on its location on the via Francigena.<sup>43</sup> While this main thoroughfare had long been the focus of trade, from around 1460 a series of government policies actively promoted the clustering of luxury *botteghe* ('shops') along the central section of the *strada Romana* as part of a wide-ranging policy to make the street into a showcase for the city as a whole. To underline Siena's ambitions to foster trade, the central intersection of the *strada*, known as the *croce del Travaglio*, adjacent to the market on the *piazza del Campo*, was given monumental form by the erection of a marble loggia housing the corporation of the city guilds, the Loggia della Mercanzia (fig. 75).<sup>44</sup> As early as 1399, the city authorities had agreed funding for the project, observing that, 'on account of the main street, all foreigners come past this place, from wherever they come to Siena';



76. Palazzo Piccolomini (left), Siena.

however, its construction and decoration continued well into the second half of the fifteenth century.<sup>45</sup>

Meanwhile, an extensive building programme along the street saw private citizens – often benefiting from public subsidies or tax incentives – invest in new houses and palaces, most of which were designed to accommodate ground-floor shops.<sup>46</sup> The coincidence, along a single street, of prime residential and commercial real estate meant that design solutions had to be found to accommodate shops even within the new type of domestic *palazzo*, as high rents made it worthwhile for patrons to retain shops even in the most prestigious homes.<sup>47</sup> So, for instance, in 1507 Andrea di Nanni Piccolomini – the brother of Pope Pius III and nephew of Pius II – stipulated in his will that a number of shops were to be purchased in Siena to enlarge the endowment that maintained the family’s interests in the cathedral church of Pienza. He was evidently keenly aware of urban commercial property values, noting that:

the shops should be located from the piazza Tolomei, along the *strada* towards piazza Piccolomini, turning from that piazza [Piccolomini] towards San Martino, and entering into [via del] Porrione, and along it towards the piazza del Campo, and anywhere on the Campo, so rising to Porta Salaria and following the *strada* to the croce del Travaglio.<sup>48</sup>

Andrea’s will effectively defines the commercial heart of Siena; coincidentally his own grand new home stood within this same perimeter, and, unsurprisingly, the entire ground floor was lined with rent-producing shops, as indeed was the adjacent family loggia (fig. 76).<sup>49</sup>

A combination of government policies and private patronage significantly modified the built form of the central section of Siena's *strada Romana* in the half-century following 1460 (see fig. 19), regularising this privileged pathway through the city and embellishing its edges through architectural improvements to the façades projecting onto it. These works were enforced by the *ufficiali sopra l'ornato*, the office founded for the specific purpose of supervising city improvements, who

work incessantly [...] and renew the city's appearance with appropriate and fine works, and especially by removal of overhangs from the most prominent sites. This is particularly the case in the street of Camollia [the northern section of the *strada Romana*], because visitors to the city see that street more than any other. And it is already clear how fine the street has become from the demolition of many of these overhangs.<sup>50</sup>



Citizens of varied financial standing were called upon to participate in the renewal campaign, some doing little more than remove overhanging structures that projected onto the street from simple two-bay houses.<sup>51</sup> Other interventions were significantly more ambitious, such as the grand new five-bay palace built for the papal banker Ambrogio Spannocchi from 1473, in the most up-to-date Florentine style to a design provided by Benedetto da Maiano (fig. 77).<sup>52</sup> Although considerable sums were expended to furnish the palace with a small piazza set back from the main street, it is notable that the Spannocchi palace façade is towards the main street, as are the ground-floor shop openings. This and the palaces of a number of other elite families – including the Cinughi, del Vecchio, Bichi, Trecerchi and Tolomei – combined to create an almost unbroken curtain of elegant and tall façades along the *strada* to the *croce del Travaglio* and beyond, all of them lined with multiple ground-floor openings that accommodated shops.<sup>53</sup>

Civic policies promoted the concentration of trade along the city's main thoroughfare, and benefited from the collective effects of aesthetic improvements to the built fabric, though the financial burden of these changes was largely borne by individual resident owners, tenants and shopkeepers. As in Mantua, we should be mindful of distinct – sometimes competing – priorities for urban improvement: the civic self-fashioning along the *strada Romana* created winners and losers, largely advancing the interests of the merchant elite, while creating significant challenges for traders such as butchers (who were zoned out of central areas), and less wealthy citizens (some of whom were unable to manage the high costs of renovating their houses).<sup>54</sup> To an extent, we might understand this process through the modern-day concept of gentrification, as the convergence of elite residential and commercial interests inevitably altered the socio-economic composition of the population resident along the

77. Palazzo Spannocchi, Florence, from 1473, viewed from the north. Photograph by Paolo Lombardi, c.1870.

city's main street.<sup>55</sup> In contrast to such processes, however, property values declined sharply off the main street, ensuring a degree of diversity in neighbourhood composition and a range of housing types, even in central areas.<sup>56</sup>

In Rome – the destination of so much of the pilgrimage traffic that came through Siena and San Gimignano – a complex network of medieval streets criss-crossed the residential centre of the city. This area was most easily navigated by four major axes, which pre-dated the numerous papal interventions of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that sought to regularise the city's layout and rationalise circulation. Entering the city from the north at Porta del Popolo, the Corso (or via Lata) led straight to the Capitoline Hill, while a series of east–west axes converged towards the Ponte Sant'Angelo, the main access point across the river Tiber, which connected the main part of the city to the Vatican precinct (see fig. 27).<sup>57</sup> The via Recta (later Coronari) was the northernmost of these lateral routes, while the via Papalis charted a central route through the city's banking district, close to the bridge, towards the vast open space of the piazza Navona (also known as piazza in Agone), near the centre. The route took its name from the pope, and the accession of each new pontiff was marked by a procession (the *possesso*) along this street and others on this side of the Tiber, in which he took possession of the city by moving through its thoroughfares in an elaborate ritual ceremony connecting the Vatican in the west to St John Lateran in the east of the city.<sup>58</sup> Finally, the via Peregrinorum ('street of the pilgrims'), as the name suggests, provided perhaps the most important east–west route for easing and rationalising the movement of outsiders through the city; it was considered to retrace the route of the ancient Roman via Triumphalis through what had become the most densely populated part of the post-antique city (the *abitato*), to its civic administrative centre at the Capitoline.<sup>59</sup>

As in the examples discussed above, it was around these main streets that many of the residences of the urban elite clustered, while service industries, luxury retail, and artisan shops and workshops more broadly were also concentrated along them during the fifteenth century.<sup>60</sup> In particular, the via Peregrinorum (also known as the via Mercatoria, the street of merchants), which passed through a number of the open spaces, including the city's main market space at Campo dei Fiori, emerged as the principal commercial street in the city and was lined with shops on the ground floors of properties along most of its route.<sup>61</sup> Looking back on the renewal of the city initiated during the pontificate of Sixtus IV and continued into the following century, Marcello Alberini noted that, before Sixtus' interventions:

it was not possible to see order in Rome, but rather disorder and disharmony of the buildings and the streets [...] so that if people that lived before our times were to see [the city] again now, they would judge it for the marvellous buildings and the magnificent streets as being more beautiful and more noble.<sup>62</sup>

A somewhat bombastic contemporary account of the city's good fortunes during the pontificate of Sixtus IV noted of the via Peregrinorum that 'it is here Golden Rome that you lay your wealth: where gleams the immense road now very beautiful [...] in this space[,] whatever is hidden in the earth may be seen'.<sup>63</sup> That magnificence and abundance of material goods was in evidence



above all along the route from Campo dei Fiori to Ponte Sant'Angelo, where luxury goods, as well as services aimed at pilgrims and travellers jostled for visibility in the densely packed thoroughfare. Later drawings confirm what the documents reveal to be a street filled with a variety of merchandise, and trades such as shoe shops and farriers to deal with the worn feet and hooves of travellers, and inns and taverns for them to rest, as well as luxury goods such as gold, armour and spices, giving way to bankers in the final approach to the bridge crossing to St Peter's.<sup>64</sup>

The high demand for shop space again heavily conditioned the design of houses and palaces. A rare survival of housing built around the last quarter of the fifteenth century, the house of Pietro Paolo della Zecca, fills a triangular plot on the spur between the via Peregrinorum and via di Monserrato, and was designed with broad, open shop spaces on the intersection and on the façade towards the main street (fig. 78).<sup>65</sup> The residential upper floors are defined by simple round-arched stone-framed windows and a top-floor open loggia, which also took advantage of the vantage point created by the corner location to enhance the building's visibility along the street. In so doing, the house adopted comparable strategies to those applied at the Palazzo della Cancelleria (from 1486), the sumptuous residence of the pope's nephew Cardinal Raffaele Riario, just a few hundred metres further east along the via Peregrinorum (fig. 79). Eleven shops were included in the via Peregrinorum façade of the

78. House of Pietro Paolo della Zecca, c.1475–1500, via dei Pellegrini, Rome.

79. Palazzo Cancelleria, from 1486, shop opening in the façade on via dei Pellegrini, Rome.



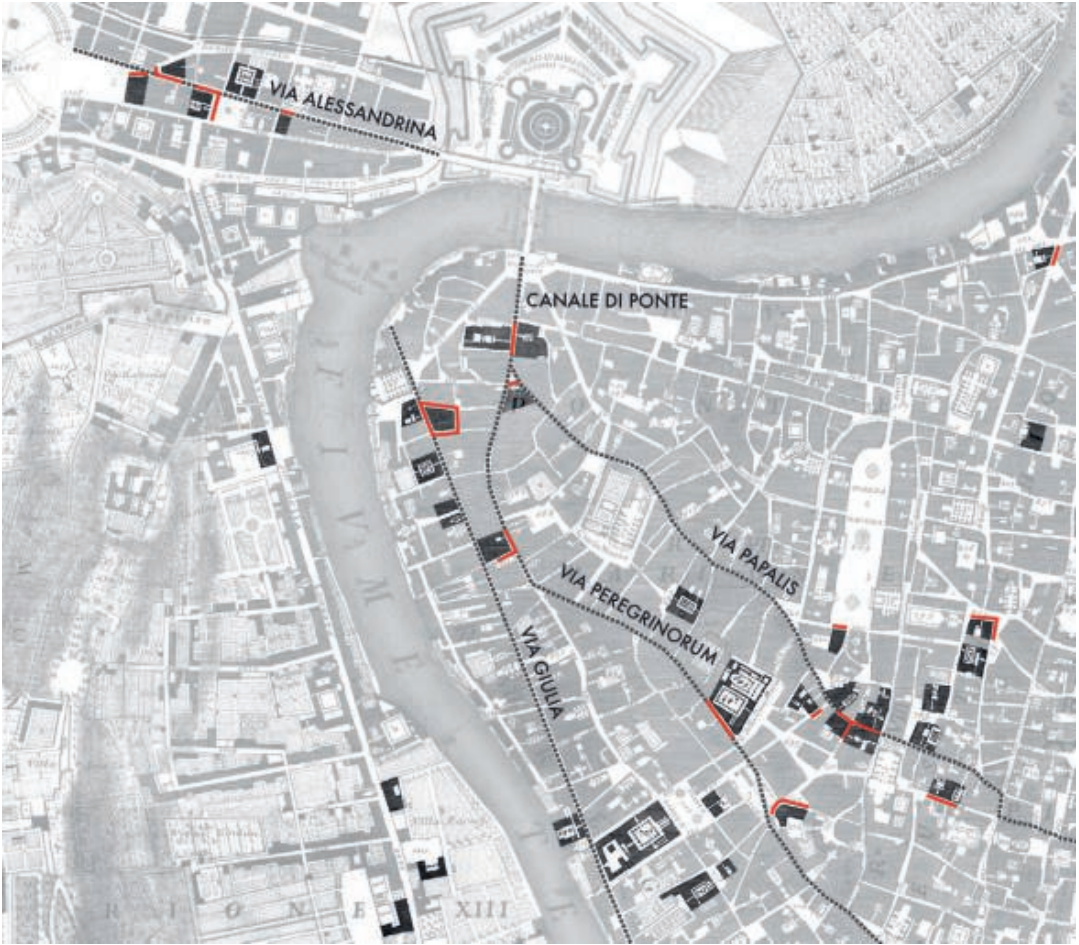
80. Palazzo Cancellaria, from the corner of via dei Pellegrini, Rome. Photograph from the second half of the 19th century.

Cancellaria, as reparation to the chapter of the titular church of San Lorenzo in Damaso, which had owned shops that were demolished to make way for the vast new palace.<sup>66</sup>

The great density of commercial activity in this area helps to explain the high rents commanded by the Cancellaria shops; the chapter of San Lorenzo had derived an annual rental income of 240 ducats from its shops, and it seems evident that a number of shopkeepers depended upon these spaces for their livelihoods.<sup>67</sup> While the façade along the via Peregrinorum is not the principal elevation of the Palazzo della Cancellaria (which, instead, addresses a purpose-built piazza, running north–south at a right angle to the Campo dei Fiori), it is nevertheless highly visible. A prow-like balcony, adorned with the Riario arms and an extended inscription, projects into the via Peregrinorum and towards the Campo dei Fiori to ensure visibility on ceremonial occasions (fig. 80).<sup>68</sup> Thus, far from being relegated to a side street, away from the principal facade, the shops faced onto the busiest thoroughfare in the neighbourhood, which, as we have seen, was one of the city’s most important arteries.

It seems that the commercial potential of sites located on the city’s principal thoroughfares almost certainly conditioned palace design elsewhere in early sixteenth-century Rome, a period during which the *palazzo* type was at the peak of its architectural development.<sup>69</sup> A sampling of palaces in Renaissance Rome, perhaps unsurprisingly, reveals that new palaces constructed along the city’s





main through routes – whether these were the original pilgrimage routes, or new papal streets – were likely to contain shops on the ground floor (fig. 81).<sup>70</sup> Among the new streets, the via Alessandrina or borgo Nuovo, cut in honour of Pope Alexander VI Borgia from 1498, constitutes perhaps the clearest example of economic policy and architectural design coming together to forge a new form of palace façade.<sup>71</sup> Via Alessandrina was the natural extension, on the Vatican side of the Tiber, of the main streets in the *abitato* that converged on the Ponte Sant’Angelo, and it served the function on the west side of the river of funnelling the dense curial and pilgrim traffic towards St Peter’s basilica.<sup>72</sup> The palaces built along this privileged pathway leading to the Vatican precinct almost uniformly adopted design solutions that provided ground-floor shops, to capitalise on access to passing custom.

Numerous examples reveal how powerfully trade conditioned street design and architecture, as the infrastructure of market areas extended well beyond the public spaces reserved for temporary stalls, piercing the enclosing walls of surrounding buildings and opening up the ground-floor façades that lined adjoining streets, so as to shape the appearance of entire neighbourhoods. As the

81. Map of Rome showing major arteries (dotted lines) and the locations of forty-two palaces built 1500–40 (black blocks), as surveyed in Christoph L. Frommel, *Der Römische Palastbau der Hochrenaissance* (Tübingen, 1973). The palaces that contain shops at street level are marked with a solid red line (manipulated version of Giambattista Nolli, *Nuova pianta di Roma*, 1748, etching, by the author with Peter Lowe).



82. Shops incorporated into the *volta* (arch or tunnel) of the Palazzo del Podestà, Fabriano.

evidence from Rome shows, trade and industry conditioned the development of the distinctive typology of the residential *palazzo* in those locations where there was a significant potential for rental income, and this applied widely in other cities too.<sup>73</sup> So irresistible was the lure of lucrative rents from shop premises, that they can be found in the most unexpected locations contiguous to market and commercial areas, even in civic buildings – as, for example, in the base of the bell-towers of the city halls of Siena (Torre del Mangia) and Ferrara (Torre di Rigobello), beneath the huge archway that bisects the Palazzo del Podestà in Fabriano (fig. 82), and distributed around the ground floor of the archbishop’s palace in Florence.<sup>74</sup> When the medieval church of San Donato in Spoleto was deconsecrated in the sixteenth century to make way for a civic fountain on the piazza del Mercato, a few surviving chapels were even remodelled as shops, still visible along the via del Palazzo dei Duchi (fig. 83).<sup>75</sup>

Shops were, indeed, not uncommon accessories to church designs and religious architecture more generally. As on the south side of the cathedral of Ferrara, and the flanks of the new church of Sant’Andrea in Mantua and the church of San Giacomo di Rialto in Venice – all places where churches abutted central commercial districts – the exterior perimeters of churches might be built to include shops;<sup>76</sup> this situation can be observed at the church of San Martino in Siena, close to the central market on the piazza del Campo, and the later Santa Maria ad Ogni Bene dei Sette Dolori in Naples.<sup>77</sup>

We shall return later in this chapter to the wider impact of religious properties on the make-up of some city streets, but here it is worth noting that the sort of compromise reached in the construction of the vast new Palazzo della Cancelleria was not unique. That such concerns persisted well into the seventeenth century is confirmed by a debate preserved in the minutes of a meeting held in 1639, as part of a discussion led by Virgilio Spada, prior of the Oratorian congregation of Santa Maria in Vallicella in Rome, regarding plans for their Oratorio complex.<sup>78</sup> The congregation noted the possible risks associated with the addition of shops at the street level of their monastic complex, including the possibility of fire spreading from them, and concerns over decorum related to the proximity of female shop-owners to the clergy living above. A dominant concern was the fear of criticism that, in the ‘best site in Rome[,] they should take away so much from the public weal’ by failing to provide shops and accommodation for second-hand dealers; and at the same time there was the sacrifice of potential annual rental income of over 500 scudi for commercial premises if they decided against including these in the new development.<sup>79</sup> A compromise solution was reached: the risks to clerical propriety were mitigated by means of a design that omitted mezzanine windows so the monastic quarters were not overlooked, but shop spaces for rent were retained, and these faced onto the prime real estate along via Papalis (via del Governo Vecchio).<sup>80</sup> Although this is a somewhat specific instance, it serves to illustrate the issues that were at stake, and confirms the degree to which the design of mixed-use building types largely depended upon location in the city, as the potential for shops to generate rental income was linked to their proximity to the city’s principal thoroughfares.

Again, as we have seen with the examples of Mantua and Ferrara, porticoes were a common feature of city-centre urban infrastructure, which facilitated interactions in public space. They provided a standardised ground-floor covered walkway in front of shops, which was free from traffic and eased pedestrian movement in many cities, especially those north of the Apennines; the most extensive extant early networks survive in Bologna and other cities and towns of the Po valley.<sup>81</sup> More piecemeal survivals reveal some use of porticoes in Rome and Naples, though in these cases there is evidence of their removal on the grounds of internal security. In other instances, such as the well-documented example of Vigevano – a satellite town of Milan, controlled by the Sforza family – the creation of central squares with continuous façades of porticoes has been interpreted as a strategy by means of which a ruling family imposed its authority by masking the institutions of local government. Vigevano was remodelled from 1492 on Ludovico il Moro’s orders, with the likely involvement



83. Shops on via del Palazzo dei Duchi, Spoleto. They were created from chapels remaining after the demolition of the church of San Donato in the 16th century.



of Leonardo da Vinci and Donato Bramante, to create a porticoed piazza, which reorientated the city's layout by turning the civic centre into a grand anteroom (fig. 84), leading towards the Sforza castle, accessed via a triumphal flight of steps behind the screen of the arcade.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, following Pope Julius II della Rovere's conquest of Ascoli Piceno for the Papal States in 1506, a regularised portico was erected around the town's central piazza, which was subsequently adorned with papal portrait statues.<sup>83</sup> Among a number of comparable examples from around the same period are the incomplete porticoed central piazza and streets created for Sixtus IV's nephew Girolamo Riario at Imola in the decades following 1474, and the construction of a monumental 53-bay *portico lungo* (fig. 85), facing the residence of Alberto III Pio in Carpi, following his imperial investiture as count in 1509.<sup>84</sup> Notwithstanding the political context and meaning of such interventions, it is also clear that these porticoes served a functional purpose: they invariably opened onto shops, creating a mixed-use urban environment ordered along classicising principles.<sup>85</sup>

While central city squares were frequently the primary objective of renewal campaigns, another aspect that emerges from the examples discussed here is the degree to which we might question the sharp distinction between street and piazza in central urban areas, given that a relatively continuous set of usage patterns unified these spaces and the activities transacted around them. Where extensive systems of porticoes were developed – as, for instance, in Bologna – a degree of continuity was created between arcaded piazzas and the street network, which reinforced the function of porticoes as a city-wide amenity of covered walkways. It is such a network that the Gonzaga rulers of Mantua sought to develop, while the more circumscribed interventions of shorter-lived dynasties, such as the Pio in Carpi, remained focused on the central sites of government and trade. Where porticoes were absent, or indeed legislated against, as in papal Rome at the time of Sixtus IV, the distribution of mixed-use buildings along the city's principal streets reveals a degree of continuity in the treatment of façades projecting onto open market spaces and the streets to which they were connected.

Notwithstanding cities where it barely figured, there can be little doubt that the arcaded portico, which tended to employ *all'antica* style capitals and other classicising details, emerged as a distinctive new element in urban-scale architectural interventions during the second half of the fifteenth century in Italy. It is striking that the word *portico* is one of the most commonly occurring architectural terms in Filarete's *Trattato di architettura* (c.1460–64), albeit, of course, it does not always refer to outdoor arcaded structures.<sup>86</sup> Filarete's imagined ideal city was laid out symmetrically and was rigorously zoned, but his comments nonetheless help to provide a theoretical context for the widespread implementation of arcading in the central squares and streets of Italian cities between 1460 and 1520. In Book VIII he notes:

The piazza will have six points of entry, two on each end, and one on each axis; and around these porticoes, will be distributed those that work silver, and on the other side will be the merchants and trades according to how you think best. This piazza will be filled with shops beneath the arcades, so that each will have space to conduct his business.<sup>87</sup>

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84. Piazza Ducale, Vigevano, from 1492, viewed from the east end of the square, with the Castello Visconteo Sforzesco visible on the left.

85. Piazza and Castello Alberto III Pio (now piazza dei Martiri), Carpi, with the *portico lungo*, built after 1509.

Similar comments accompany his account of the administrative and commercial district, with the implication that these porticoes offered an elegant solution to two requirements – namely, providing the necessary space for shops and their users, while hiding from sight the activities of less aesthetic traders, such as butchers and fishmongers.<sup>88</sup> More generally, the treatise literature of the period seems to have acknowledged the demand for mixed-use provision in housing to accommodate the needs of trade. Thus, while Vitruvius' writings were not fully understood in the fifteenth century, his treatise clearly acknowledged a functional hierarchy of residential types, responding to the professional needs of their incumbents: 'those who deal in farm produce must have stalls and shops in their entrance courts', while bankers and merchants require more luxurious surroundings.<sup>89</sup> Leon Battista Alberti's comments are somewhat ambiguous, as it is not clear whether he intended any class distinctions, but he remarked that, 'within the city, the shop that lies beneath the house and provides the owner with his livelihood should be better fitted out than his dining room, as would appear more in keeping with his hopes and ambitions.'<sup>90</sup> Later in the fifteenth century, Francesco di Giorgio Martini recommended socially stratified housing types and proposed that luxury retail should cluster around the central city streets; it is to this issue of stratification and zoning that the next section turns.<sup>91</sup>

### *Stratification or specialisation: Centres, clusters and peripheries*

As the foregoing discussion has shown, change to the urban landscape and network of streets was gradual, and proceeded through cumulative interventions that reshaped the built fabric of many urban centres through the fifteenth century. Running parallel to this process are proposals made in theoretical writings for idealised urban visions, and designs that sought to mirror the socio-political systems they were intended to house; they outlined comprehensive renewal and re-foundation of cities in rigorously classical style and according to principles of order and symmetry. As will be shown, a number of built projects put into practice the principles set out in these theoretical texts, although they were implemented at a range of scales and with varying degrees of success. While it is easy to assume that theory was intended to inform practice, this rarely materialised, and many of the best-known examples of centralised urban design – the so-called 'ideal city' – were almost certainly not intended as practical projects that would actually be built.<sup>92</sup> Conversely, it is all too easy to assume that completed urban-renewal projects of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were directly influenced by the theoretical principles set out in largely manuscript texts, but there is little evidence to prove this.

The treatise on architecture by Antonio Averlino (known as *il Filarete*), written for the Duke of Milan Francesco Sforza around 1460–64, includes an unprecedented centralised plan for the new town, Sforzinda, which he dedicated to his patron (see fig. 8). A fortified design on a significant scale, Sforzinda adopted a radial layout, focusing on a central piazza, around which were distributed the cathedral and the ducal palace; main streets radiated outwards to the gates, along which residential and industrial enclaves were distributed

according to a socially stratified system. In spite of the compelling visual appeal of its star-shaped walls and rigorously symmetrical design, Sforzinda was little more than a device for the architect to present his patron with a range of building types that would make up the city; with the exception of the Ospedale Maggiore hospital building in Milan, the designs remained unbuilt.<sup>93</sup> Much the same can be said for the many centralised designs for fortified towns and cities that Francesco di Giorgio Martini proposed in treatises produced while he was in the employ of Duke Federico da Montefeltro of Urbino (1480s).<sup>94</sup>

One common theme that emerges from these treatises and the numerous manuscript and later printed texts that followed them, is the overwhelming drive to create stratified and segregated urban forms. Authors from Filarete to Sebastiano Serlio described cities where socio-economic groups were rigorously confined to specific districts, trades were given fixed areas from which to operate, the principal institutions of faith and administration were accorded more central prominence, and the centre of the city was reserved for the residence of the ruler; proximity to the centre signified, while the lowliest, disenfranchised residents and professions were pushed to the city's edges.<sup>95</sup> To an extent, of course, this was anyway the configuration of cities, though the fantasies of treatise writers polarised and exaggerated systems that were in reality more complex and polysemous. The distribution of industrial clusters was often topographically contingent upon such variable factors as proximity to water, energy or suppliers, for instance, while elite family enclaves did not always converge around the city's main streets.

The processes of urban improvement, so widespread through the fifteenth century, generally went hand in hand with an increasing level of specialisation required for specific areas and particular building types. Growing numbers of administrative and bureaucratic offices were provided with purpose-built residences, which occupied significant portions of city-centre real estate; on or around most main squares were the buildings that housed the long-established institutions of civic administration and justice, and usually the residence of the (externally recruited) chief magistrate (the *podestà*). While, in the majority of cases, the ancient architecture of these buildings expressed the antiquity of the institutions they housed, a number of cities rebuilt or remodelled their town halls – as occurred in Bologna, for instance, during the second half of the fifteenth century, or in Rome, where Michelangelo refashioned the Capitoline complex from 1536.<sup>96</sup> Such interventions were rarely politically neutral: rather, they usually articulated the changing balance of power among ruling families or individuals, and their encroachment on civic liberties – in the cases just mentioned, the Bentivoglio in Bologna and Pope Paul III in Rome.

Even where such significant alterations were not made, new or expanded offices and their bureaucracies were accommodated in new palaces built in up-to-date classicising style. In Viterbo, for instance – a city whose connections with the papacy dated back to the time of the popes' temporary relocation there during the thirteenth century (marked by the magnificent papal palace) – the civic centre in the low-lying piazza del Comune (now piazza del Plebiscito) was altered with the addition of the large arcaded Palazzo del Governatore (Palazzo dei Priori), promoted by Pope Sixtus IV from 1481 (fig. 86).<sup>97</sup> As the building's name suggests, the ample palace was originally designed to house the



86. Palazzo del Governatore (now Palazzo dei Priori), Viterbo, from 1481.

governor of the ‘Patrimony of St Peter’s in Tuscia’, a new office that signalled the renewed papal control of the city and its region from the papal capital in Rome. Here, then, large-scale architectural interventions gave visual articulation to institutions that altered the balance and exercise of power in the city. It is in this light that Pope Julius II’s ultimately failed plans to create a legal hub for the city of Rome around the Palazzo dei Tribunali on the via Giulia, or the successful centralisation of all the law courts of Naples to the remodelled Castel Capuano (Palazzo dei Tribunali) by the new viceroy Don Pedro de Toledo from 1537, should be understood.<sup>98</sup>

Conversely, it might be said, following the end of the brief break in republican government during the lordship of Paolo Guinigi (1400–30), that the city of Lucca reaffirmed its civic independence by similar means; the Palazzo del Podestà (Palazzo Pretorio) was the first of a number of interventions that gave new definition to the independent city state and its administration (fig. 87).<sup>99</sup> Matteo Civitali’s *all’antica palazzo* (begun 1494) stands prominently on the piazza San Michele; an open arcaded loggia two bays deep at its base provided a meeting space, while the legal, administrative and residential accommodation reserved for the *podestà* was on the upper storeys. The piazza surrounding the Romanesque church of San Michele in Foro marked the area occupied by the ancient Roman forum, was an important focus for trade and banking, and was traditionally where many of the city’s notaries had their offices and *banchi*, so that the placement of the new palace gave greater monumental definition to these elite professions and to the city’s justice system.<sup>100</sup>





87. Palazzo del Podestà  
(now Palazzo Pretorio),  
Lucca, from 1494.

It is quite clear from these examples that a process of architectural specialisation altered many cities during the period under review, and an increasing area of numerous urban centres came to be occupied by institutional buildings. So, for instance, following the conquest of Brescia by Venice in 1426, as part of the expansion of its *terraferma* dominions, a new central square was developed, where the local government eventually took up residence in the magnificent *all'antica* Palazzo della Loggia (fig. 88).<sup>101</sup> The strikingly classicising building was begun around 1490 but not completed until the middle of the following century; it housed the offices of the local government, and was flanked on the same piazza by the expansive headquarters of the government-sponsored petty-loan bank, the Monte di Pietà. By the latter part of the fifteenth century, many cities throughout Italy had established similar institutional pawnbrokers, which provided petty loans at rates intended to undercut those charged by Jewish moneylenders.<sup>102</sup> Heavily promoted through the preaching of Franciscan friars – such as Bernardino da Feltre, whose sermons also whipped up anti-Semitic sentiments – Monti sprang up across Italy, satisfying a need for credit among large sections of the urban population, while adopting a transactional context of charity and devotion.<sup>103</sup> Monti tended to be housed in structures whose central location, size and magnificence advertised their presence to would-be users, and, because they were usually established with government backing, they frequently display the arms of the municipality. Such civic promotion is evident in Bassano del Grappa, where the Monte was set up in 1492 and housed in a building previously used as a city grain store on the



88. Palazzo della Loggia, Brescia, from c.1490.

market square (fig. 89), while in Siena the Monte was established in 1472 in the requisitioned residence of a leading family in the city's banking quarter on the main street.<sup>104</sup>

As has already been noted, central church authorities had a long-established monumental presence in the city centre (either on the central civic piazza or on a separate square), which was usually expressed in the form of a cathedral, baptistery and episcopal palace; in some cases, a more functional cathedral works office and workshop (*opera*) might also form part of the architectural ensemble. Beyond the localised distribution of parish churches across cities, mendicant orders had from the mid-thirteenth century established their convents on the city's outer edges, where land was more readily available and they could reach their core audiences.<sup>105</sup> Perhaps counter-intuitively from a demographic perspective, despite the decline in population owing to the Black Death and subsequent further instances of plague, the urban footprint of many religious institutions grew in size during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as convents and monasteries expanded to occupy larger sites, in part thanks to increased private patronage, which endowed them with land and sustained their building campaigns.<sup>106</sup> Hand in hand with this growth in convent architecture, there developed the enormous appeal of public sermons provided by the mendicant orders, which was given concrete expression in the dedication of large tracts of land to open spaces in front of convent churches to accommodate the vast audiences of the most successful sermon cycles.<sup>107</sup> While the huge new religious complexes certainly marked the urban landscape, perhaps even more signifi-



cant were these great piazzas, which created a constellation of open spaces that was usually outside the central areas of the city, where the episcopal authorities, government institutions and market areas were concentrated.

Much the same can be said for hospitals and other charitable institutions, which were again often confined to less central areas – indeed, often sharing the same city locations with the convents: the spatial demands of specialist accommodation, such as segregated dormitories or areas of confinement for specific maladies, could occupy quite extensive tracts of land.<sup>108</sup> Hospitals were frequently adorned with public façades, often lined with grand arcaded porticoes, which projected the image of these charitable institutions onto the cityscape, while providing shelter for visitors and users.<sup>109</sup> Filippo Brunelleschi's famous reformulation of the arcaded loggia for the new Ospedale degli Innocenti in Florence (fig. 90), decorated with illustrative maiolica roundels depicting the very swaddled orphans that the institution was built to house, had many imitators, including the Ospedale di San Paolo in the same city, as well as the Ospedale del Ceppo in Pistoia (fig. 91) and the Ospedale Maggiore in Milan.<sup>110</sup> Hospitals performed a variety of functions – including care of the sick, the poor, orphans and travellers – and their welfare mandate was clearly and publicly expressed by architectural means: the conventional structure of the courtyard was turned inside out to provide an external loggia for the accommodation of the needy. While Brunelleschi devised a simple *all'antica* interpretation of this form, earlier welfare institutions located on central public spaces had also used loggias and open doorways to articulate their offering of civic-sponsored

89. Monte di Pietà,  
Bassano del Grappa.



90. Ospedale degli Innocenti, Florence, from 1419.

welfare – as, for instance, the hospital of Santa Maria della Scala in Siena, or the Bigallo in Florence, both of which occupied sites adjacent to the cathedral. As we shall see, thanks to testamentary bequests, hospitals, like the mendicant orders, frequently emerged as major city landlords, and consequently had a determining role in shaping streetscapes, especially at the residential urban periphery.

Returning to the city centre, significant urban-scale interventions extended and reordered networks of shops beyond the central market spaces, which nevertheless retained their role as a key instrument for the spatial control of trade and industry within the city, given that the majority of early modern commercial and industrial spaces were part of the pre-existing building stock. It is important to keep sight of the fact that these carefully orchestrated urban spaces also lent themselves to more informal usage, which often sought to capitalise on the benefits accrued to central areas through the concentration of trade. So, for instance, pedlars and sellers of street food or produce from the countryside often found spaces in the market areas to sell their wares, while these same spaces might offer rich pickings for beggars and orphans collecting alms.<sup>111</sup> While such less-regulated activities animated the street life of commercial centres, conscious efforts were made to group trades and industries in particular areas; street names often corroborate statute and other evidence of the confinement of particular trades to specific streets or sectors of a city's market area.<sup>112</sup> Major trading cities such as Venice and Florence had a very extensive, and expanding built infrastructure, which supported industry and commerce, and occupied large sections of the urban core.<sup>113</sup> Over the fifteenth century, and particularly during the sixteenth, the narrow streets and crowded buildings of these medieval market districts, packed with shops and work-



shops, were regularised through monumental built interventions and legislative measures. As is well known, the Rialto area is the central node of Venice's trading district, and the streets and squares around it were subject to a prolonged and systematic campaign of architectural renewal – including the new bridge (1591), lined with shops – following a devastating fire in the area in 1514.<sup>114</sup> Improved amenities were provided in Florence, with such new buildings as the Loggia del Mercato Nuovo (from 1547), a focus for silk and other luxury wares, and the Loggia del Pesce (1567) for the exclusive use of fishmongers, while legislative measures also altered the visibility of particular trades, as in the case of the 1593 exclusion of butchers from the shops that lined the two sides of the Ponte Vecchio, in order to make space for grouping goldsmiths there.<sup>115</sup>

Besides the marketplaces themselves, elegant buildings were erected by various trades and professions to provide spaces for guild members to meet and pursue their professional interests, but also, generally, to increase their visibility within the city. In addition, centrally located loggias and palaces were built for the merchants' regulatory body (the *mercanzia*) in cities such as Bologna, Florence, Siena and Perugia, while the bureaucratic needs of increasingly paper-based transactions were reinforced through the office buildings of notaries (for example, in Siena and Bologna).<sup>116</sup> The impact of new buildings such as these on the meaning of urban spaces could be significant, accentuating the significance of trade bodies, and underlining the collective fortunes of a city to outside visitors. Moreover, it is clear that from the mid-fifteenth century, throughout Italy, city authorities actively promoted the construction of purpose-built structures, designed to provide multiple ground-floor shop spaces and accommodating other facilities above. An early prototype of the model can be seen in Padua, where the fourteenth-century law courts on the upper floor of

91. Ospedale del Ceppo, Pistoia, from c.1514.

92. Andrea Palladio, Basilica (Palazzo della Ragione), from 1549, piazza dei Signori, Vicenza.



the Palazzo della Ragione presided over the market square of the piazza delle Erbe; the ground floor of the vast palace provided extensive additional spaces for the strictly zoned trades operating in the area.<sup>117</sup> The monumental scale of this arcaded palace of justice was far from unique in Italy, and was famously re-imagined in the classical forms of Andrea Palladio's Basilica on the central piazza of Vicenza, where elegant stone arcades mask an earlier functional building, which included ground-floor shops (fig. 92).<sup>118</sup> Palladio's design for the Basilica (from 1549) did not significantly alter the building's functions, but gave the piazza monumental order, while retaining the essentially commercial functions of the adjacent public spaces, including a market square on the south side of the building.

An approach to the redevelopment of central urban areas that combined varied functions within a single building often led to magnificent new structures that had retail outlets on the ground floor and offices or housing above.



93. Palazzo del Capitano, from c.1475, piazza Sopramuro (now piazza Matteotti), Perugia.



94. Studium Generale (now Università Vecchia), c.1455, piazza Sopramuro (now piazza Matteotti), Perugia.



95. Coat of arms of Santa Maria della Misericordia, 1472, over a doorway on the ground floor of the Università Vecchia, Perugia.



96. The headquarters of the *Fraternita dei Laici* (left), 1484, and the *Loggia Vasari* (right), from 1570, piazza Grande, Arezzo.

One early example of such interventions is the redevelopment of the piazza Sopramuro (now Matteotti) in Perugia, a complex site that had originally been created during the later thirteenth century, when massive piers and arches were erected on the city's ancient walls to support a new piazza above (Sopramuro, 'above the wall').<sup>119</sup> This large, centrally located open space was used for diverse commercial and administrative functions, and from the mid-1450s these took on permanent form, under the supervision of the charitable institution of Santa Maria della Misericordia, in a new purpose-built block containing shops, which runs along the eastern side of the piazza (see fig. 94).<sup>120</sup> Richly dressed in travertine stone, the ground-floor Gothic-arched shop openings create a continuous façade along the piazza, giving the space urban definition by cutting off the view to the landscape east of the city. Construction on this complex site appears to have been somewhat protracted, and in 1469 the city government stepped in to lend support for its completion; a number of beautifully sculpted plaques, bearing the date 1472, the Misericordia's monogram and the griffin symbol of Perugia, testify to the completion date (fig. 95).<sup>121</sup> It was at this time that the adjoining Palazzo del Capitano was constructed to house law courts and prisons, as well as the residence of the city's magistrate, using similar materials, but a more up-to-date *all'antica* style (fig. 93).<sup>122</sup> A figure of Justice over the entrance proclaimed clearly the building's function and the units of measure of length, inscribed on a stone set into the wall to the left of the door, confirm the supervisory role over the marketplace of the building's occupant, while the prominent first-floor stone balcony was used by the town-crier.

Interestingly, the proximity of the city magistracies appears to have inhibited uptake of rentals on the shops and, indeed, access to them by consumers, some of whom, at least, feared prosecution. In 1476 a law was passed that



forbade public officials from ‘arresting, obliging or in any way importuning or molesting any citizen, countryside-dweller or foreigner for any sort of debt – whether public or private – in those shops or within the space of 10 feet from their doorways, to be marked by a stone line’.<sup>123</sup> A couple of years later, Pope Sixtus IV reduced this safety zone to 5 feet, but the measure appears nevertheless to have been successful, as tenants now competed for the shops; the artist Perugino had a shop there for thirteen years, while Federico and Cesariano del Roscetto had a goldsmiths’ workshop, which may also have operated as the city mint.<sup>124</sup> A final phase in the comprehensive redevelopment of the Sopramuro site followed in 1483, when a papal bull issued by Sixtus ordered the construction of a second floor over the shop development, to be used to house the city’s studio (university) (fig. 94).<sup>125</sup> This new addition stands out from the earlier shops by the prominent display of the della Rovere papal escutcheon, as well as the use of rectangular cross-mullioned framed windows, inscribed with references to the pope, the university and the Misericordia, which again oversaw the development. Finally, in 1516, the city’s Monte di Pietà was relocated to one of the existing shops, thus bringing together into one purpose-built block a variety of the city’s public institutions, as well as numerous shops.

In Arezzo the large-scale redevelopment of the north-eastern side of the piazza Grande by the construction of what came to be known as the Loggia Vasari has much in common with the Sopramuro project, both in terms of the regularisation it achieved of this central urban space, and because this, too, was a large-scale urban intervention overseen by a charitable institution (fig. 96). The powerful city confraternity, the Fraternita dei Laici, was already a major landowner around Arezzo’s principal public square, the piazza del Comune, where it had accumulated a significant number of income-generating shops received from testamentary bequests, and in the first half of the fifteenth century had commissioned grand new headquarters, designed by Bernardo Rossellino.<sup>126</sup> When a Monte di Pietà was set up in Arezzo in 1473, this was also managed by the Fraternita, and from 1484 it was housed in a new building behind their headquarters, which included a purpose-built range of shops along what is today via Vasari; a painting by Bartolomeo della Gatta shows the piazza, with a shop tucked into the façade, to make the most of rental income on the main square (fig. 97). Significant changes to the piazza followed from 1560, when, on a site above the square, Duke Cosimo de’ Medici built a fortress to control Arezzo, which resulted in the demolition of the civic administrative buildings of the Palazzo del Comune and Palazzo del Popolo.<sup>127</sup> A decade later, following a major bequest, which included significant additional properties on



97. Bartolomeo della Gatta, *Saint Roch Intercedes for Arezzo*, 1479, tempera on panel, Museo Nazionale d’Arte Medievale e Moderna, Arezzo.



98. The fish market (*pescherie*), crossing the canal (background), and premises for the butchers (*beccherie*) running alongside it in Mantua, designed by Giulio Romano, and built from 1536.

the upper edge of the piazza, the Fraternita oversaw a complex building campaign that resulted in an extensive arcaded palace, designed by Giorgio Vasari (began 1570, and completed by Alfonso Parigi).<sup>128</sup> Interestingly, Vasari's design was executed in blocks, so that, as ground-floor shops were completed, so they were immediately made available to rent by members of the Fraternita.<sup>129</sup> Ample spaces on the upper floors – which included accommodation as well as a theatre, and a bridge connecting it directly with the Fraternita headquarters across the street – evidently owe much to Vasari's earlier design for the Uffizi in Florence. While the piazza has been much modified, the Loggia Vasari stands out as a unifying structure which extends beyond the perimeter of the main square, connecting it to Arezzo's principal thoroughfare with a continuous arcade.<sup>130</sup>

Numerous examples of comparable large-scale building projects, which satisfied diverse functions while also creating a sense of ordered magnificence, can be documented in the later fifteenth century and into the sixteenth. While many such developments were focused on the city centre, what might be termed

industrial complexes confined to the urban edges also contributed to the process of renewal and specialisation. So, for instance, quite a simple block was developed in the third quarter of the fifteenth century to accommodate the butchers of Siena, zoned away from city's main streets on the grounds of aesthetics and hygiene, and relocated to a marginal site close to the fountain of Fontebranda (see fig. 49).<sup>131</sup> Far more magnificent, but achieving a similar purpose, was the development of a site along the Rio in Mantua (from 1536), designed and overseen by Giulio Romano in his capacity as *superiore delle strade* ('superintendent of the streets'), to house the fish market and, on a lower level running alongside the canal, the butchers (fig. 98).<sup>132</sup>

While mixed-use property types and residential arrangements were prevalent in the early modern city, a process of specialisation of building types unquestionably altered the architectural composition and vista of the streets during the period 1450–1600. As civic, administrative, religious and charitable institutions multiplied, so the buildings that they occupied adopted increasingly monumental forms, often in the prevalent *all'antica* style, which would have made them all the more remarkable as new interventions, quite different from earlier building types and styles. These buildings did much to give physical expression to the distinctions between the institutions, professions and activities that they housed, while their location within the city consolidated patterns of association that gave greater spatial definition to particular realms of urban life: the market, the administrative function, central and distributed sites of devotion and charity, and so on. Nevertheless, individual buildings, however monumental, do not make a city, and it is the rich connective fabric between them that forms the urban ecosystem, articulated around streets and public spaces. As I argued in the opening chapter, while government bodies could legislate to modify or transform the built environment, this could be achieved only through a distributed collective endeavour in which the wider urban community participated.

### *Stratified residential enclaves: Palace streets and row-housing*

It was almost certainly residential architecture – especially that of the urban elites – that most dramatically changed the appearance of the Renaissance city. The typology of the *palazzo* is considered in detail in Chapter 6, where a comparative analysis is offered of the relationship between social life and the built form of these huge urban monoliths. Here, the focus is on the impact of such buildings on urban design and the process of segregation and specialisation, for it was perhaps on the question of housing types and how these visually articulated the status of their owners that architectural theorists had most to say, expressing views that quite closely correlate to cities as built.<sup>133</sup> Broadly speaking, theorists from Filarete to Serlio argued that the dimensions of houses were an expression of the status of their owners, and also advocated a degree of socio-economic zoning, whereby professional elites were more centrally placed and artisan housing was pushed out to the periphery. As the first part of this chapter has suggested, contrary to such theories, mixed use was prevalent in most urban contexts, where even in quite circumscribed districts a rich variety

of residential property types attests varied socio-economic conditions, a situation that is regularly borne out by documentary evidence. Nevertheless, the proliferation of *palazzi* from the mid-fifteenth century put significant pressure on real estate along preferred streets, as the large size of these buildings often required the purchase and consolidation of multiple plots of land, thus squeezing out previous owners; this was even sometimes achieved through ‘eminent domain’ legislation, which favoured patrons of new palaces at the expense of their less wealthy neighbours.<sup>134</sup> Policies were widely applied by the city authorities to encourage urban renewal, and private patronage of domestic architecture was incentivised by a variety of means, so that palaces became an increasingly common feature of the streetscape. In so doing, the authorities contributed to altering the collective image and identity of the city by creating ever denser residential districts, where the magnificent houses of the urban elites clustered.<sup>135</sup> The Grand Canal of Venice is an early exemplar of the façadism of the Renaissance street as directed at audiences of visitors and spectators, and finds parallels in such fifteenth-century developments as the *strada Romana* in Siena and the *via Tornabuoni* in Florence.<sup>136</sup>

Processes of urban transformation were accentuated by the increasingly widespread phenomenon of the palace street, promoted through the particular impetus of urban ruling groups or through government policies that specifically required large-scale participation by elites. As was shown Chapter 1, papal Rome was something of a testbed for the development of new streets laid out to create a sense of ordered magnificence; although usually promoted by and dedicated to a pontiff, these projects were realised through what was often a protracted process of collective patronage, whereby palaces and churches gave concrete form to the ideals of the individuals who had launched them. The names of streets such as the *via Alessandrina* and *via Giulia* associated them with the popes who commanded that they be laid out, and the carrying through of such far-reaching campaigns was effectively an expression of ‘building against time’; this valuable formulation conveys how building projects could resist the entropy that might follow the death of their initial patron, and articulates an approach to the future-proofing of large-scale constructions – such as St Peter’s in Rome – which took decades and sometimes centuries to complete.<sup>137</sup> So, then, the central street of Duke Ercole d’Este’s urban extension of Ferrara, the *via degli Angeli* (now *corso Ercole I*), was paved and dignified by the construction of major new palaces, particularly around its primary intersection, where the Este residence of the *Palazzo dei Diamanti* was erected, but it was well into the nineteenth century before it became built up in the form that is visible today (see fig. 141). Along the *via Alessandrina* in Rome and the *via degli Angeli* in Ferrara – much as in the diminutive ‘city’ of Pope Pius II at Pienza – it was courtiers and close supporters of the project’s primary patron who contributed to its success by the addition of a palace of their own to the scheme.<sup>138</sup>

Palace-street developments tended to originate as projects that sought to give architectural definition to groups of families and individuals, more often than not of a ruling elite; although they may in some ways resemble the residential arrangements of modern-day gated communities, they had a more specific political purpose in spatially defining a self-constituted, often exclusive ruling group. The little-known example of the redevelopment of the *via del*

Capitano – the main street leading to the cathedral piazza in Siena – was effected in the decade after 1487, when a regime change installed a new government dominated by a tight group of merchant elite families; it was exclusively individuals from this new oligarchy, including Giacompo Petrucci, Antonio Bichi and Agostino Chigi, and the Borghesi, Pecci and Piccolomini, who participated in the project.<sup>139</sup> The via del Capitano redevelopment was executed at speed, in part because it was located on land large sections of which were expropriated from a major institutional landowner, the hospital of Santa Maria della Scala, so that the new palaces to some extent resulted from the new regime's asset-stripping of a civic institution.<sup>140</sup> Similarly, via Maggio in Florence (see fig. 56), a street that was transformed by the construction of numerous elite palaces in a couple of decades around the turn of the sixteenth century, was made possible by the systematic targeting of an area previously occupied by workers in the wool trade, and was given final impetus by preparations for the grand ceremonial entry of Pope Leo X in 1513.<sup>141</sup>

As in the case of via Maggio, palace-lined streets were especially well suited to the triumphal processions that increasingly formed a part of the ceremonial life of the city; on these occasions the overwhelmingly classicising forms of the newly built palaces that framed the public spaces of the street created a built extension to the ephemeral decorations of triumphal arches and set pieces. Streets such as the strada San Michele and piazza Maggiore in Parma (1530s), the strada Gambarà in Piacenza (1543), and via Nuova (now via Mazzini, c.1545) in Perugia are all instances of the Farnese family's understanding of the powerful effect of palace streets in the redefinition of urban centres, all of them constructed thanks to forced sales and expropriations.<sup>142</sup> Within this urban typology, the strada Nuova in Genoa (from 1550; fig. 99) is the best-known example of a purpose-built street lined with palaces; created by members of a tight-knit group of the city's oldest noble families, it is attributed to the planning oversight of the architect Galeazzo Alessi.<sup>143</sup> The project required significant amounts of centrally placed real estate, much of which was expropriated thanks to special legislation, with the added benefit of relocating the city brothel; these measures led to the creation of what has been described as a 'linear piazza', a set piece of urban design that was regularly used for ceremonial purposes.<sup>144</sup> Over the course of three decades, ten palaces were built to line the street, all of them executed in a classical style that created a harmonious urban ensemble; this became widely known throughout Europe, thanks to Peter Paul Rubens' illustrated publication *I palazzi di Genova* of 1622.<sup>145</sup> Moreover, the street was regularly put to use as a centrepiece for civic ceremonial, with duties of hospitality to visiting dignitaries enjoined on the palace owners of Genoa's 'Republican court'.<sup>146</sup> Unquestionably this short street, lined exclusively with palaces built according to the most up-to-date classical language, stands as an undiluted example of social stratification, in which the urban elite shaped a built environment closely resembling the stage-set designs evoked by Serlio's 'tragic scene'.

At the other end of the social spectrum, and usually confined to the outer edges of cities, the residential arrangements of the vast majority of working urban populations can also be understood to articulate the process of social stratification. Entire districts, especially outside the commercial and residential centres, would have been subject to quite limited modification during the

99. Strada Nuova (now via Garibaldi), from 1550, Genoa.



Renaissance period, as the simple and relatively standardised housing established for the mass of the urban population during the century before the Black Death was not often subject to major rebuilding.<sup>147</sup> In Florence, for instance, the narrow row-housing developments, built as part of the late-thirteenth-century and early-fourteenth-century urbanisation of church-owned lands on the city's periphery, were largely still in place when seventeenth-century public-health officials visited these streets three hundred years later.<sup>148</sup>

Religious orders were frequently the developers of blocks of row-housing on large tracts of land adjacent to their religious houses away from the centre.<sup>149</sup> In Florence, for instance, the order of San Salvatore di Camaldoli in Oltrarno was instrumental in the development of the Camaldoli district close to the church of Santa Maria del Carmine, while the nuns of Sant' Ambrogio built property around their convent on the eastern side of the city, where the Frati della Penitenza also developed the via dei Pilastri and part of borgo Pinti.<sup>150</sup> Realising that such developments provided a stable rental income, religious houses based

outside Florence also invested in housing projects in the city: for example, the Cistercians of San Salvatore at Settimo, from around 1320, developed a large site along borgo San Paolo (modern-day via Palazzuolo) and via della Scala in Florence.<sup>151</sup> Institutional landlords contributed to the urbanisation of Florence before 1348; housing tended to be arranged in a standardised format, at right angles to the street on narrow plots, so that all could benefit from a street-front aspect and ‘the public street [...] became the principal organiser of urban space.’<sup>152</sup>

What is quite remarkable is that more than two centuries later some of the very same streets were still owned by the same institutional landlords, and comparable houses were still being let out to similar tenants.<sup>153</sup> So, for instance, in the sixteenth century, in the working-class district of Camaldoli, to the west of the Carmelite church, over 50 per cent of properties still belonged to the Camaldolese; this was the area that had been developed in the fourteenth century, and many of the tenancies passed through male hereditary leases down to the 1561 tax census.<sup>154</sup> By this time, of course, a number of new institutions had also entered the rental market, such as the religious order of Knights of San Jacopo, who owned a large block of 134 contiguous properties near piazza Santa Maria Novella.<sup>155</sup> Above all, it is hospitals that stand out; the Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova was, with the Ospedale degli Innocenti, among the largest institutional landlords in Florence by 1561, in part as a result of gifts received through testamentary bequests.<sup>156</sup> Besides these two major foundations, property was the main asset for most hospitals, and they derived their income from letting houses, shops and stalls in the market, while their farms furnished them with the produce they needed to deliver their essential services.<sup>157</sup> By 1561 the Innocenti had become the third largest institutional landlord in Florence, owning properties across the city, followed closely by Santa Maria Nuova, whose portfolio had expanded greatly from the mid-fourteenth and through the fifteenth century; by the time of an inventory of 1486, the majority of their estate was made up of lettable properties in streets around the hospital, though they also owned some profitable mixed-use properties close to the city’s commercial and industrial centre.<sup>158</sup>

The majority of institutionally owned houses were developed on plots of land on the urban edges, which were laid out in straight streets, usually a minimum of 10 *braccia* (5.83 metres) wide.<sup>159</sup> Houses were commonly built on sites that were narrow on the street front but deep, so that they included some land behind; this pattern resulted in terrace or row-housing developments, many of which survive to modern times in the footprint of buildings and sometimes even in their general outward appearance. These institutionally owned properties on the edges of the city tended to command significantly lower rents than privately held rental properties; it was in such houses, outside the centre, that the majority of the city’s working population lived, in relatively homogenous residential neighbourhoods.<sup>160</sup> It can be suggested that a form of social stratification was built into urban design, and this situation perhaps became more polarised as the land-hungry palace developments of the elites occupied increasing amounts of prime real estate.

In addition to creating a distinctive street scene, consisting of serried ranks of similar houses, with their two-bay design – a door and window on the ground floor and pairs of windows on the floors above – these institutionally

owned residential enclaves were also identified by physical markers. Institutions that held large-scale property portfolios, comprising rental housing outside the city centre, or shops around market areas, fixed signs to the buildings to mark their ownership, though these are easily overlooked and are rarely commented upon. Text and image often come together in simple inscribed plaques that reveal entire blocks of the city to have been owned by institutional landlords, whose letting strategies shaped a streetscape of what were often multiple-occupancy row-houses or multi-storey apartment buildings. As has been noted, the mid-sixteenth-century Florentine census documents large blocks of property holdings, and the records pertaining to the Knights of San Jacopo report that their properties were numbered above each door, with a crucifix marking the edges of the precinct.<sup>161</sup> More common are the chance survivals of the landlords' signs, sometimes numbered, and displaying the symbols of the Innocenti, Sant'Ambrogio, the Misericordia, Bigallo and so on.<sup>162</sup>

In marking their properties, the institutions followed the same practices as elite families, who not only adorned their own homes with their arms and names, but often also inscribed these on secondary properties that made up their rental portfolios. Much the same occurred in other cities: in Rome, for example, the properties of San Giovanni dei Fiorentini (figs 100–102) and those of the confraternity of San Salvatore ad Sancta Sanctorum were marked, in Siena those owned by the hospital of Santa Maria della Scala.<sup>163</sup> While articulating ownership of the individual buildings, which passed promiscuously from one tenant to another, these markers also gave a collective impression of the power and reach of the charitable institutions that managed them, extending the symbolic value of their monumental headquarters.

The evidence here discussed for Florence appears to have followed patterns that applied widely across the peninsula, where outlying residential districts, streets and neighbourhoods were shaped by major institutional or charitable property owners and landlords.<sup>164</sup> In Venice, for instance, entire property blocks, laid out as quite distinctive small grids of parallel streets (or *corti*) with row-housing or apartment blocks, can be found in predominantly peripheral areas, and often resulted from targeted charitable investments typical of the city's decentralised welfare structures.<sup>165</sup> For instance, a number of blocks set back from the Fondamenta delle Procuratie in Dorsoduro (close to the church of Santa Maria Maggiore), comprising seventy-four houses, were developed thanks to a bequest in the 1502 will of Filippo Tron for indigent families, and were managed by the Procuratori della Commissaria de Ultra.<sup>166</sup> Significant areas of the *sestiere* of Castello were built up to create housing for workers and mariners associated with the Arsenal, including a block around *corte* (or *calle*) Colonna, later reordered as the Marinaressa. There were plenty of exceptions to this decentralised arrangement in the densely packed city: the *corte* San Marco development was built on a more central site under the will of Pietro Olivieri in 1515, which required that twenty-four houses be constructed for let at strictly controlled rents to members of the Confraternity of the Scuola di San Marco who had large families; a similar arrangement seems to have been applied to the twenty-six low-rent row-houses along the *calle del Paradiso* (near Santa Maria in Formosa), which formed part of Pellegrina Foscari's dowry when she married Alvise Mocenigo in 1491.<sup>167</sup>





As in Florence, so too in cities like Siena, Bologna and Verona, where the city's principal hospitals emerged as major property owners from the fourteenth century, managing rental holdings that contributed to the housing arrangements of large portions of the urban population.<sup>168</sup> The account books of Siena's Santa Maria della Scala reveal strategic decision-making that led to the consolidation of property portfolios: the hospital benefited from a steady income from high-value rents for such properties as centrally located shops, and was able to subsidise rents for housing, some available to hospital employees but much more to those, such as widows, requiring charitable support.<sup>169</sup> Properties that were bequeathed to the hospital but were not required for rental or other purposes were auctioned off at regular intervals to raise funds that contributed to the hospital's running costs.<sup>170</sup> In Rome, hospitals were also active in urban development and housing, as is evidenced in the fascinating example of the urbanisation, in the first decades of the sixteenth century, of the 'trident' of streets converging on Porta del Popolo.<sup>171</sup> Here the hospitals of San Rocco and San Giacomo degli Incurabili, as large landowners in the urban periphery, sold off parcels of land to property developers, including the architects Baldassarre Peruzzi and Antonio da Sangallo the Younger.<sup>172</sup> The site, bounded on either side by the main arteries of via di Ripetta and the Corso, was divided up for residential accommodation and organised into blocks along a new grid of orthogonally ordered streets.<sup>173</sup> While the initial plans included residences for the architects themselves, the proximity of the city port and concentration of transient dockworkers denoted this as a working-class neighbourhood, which by the end of the century had become the principal zone designated for prostitutes.<sup>174</sup>

### *Mapping the city*

If we return to the examples of Sebastiano Serlio's urban stage-set designs, discussed at the beginning of the chapter, it is clear that in his treatise he presented a comparison between the everyday settings that provided the characters

100–102. Landlords' signs, sometimes numbered, displaying the symbols of (100) San Giovanni dei Fiorentini (in via dei Cimatori), (101) Capitolo San Pietro (in via Cappellari) and (102) Tor de Specchi (in vicolo de' Sugarelli), Rome.



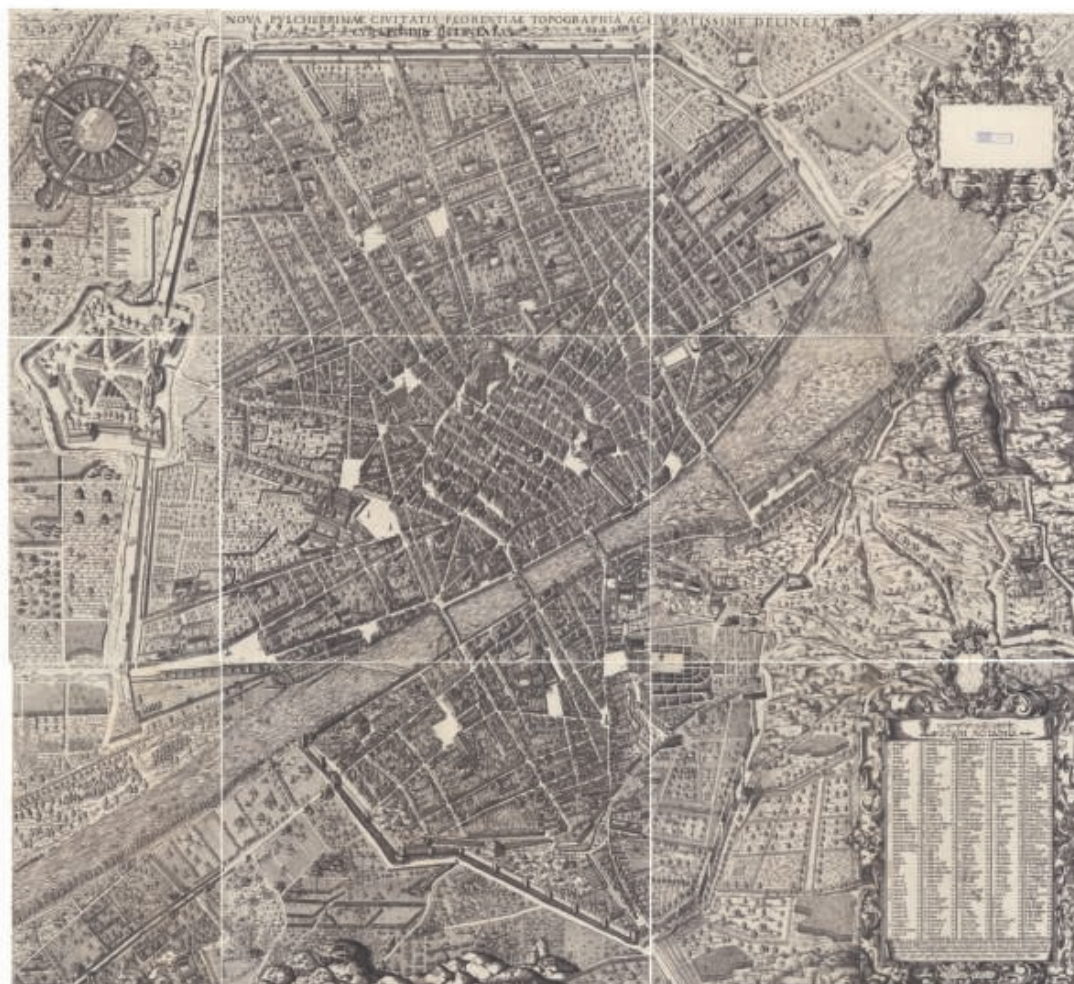
and plot for comedies, and those more appropriate to the lofty goings-on that were the subject of tragedies. While the buildings that framed the scenes were quite distinct, the open space of the street where much of the drama was played out was obviously broadly similar in both designs, confirming the role of architecture in shaping and conveying meaning on an urban scale. Serlio's streetscapes were therefore consciously fashioned to create an appropriate setting for drama, and, to an extent at least, echoed the transformations of numerous urban centres of the period. We might go further, and consider their contrasting designs through the analytic system of urban 'imageability' defined by Kevin Lynch: 'to heighten the imageability of the urban environment is to facilitate its visual identification and structuring [...] paths, edges, landmarks, nodes, and regions are the building blocks in the process of making firm, differentiated structures at the urban scale'.<sup>175</sup> Both of Serlio's scenes could be said to include all of Lynch's elements: they are structured along a path (the open stage of the street), bound by edges (the buildings) and focused around landmarks (larger buildings that fill the vanishing point), while as sites of action they are nodes, and as microcosms of urban life they are regions. Serlio's achievement is to create a polarised contrast through the careful deployment of 'differentiated structures at the urban scale', arranging buildings to convey distinct meanings.



103. Francesco Rosselli, bird's-eye view of Florence from the south-west, the so-called 'Catena' view, woodcut, c.1510, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin.

The discussion in this chapter has highlighted the role of particular buildings and building types, as well as broader urban renewal interventions, in refashioning cities and the collective appearance of streets and neighbourhoods. Here, then, the attention has been turned from the paths themselves – the streets and public spaces – to their contours or edges, as defined by the buildings that line and address them.<sup>176</sup> We have explored the degree to which changes to the built environment during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries facilitated the legibility of distinct areas within the city, highlighting the governmental, devotional, commercial, industrial and residential character of given zones, as well as the integration that operated across such functional categories. Mixed-use characteristics remained widespread throughout the period, although a tendency towards specialisation and stratification has been shown to have been applied more consistently through built projects and developments by the sixteenth century. Street-scale interventions, in particular, gave monumental definition to ruling elites, and the naming strategies adopted for these interventions communicate the identity of ruler–patrons who promoted them right down to the present day. Thus, streets emerge as a dominant structuring element of urban design, creating (sometimes imposing) legible order on the built fabric of the city.

Of one Italian Renaissance city, Lynch wrote: 'Florence is a city of powerful character [...] of almost oppressive strength', explaining this as the result of



104. Stefano Buonsignori, *Nova pulcherrimae civitatis Florentiae topographia accuratissime delineata*, 1584 (repr. Rome, 1690), Harvard Map Collection, Harvard University Library. (Compass north is at the top left of the map.)

the rich variety of urban elements from which it is assembled.<sup>177</sup> He described the ‘highly visible city’, and reflected on ‘the huge and unmistakable dome of the Duomo, flanked by Giotto’s campanile, a point of orientation visible in every section of the city and for miles outside of it’, setting it within the wider landscape of the Arno valley. In so doing, he perhaps knowingly evoked Alberti’s famous comments in the preface to his short treatise *Della pittura*, which suggested that Brunelleschi’s dome cast its shadow over all of Tuscany, as well as over the many representations of the city that depicted it, standing proud on the skyline.<sup>178</sup> In both text and images, of course, the cathedral dome becomes a synecdoche for the city as a whole, the artifice of its design a metaphor for the ingenuity of an entire artistic generation, its shadow representative of the power of the city over its surrounding territories. As with numerous images of St Zenobius and other patron saints bearing the intercessory city model of Florence in their arms for presentation at the celestial court, architectural landmarks stand out as recognisable, even iconic features of the city.<sup>179</sup>

As these shorthand devotional images of the city became more detailed, the urban landscape arrangement was developed by providing a slightly raised yet



105. Piazza della Signoria, detail from fig. 104, showing the piazza della Signoria, with the Palazzo Vecchio, the Neptune fountain and the equestrian statue of Cosimo I.

distant viewpoint that enabled an all-encompassing perspective on the city. In the remarkably detailed view of Florence (after a lost original of the 1480s by Francesco Rosselli), which is often described as the ‘Catena’ view on account of the chain motif that delimits the frame in the woodcut version, the draughtsman appears on a hillside in the right foreground, in the very act of drawing a survey of the city’s walls (fig. 103).<sup>180</sup> Spread out before him, in what is usually described as a bird’s-eye perspective (provided by his elevated viewing position), the city of Florence unfolds on either side of the Arno river, significantly distorted to appear even wider, with Brunelleschi’s much enlarged dome assuming centre stage in the composition.<sup>181</sup> Landmarks stand out in the view, with major churches, public buildings and residential palaces prominent within the mass of housing; scale is used to underline the importance of buildings such as the Palazzo della Signoria, Orsanmichele, and palaces of the Pitti, Medici and others. However, given the angled vantage point, the city’s public spaces are not in evidence, as the street level is largely out of sight, except for a narrow strip bordering the north bank of the Arno and visible open spaces in front of Santa Maria Novella, San Marco and Santissima Annunziata, as well as glimpses of similar open spaces in front of Santa Croce, the Carmine and Palazzo della Signoria. The view’s aim was not to convey accurate topographic detail, but rather to represent the ideal – inscribed rhetorically in the title *Fiorenza* – of a prosperous and flourishing city.<sup>182</sup>

Such images as Rosselli’s, and, indeed, the fragmentary views of Florence that appear in the background of countless altarpieces of the period, capture essentials of the city’s ‘imageability’ but largely overlook its structuring elements of paths, edges and nodes. It was three-quarters of a century before a detailed

cartographic representation of Florence, in the shape of Stefano Buonsignori's map of 1584, laid bare its street network, accurately positioning landmarks and public spaces, as well as the city's residential neighbourhoods (fig. 104).<sup>183</sup> Buonsignori made his map for Grand Duke Francesco de' Medici, during his tenure as court 'cosmographer'; nowhere is this Medicean association made more evident than in the depiction of the Piazza della Signoria, which is placed at the visual centre of the huge map.<sup>184</sup> Significantly, in the elaborate display of statuary assembled along the *ringhiera* ('raised dais') that runs along the façade of the Palazzo Vecchio and beyond into the piazza, the new Medici additions of Ammannati's Neptune fountain and Giambologna's equestrian monument of Cosimo I are prominently visible, serving to reorder the princely space that supplanted the civic centre following the Medici accession (fig. 105).<sup>185</sup> This is a powerful reminder of the fact that the cartographic gaze is not necessarily objective, and that urban space as it is constituted on the printed page of the map represents the politics of sixteenth-century Medici patronage.<sup>186</sup> Buonsignori's was an innovative piece of map-making, combining a traditional axonometric ('bird's-eye view') approach with the more technically accurate ichnographic ('figure ground') survey to create an unusual compound view of clear street networks and recognisable elevations.<sup>187</sup> Thus the key network of streets can be understood – and is, indeed, revealed to be quite similar to the modern layout in most areas – while landmarks also stand out as prominent. Even so, as recent georectification of the map has shown, the survey was not totally accurate and there is significant distortion, especially to the eastern and south-west sides of the city.<sup>188</sup>

The development of surveying skills, tools and techniques for map-making has been amply documented and researched, but in the present context the intention is to draw a parallel between the desire for increasingly accurate representations, which resulted in city maps, and the processes of urban renewal that form the subject of this chapter.<sup>189</sup> Turning again to Lynch's analytic framework, we might say that, while at the start of the fifteenth century many cities already possessed the essential elements for strong visual identification, it was in the subsequent century and a half that systematic efforts were made to order and structure the whole. From the latter part of the fifteenth century, there were certainly technical, strategic, military and political reasons for the proliferation of map-making, collecting and display, but it is also true that this form of representation gave visual expression to the urban-scale interventions that characterised sixteenth-century city planning, and, in fact, shared many of the same objectives.<sup>190</sup>

Beyond Florence, the proliferation of local saints' cults was a phenomenon that developed in parallel with the growing autonomy of Italian city states, and the iconography of patron saints often showed them bearing a model of the city.<sup>191</sup> In myriad images, the intercessionary agency of the saint as mediator at the celestial court on behalf of the local polity is captured and given expression through the city image that stands for the institutional whole and the body politic. People and buildings are here subsumed – again, a form of synecdoche, as the 'container' (the built city) stands for the whole (the population within the city walls). Nevertheless, in such images the city model is an attribute, like the keys of St Peter, which helps to identify the saint, and so it must facilitate



the recognition of the city by the formal representation of a distinctive view. In many of these representations, the patron–donor is a very early evangeliser (as in the cases of Sts Emidius, Giminianus and Ercolano), or a recent local arrival at the heavenly court (for example, San Bernardino).<sup>192</sup> In some instances, the connection is even more complexly articulated: in the case of San Petronio at Bologna, for instance, the fifth-century bishop brought a personal experience of Jerusalem and laid out Bologna’s sacred topography to echo that of Jerusalem, through the church of the Holy Sepulchre, Calvary, the Crucifix and the court of Pilate. In holding the city as model he is thus both patron and designer of the city.<sup>193</sup>

As has been suggested above in relation to late-fifteenth-century views of Florence, greater levels of detail characterised the emerging genre of the city view, which was often then more widely distributed in print form by means of simplified woodcut blocks accompanying such popular texts as Jacopo Foresti’s *Supplementum chronicarum* (Venice, 1490) or Hartmann Schedel’s *Liber chronicarum* (Nuremberg, 1493).<sup>194</sup> As with Rosselli’s view of Florence, so too his view of Rome recorded immense levels of detail of the antiquities as well as the contemporary city, though the raised northern vantage point from which the compound view is taken again produced a cityscape in which the underlying topography and network of streets was largely absent.<sup>195</sup> Even the most famous of all Renaissance city views, Jacopo de Barbari’s representation of Venice in 1500, which offers an unprecedented level of detail assembled from multiple vantage points – gathered from the top of the city’s bell-towers and rendered as if from that of the island monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore – provides only an impressionistic account of the city’s street and canal network (fig. 106).<sup>196</sup> The bird’s-eye perspective meant that the street and canal level was out of sight, except when these happened to be in alignment with the ideal vantage point; moreover, the central channel of the Grand Canal was artificially widened for greater legibility and to increase the visual impact of the image, while significant compression was applied to the edges of the city, especially on the

106. Jacopo de Barbari, *Venetie*, bird’s-eye view of Venice, 1500, woodcut, British Museum, London.

west (left) side.<sup>197</sup> The convergence of the eight winds to a point of intersection aligned with the campanile of San Marco, and the presiding presence of the gods of trade and the sea (Mercury and Neptune) are reminders of the moralising purpose of the map, as indeed are the scale and focus provided on the civic centres of the Rialto (trade), San Marco (civic government and devotion) and the Arsenal (maritime strength).<sup>198</sup> Such features and distortions became quite common in the many views of Venice derived from Barbari's, which proliferated in the sixteenth century (see fig. 38).<sup>199</sup>

Although it has rightly been said that, in Barbari's view, 'topographical accuracy was not the aim', nonetheless, the unprecedented level of detail offers a compelling sense of the city, of the variety of building types, the range of densities of buildings, and the variations that can be observed across districts, including the concentration in given areas of warehouses or popular housing.<sup>200</sup> Moreover, although the *calli* and canals are not always visible, their sinuous contours shape the ribbons of façades that the artist carefully delineated, providing an impression of the city's connectedness. In fact, as studies of Leonardo Bufalini's 1551 map of Rome have tended to underline, advanced surveying skills were required to achieve such topographic verisimilitude (fig. 107).<sup>201</sup> Bufalini's map was among the first to adopt a pure ichnographic form, focusing primarily on the city's street network and property blocks occupied by the principal buildings, many of which were delineated in plan. In spite of its inaccuracies, and on occasion because of them, Bufalini's map affirmed the power of streets to impose order on the city of Rome. By representing the via Lata (via Corso) as wider than it is, he emphasises the street's function as a strong spine through the redeveloped *abitato*, while the various new papal streets – via Giulia and Lungara, the piazza del Popolo trident, the Vatican Borgo and so on – are likewise given greater prominence through being depicted as wider than they actually are.<sup>202</sup> The map was unquestionably important for the history of cartography, offering as it does one of the earliest representations of the city as an ichnographic street map and ground plan, though this approach was not widely imitated.<sup>203</sup> In Bufalini's map we might say that paths and edges are carefully delineated, at the expense of other key elements of urban form, and it is interesting to note that most maps of Rome produced in the half-century that followed reverted to more naturalistic modes of representation, which tended to delineate the appearance of buildings.

As one seventeenth-century commentator, Floriano del Buono, put it in 1636: 'the portrait of a city does not consist of its plan [...] but rather the representation of that which the eye can see from a determined height'.<sup>204</sup> As is widely recognised, however, city views and partial bird's-eye representations could rarely be assembled from a single verifiable viewpoint, so artists and cartographers tended to err on the side of making their compositions more compelling and easily legible to their audiences. In this respect, the process of mapping the city was not dissimilar to the numerous built interventions that gradually or dramatically transformed many Italian cities during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as new building typologies, regularised streets, and the clustering of industries or the residences of social groups all acted to impose greater degrees of order and legibility on the complex urban ecosystem. It is significant that ribbon-like patterns of façades in views such as





Barbari's, and serried ranks of buildings edging the street network in works such as Buonsignori's view of Florence, highlight the role of streets in ordering urban space. These and countless other examples of printed and painted city maps and views are visual documents that attest the increased significance of privileged urban pathways, the main streets and thoroughfares that provided the essential networking of these complex urban systems.<sup>205</sup>

107. Leonardo Bufalini, *Roma*, 1551, in a copy by Antonio Trevisi, 1930, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome. (Compass north is to the left of the map.)



# Street Corners

## *Nodes in the Networks of Urban Community*

Not many years ago in Florence by the gate of the Duomo [Porta del Duomo] a few youths decided to celebrate All Saints together, without effort and at no cost. So, on the evening of All Saints they set off together to bakeries, where they helped themselves to geese that the servant boys and girls were taking home. Late on in the day, they came to the bakery on piazza de' Bonizi, and hid near the entrance[.]<sup>1</sup>

So begins one of the light-hearted novellas in Franco Sacchetti's compendious late-fourteenth-century vernacular collection of short stories, the *Trecentonovelle*. As Sacchetti reports, it was traditional to eat roast goose on the feast of All Saints, and in this instance a canon of the cathedral of Florence, one Filippo Cavalcanti, was the victim of a prank by a group of greedy youths. After an evening of thieving, the youths fetched up at the bakery on piazza de' Bonizi and hid nearby, listening as the various servants arrived and asked for the goose that had been prepared for their family: the Ricci, the Medici or the Adimari. Then a young servant arrived and asked for Filippo Cavalcanti's goose, and the youths sprang into action. As the baker served the goose into a tray for the servant boy to take home, the youths ran ahead to a dark corner near a tavern at the foot of the bell-tower by Cavalcanti's home. When the unfortunate servant stood knocking at the front door, the youths set upon him, took the oven tray from him and disappeared into the night to enjoy their free feast. Meanwhile, Cavalcanti and his servant's angry cries for help to catch the thieves brought many people in the locality out into the night. Although kindly neighbours offered the canon a place at their table, he was so angry that he declined all invitations in favour of pursuing the pointless quest to recover his goose. So Sacchetti was able to deliver a moralising observation on the gluttony of the clergy, a common theme in vernacular prose collections in the vein of Boccaccio's *Decameron*.<sup>2</sup>

The short tale is quite rich with incidental information regarding the street life of tight-knit urban neighbourhoods, and the everyday functions of local amenities. Central to the story is the bakery, whose ovens served multiple functions for the local community: not only did bakers make bread, but they provided the additional service of cooking food for local residents. The bakery in piazza de' Bonizi served a small area of the city, south of the cathedral, and

**FACING PAGE:**  
108. Unknown artist,  
*Florentine Street Scene*,  
c.1540, oil on panel,  
Rijksmuseum,  
Amsterdam.

was presumably located at one end of the street associated with the Bonizzi family name to this day. As the youths waited to identify a likely victim for their plan, the names of local residents from the Ricci, the Medici and the Adimari families were called out, as their geese were brought out of the oven. While it is difficult to pinpoint the homes in question with precision, a degree of topographical accuracy can be verified: near to the Bonizzi enclave is *canto de' Ricci*, which confirms the presence of that family in the vicinity, while the residences of the Adimari clan were clustered no more than a block away, just off the *via Calzaiuoli*.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, *via della Canonica*, in the immediately adjacent area, identifies the location of the cathedral canon's residence, a narrow alley built with overhanging structures and also marked by a residential tower at the eastern end. Although we do not have evidence contemporary with the period in which Sacchetti was writing, mid-sixteenth-century documents record the presence of a bakery run by one Domenico di Giovanni in the vicinity of the Canonica; the hyperlocal distribution of bakeries in the city makes it plausible to assume that a bakery had long occupied that site.<sup>4</sup>

### *Nodes of neighbourhood interaction*

This short story gives a glimpse of the ways in which certain places functioned as nodal points in the city, where people gathered and interacted on a regular basis. Kevin Lynch observed that 'nodes are points, the strategic spots in a city [...] which are the intensive foci [...] the focus and epitome of a district, over which their influence radiates.'<sup>5</sup> In the story, the bakery is a node in the local neighbourhood; people converge there daily to purchase bread, and to have food prepared in the oven. Given the essential role of bakeries in the transactions of daily life, they were widely distributed in most cities. So, for instance, in Siena in 1481, the twenty-one bakers who declared their profession in the tax records were distributed across the whole city, while twenty-five shoemakers, whose trade relied on clustering, can be found in the district of Badia Nuova alone.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, in Florence in 1561, bakers were evenly distributed across the city, while a specialist profession such as that of the cloth dyers was mostly located in one place, around the appropriately named *corso de' Tintori*, where they had easy access to the river Arno for their water-intensive industry.<sup>7</sup>

Furthermore, the functional reasons why bakeries tended to be sited on street corners are very similar to those that led people to gather around those same places: nodes in the city can be defined as locations that can be reached by the largest number of people with the least amount of effort. As urban theorist Jane Jacobs first showed in her analysis of city blocks in New York, the emergence of nodal sites is very much dependent on localised patterns of movement; such sites shape the social fabric of urban environments by creating the conditions for everyday interactions.<sup>8</sup> Jacobs argued that 'short blocks are valuable because of the fabric of intricate cross-use that they permit among the users of a city neighbourhood', identifying clearly how tight, interconnected urban environments create multiple opportunities for encounters of all sorts.<sup>9</sup> These factors and observations also obtain for the pre-modern city, where local nodes were key sites of social interaction, normal commercial exchange (such as at the

baker's shop or the apothecary's) and formal and informal distribution of news and information.

The neighbourhood bakery is the central node of the social interactions around which Sacchetti's story revolves, and an interesting visual counterpart to the novella can be found in a panel in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, which depicts what is described as a Florentine street scene (fig. 108).<sup>10</sup> The residential neighbourhood depicted might be identified as an actual site in Florence, but at the same time resembles numerous intersections in many towns. What is distinctive about the urban setting is the arrangement of the streets in the background: a narrow, wedge-shaped building dividing two streets lined with humble houses and a more elegant *palazzo* to the right, opening out into the unpaved space in the foreground. Wedge-shaped (or 'flatiron') buildings and the configuration of the streets and spaces around them were not uncommon in Florence; examples survive that split streets radiating out from small piazzas, as at the intersection of the via dello Sprone with via Maggio (fig. 109), or that of via del Sole and via Spada. The painting shows a largely residential neighbourhood, though the central 'flatiron' building has a large ground-floor opening protected by a ramshackle overhanging wooden roof, which may represent a shop. Quite standardised grey *pietra serena* stonework frames many of the doors and windows, as was common in a number of central Italian cities, and the same stone is used for the horizontal string courses that divide the vertical mass of the houses; the most prominent building, the *palazzo*, fills the right side of the painting, standing out from its neighbours by being raised up from the street on a step, and having a bench beside the door.

The open space in the foreground is occupied by twelve people, assembled in various groups. Two women stand in the middle-ground on the right, one carrying a bundle of linen on her head, the other opening the door to the *palazzo*; they seem to be conversing with the man in a red cloak, whose face and upstretched arm appear to be directed towards them. Various men wearing simple doublets and hose walk through the scene, two in conversation on the left, and two others carrying cloth-wrapped bales on their heads. A central group of comparatively more elaborately dressed men fills the centre of the scene, four of the men engaged in conversation and two others standing close by; they all wear cloaks and, though the colours vary, all have a distinctive border trim of red or black ribbon. There is no reason to accept an old identification of the painting as depicting one of the Seven Works of Mercy – namely, hospitality to a traveller – not least because none of the figures can plausibly be identified as a traveller seeking shelter; it is nonetheless tempting to see the central male group, with their matching costume, as having some sort of formal association, perhaps that of a confraternity dedicated to charitable works.<sup>11</sup>



109. Wedge-shaped building at the junction of via dello Sprone and via Maggio, Florence.

Although there is no additional evidence regarding the precise setting of the scene or the relationships between the figures, the painting nonetheless offers a rare glimpse of everyday street life in a Tuscan residential neighbourhood. It is significant to note that both men and women occupy this urban space, even though the men are clearly shown to be loitering in a leisurely manner, while the women are in the act of making their way into the house; sociability in the public realm appears, at least to some extent, to be divided along gender lines. Some degree of association is evident between the male figures, possibly denoted by their clothing, and is certainly communicated by their central position in the composition and the fact that they appear to be speaking together on a street corner, a common location for such informal social gatherings. The women, on the other hand, are in the process of leaving the scene, entering the home, perhaps with bundles of laundry. Altogether, however, the picture conveys a sense of the everyday acquaintances that structured neighbourhood life and interactions. The central huddle of men talking, while others walk by and the women exit the scene in the middle of an exchange with one of the men – these are the sort of neighbourhood networks in which both family ties and sociability might be expressed in the public space of the street. It is just such a tight-knit social space that the novella of the unfortunate cathedral canon Filippo Cavalcanti presupposes, in which the urban public space of the street is an active agent in shaping identities and the sense of belonging.

Street corners were often nodes in the city, and, like the bakery around which the novella turns, a variety of shop types tended to adhere to street corners, where they were assured greater visibility and custom. Testimony of how such nodes might function as hubs in local and urban networks comes from the Florentine apothecary Luca Landucci, whose richly informative diary was compiled as he experienced the city from his shop, first on the corner known as the *canto dei Tornaquinci* on *via Tornabuoni* (which he purchased in 1466) and then from new premises nearby (purchased in 1490), in front of the *Palazzo Strozzi*.<sup>12</sup> His account of life in Florence drew on multiple sources, but was very much informed by personal observation and conversations in his shop. Entries regularly refer to how political events resulted in his having to close the shop: the threat of military occupation and looting when King Charles VIII was in Florence (November 1494) and the close approach of Duke Valentino Borgia's troops to the city in May 1501 both led to his temporarily closing his premises, though on the occasion of an outbreak of plague in April 1479 he left apprentices in charge and repaired to his villa at *Dicomano*.<sup>13</sup> Memorable passages recount the effect of heavy snowfall on a number of occasions; 'Chi lo vide lo crede' ('Anyone who saw it believes it') he wrote of snowfall in January 1493, which forced shops to close, and in January 1510 he recorded such a heavy fall that people fashioned snow sculptures of lions, nudes and galleys around the city.<sup>14</sup> Famously, of course, Landucci watched from his shop as the vast new *Palazzo Strozzi* went up before his eyes, reporting on its materials, the workers and the completion of phases of construction.<sup>15</sup> What emerges clearly through the long account, which spans more than half a century, is the tide of events, some prosaic and very local, others of national and international significance, as information flowed through his shop and was also fixed in his personal written record.

Landucci's shop was not unique in its street-corner setting, and, indeed, along with bakeries and taverns, apothecaries' shops seem to have been the most common shop types to occupy these much prized locations.<sup>16</sup> Another apothecary's shop, the *Speziale del Giglio* on the street corner of *canto al Giglio*, close to the *Mercato Vecchio*, thrived through the same period as Landucci's, and its detailed account books provide valuable information about its networks of customers.<sup>17</sup> The records kept by the owner, Tommaso di Giovanni Guidi, reveal how regular clients, but also new customers connected with people the apothecary knew, were more likely than others to be given credit in the shop, so that there 'was a high level of interconnectivity amongst the shop's many clients'.<sup>18</sup> These networks were particularly dense among a small group of clients who resided close to the shop, though his contacts extended across much of the city, and included various customers drawn from some of Florence's leading families, as well as artists and members of the political elite.<sup>19</sup> As only account books survive, it is difficult to extrapolate further regarding the social relations that existed among the shop's clients, although there is evidence that apothecary shops were significant centres of sociability, as socially varied groups of customers waited their turn to be served and had plenty of time to talk as they waited.<sup>20</sup> Such connections can be understood further from evidence pertaining to another fifteenth-century apothecary, at *canto alle Rondini*, on the eastern side of the city, just beyond the church of *San Pier Maggiore*, owned by the Palmieri family, who lived close by.<sup>21</sup> After Matteo Palmieri inherited the shop from his father in 1428, he built up the business, and eventually purchased a second shop in *Mercato Vecchio*; his clients included some of the most important families in his neighbourhood and the city, and it is likely that these connections contributed to his developing a successful secondary career as a politician and ambassador in the 1450s and 1460s.<sup>22</sup>

This connection between the physical spaces of the apothecary's shop and the sort of informal networking that facilitated the exchange of gossip and news, is captured visually in a manuscript illumination from Bologna (fig. 110),<sup>23</sup> Behind the shop counter apprentices mix prescriptions from jars of remedies kept on a shelf, while the apothecary in the foreground seems to give instructions to a shop boy about to make a delivery of prepared drugs. Meanwhile, on the left side of the image, just outside the shop and in a public space delimited by an arcade and a palace, a variety of men whose different professions are signalled by their varied dress stand around chatting. It is interesting to note here the permeability between the public space of the street and the interior of the shop, which was accentuated by the need to wait, so that social interaction spilled out from the shop to temporarily occupy the street. Comparable situations may have occurred, at a more localised residential street and neighbourhood level, around bakeries or local taverns.<sup>24</sup> Of course, such gatherings and conversations might cause concern; in Venice, for instance, we know that not only gossip but gambling was quite common in apothecary's shops.<sup>25</sup> By the later sixteenth century, the city's numerous pharmacies were under close observation from the *inquisitori di stato* ('inquisitors of the state'), officials whose task it was to control political secrets; the *inquisitori* identified the apothecaries' shops as key sites in the information economy, where diverse constituencies were able

110. Apothecary's shop, manuscript illumination, c.1440, tempera on vellum, from Avicenna, *Canon of Medicine*, Ms, 2197, fol. 492, Biblioteca Universitaria, Bologna.



to gather for often prolonged periods of time, playing cards or chess, gambling, sharing news and potentially exchanging secret information.

This chapter explores further how the urban node, as physically articulated around the street corner, structured behaviours by providing a focal point for a range of activities. Just as certain types of shop – bakeries, taverns, apothecaries, even booksellers – provided places where people would meet, so too street corners themselves could serve similar functions, albeit without the provision of amenity.<sup>26</sup> It was at the principal street corners in different parts of the city that town criers pronounced laws and public edicts, that informal news distribution took place, and that even political dissent might coalesce and be given expression, as we shall see. So, too, churches and local sites of devotion often stood on nodal sites, so that public pulpits outside these buildings might capitalise on their locations to maximise the reach of sermons and other religious public occasions; local street shrines, which were almost always erected on such public



sites, extend such practices by the creation of a capillary network throughout the city.<sup>27</sup> As the story of Antonio Rinaldeschi, recounted at the beginning of Chapter 3, reminds us, quite often all these diverse elements of urban living might overlap around one site, so that a nodal site in the city could be the venue for a tavern, for gossip and gambling, and for neighbourhood devotion expressed by street shrines (where miracles sometimes occurred). The clustering of activities at such locations reveals them to be sites with agency, which facilitated and magnified the actions that took place around them.

*'Noverit posteritas': Writing on walls and street corners*

An unusual inscribed tablet known as the 'epigraph against badmouths' (*epigrafe contro maldicenti*) or the 'stone of the layabouts' (*pietra ociosa*), until recently housed in the Museo Civico of Rimini, bears the date 13 August 1397 and the invocation 'Christ help Iacomo' (fig. 111).<sup>28</sup> It seems that Iacomo was a shopkeeper on a centrally located street corner in Rimini and the inscription went on to proclaim his somewhat confusing ditty: 'on this street corner you should have patience and strength and virtue to recommend you. Take note: be silent if you want a quiet life; you shouldn't talk about good things but should report evil to the attentive listener.'<sup>29</sup> If a little convoluted, the message appears to wish to dissuade people from gossip, although it also cautions them against boasting, encouraging them instead only to report wrongdoing. The key message, 'taxie se voi vivere in pace' ('be silent if you want a quiet life'), is nevertheless pretty clear!

The late-fourteenth-century marker stone was originally placed outside a shop that occupied the central intersection of via del Rigagnolo della Fontana and via Maestra, but was moved in the sixteenth century, when it is reported to have been walled into the façade of a house opposite, which belonged to one Lorenzo Gambucci of Sassocorvaro. This crossroads – on the street leading to the port, close to the city's market square and the residential area of San Giuliano – was a place where people naturally hung about, perhaps waiting for work, or scraping a living as witnesses for the notaries who operated nearby. The street corner was also known as the 'canto de' Puntiroli', where 'punti' refers to the sting of gossiping tongues.<sup>30</sup> And so we see the function of the inscription, which was almost certainly put there by the shopkeeper, whose monogram it is that dominates the stone panel, to discourage the loiterers around his shop from gossip. Moreover, that opening, 'Christ help Iacomo', sets in stone what seems to be an announcement, suggesting that the whole inscription should be understood as capturing the actual voice of Iacomo, directed at all those sharp-tongued loiterers who gathered around his shop.

While there is little other firm evidence relating to the *pietra ociosa*, it is clear that, as an object, it is laden with meanings related to its placement in the city, the seemingly everyday language with which it spoke, and the audience of hangers-around at whom it was aimed. It is a rare but prosaic object that testifies to street life, sociability, gossip and the ways in which such activities adhered to nodal points in the city fabric. It is also significant that, with few exceptions, it is entirely overlooked in the scholarly literature on Renaissance urbanism,



111. The so-called 'stone of the layabouts' (*pietra ociosa*), 1397, last documented at Museo Civico, Rimini. The verse exhorts readers to refrain from gossiping on street corners.

and is absent from studies of the public inscriptions which were an increasingly common feature of the Renaissance cityscape. This, of course, is unsurprising. Like the study of urbanism, scholarly attention to inscriptions and the public display of the written word has tended to focus on the elements of classical revival on a grand scale that are a commonplace of the style and culture of the fifteenth century.

Scholars such as Roberto Weiss and Armando Petrucci were pioneers in the field of Renaissance epigraphy and set a direction for the study of a continuously expanding corpus of *all'antica* inscriptions, focusing on such issues as textual philology, classical styles of script, elite patronage and to an extent also the political significance of the practice of displaying inscriptions in various contexts.<sup>31</sup> As Petrucci noted, following the fall of the Roman Empire 'the conditions necessary for the use of writing out of doors were now lacking', and were only gradually to re-emerge from the twelfth century, and with greater energy by the fifteenth.<sup>32</sup> It is within this tradition that the best-known examples of 'writings on walls' of the Renaissance period occur on a range of building types, from city gates to church façades and wrapped around public and residential secular buildings. In these contexts, they usually served to proclaim the ambitions or achievements of patrons and rulers, whose claim to legitimacy they presented in bronze or stone in an appropriate language of authority and antiquity. From Giovanni Rucellai's bold inscription on the façade of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, to Paul V Borghese's presumptuous self-promotion on the front of the basilica of St Peter's, inscriptions on churches evoked the commemorative strategy adopted on the Hadrianic temple of the Pantheon in Rome, whose bronze inlay inscription provided a prototype for Leon Battista Alberti and others to imitate.<sup>33</sup> These inscriptions project their message from the most visible vantage points, from friezes above eye-level that command and control the public spaces they dominate.

Growing levels of literacy – a key argument for Petrucci – in part explain the increasing proliferation of epigraphy in early modern cities, but it is nonetheless clear that there remains an important question of audience. Who was intended to read the extensive Latin and Greek inscriptions on Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta's Tempio at Rimini, or the erudite claims to family and lineage that decorate the façade of the Palazzo Orsini at Nola?<sup>34</sup> It is unlikely that the elaborate Latin inscriptions commemorating Sixtus IV's renovation of the Ponte Sisto in Rome, or the shorter text emblazoned on the Piccolomini loggia in Siena were really intended for all to read, yet family names stand out and, combined with coats of arms or other family emblems, underline the ownership and patronage of buildings that more often than not project towards ample open spaces.<sup>35</sup> By the later fifteenth century, building projects were seldom complete without an inscription; while these can be readily identified on numerous *all'antica* palaces facing piazzas, such as the unusually inscription-laden house of Lorenzo Manilio in Rome (fig. 112) or the much grander Cancelleria in the same city (see fig. 80), there are instances of less prominent yet equally significant inscriptions on door frames, window surrounds and applied decorated panels.<sup>36</sup> They offered additional iconographic meaning, identifying the key players who wielded ownership and authority in the urban fabric: the emblems of the Piccolomini, Montefeltro, della Rovere and others were emblazoned on



112. The house of Lorenzo Manilio, via del Portico d'Ottavia, Rome. The long inscription, dated 1468, runs along the broad stone band over the ground-floor openings.

building fronts for all to see.<sup>37</sup> Inscriptions served both to reinforce the socio-political dynamics of patronage and real estate and to affirm participation by the educated urban elites in a shared culture of revived classical learning. The buildings so marked tend to occupy prominent locations in the city, and the inscriptions project towards open spaces of wide streets and open piazzas, thus describing the monumental in the city.

Heraldic insignia and inscriptions were a common means by which both families and institutions – religious and secular – marked out urban space, announcing the identity and authority of the bodies housed within buildings to the surrounding streetscape. As Chapter 6 discusses further in relation to the Renaissance palace, benches to accommodate waiting petitioners, balconies and windows that facilitated the visual and aural surveillance of the neighbourhood environment, and grand emblazoned torches that lit façades and their



113–17. The corners of palaces, distinguished by quoining and prominent displays of arms: (left to right) Casa del canto alla Catena (or Casa dell'Arte della Lana), Florence; Palazzo Medici, Florence; Palazzo Piccolomini, Siena; Palazzo Valmarana, Vicenza; Palazzo dei Diamanti, Ferrara.

surroundings at night are all examples of how the exterior of such a building articulated the social functions of its residents and their interactions with the public realm. The scale and symmetry of these monumental buildings led to such features coalescing around the axis of the main portal, and on the edges or corners of the walls, which were frequently marked by quoining and coats of arms highlighting the presence of the palace in the streetscape (figs 113–17). All too easily taken for granted, these were defining elements of the *palazzo* and should clearly be understood through the architectural and social relationships created between the building and the public sphere; it is this dimension that urban designer Jan Gehl describes as the ‘social field of vision’, by means of which the urban landscape is analysed with reference to the close encounters of familiar and everyday experiences associated with a non-monumental scale of observation.<sup>38</sup>

If we adopt a ‘social field of vision’ approach, objects such as the *pietra ociosa* become equally significant – small-scale and site-specific items of the material culture of public space, whose meaning is contingent on contexts that need to be recovered. Here, it is helpful to adopt a spatial approach that does not privilege individual monumental buildings, but rather addresses the typologies and settings of non-monumental inscriptions and their possible collective impact on the city fabric. While in a number of instances such bottom-up forms of expression as non-elite signage and epigraphy might operate to challenge authority or established systems, in others they might provide a distributed or

pervasive expression of the centralised control of space. These forms of public writing, ranging from graffiti to street signs, are non-monumental in terms of their relatively small scale, stylistic quality, and linguistic and grammatical correctness, and have been described as ‘deviant phenomena’ (*fenomeni devianti*), an expression that captures very effectively the view that they break the mould of the classicising ambitions of epigraphy.<sup>39</sup> For instance, defamatory inscriptions recorded in seventeenth-century Rome were usually hand-written and affixed at night to the doors of houses and inns, and to walls on street corners and piazzas; the few that have survived do so in the form of transcriptions reported in criminal cases.<sup>40</sup> The practice of posting such notices reversed the functions of doors as communication thresholds, attacking and subverting the idea of the façade as a public expression of the image and identity of the occupant; it was specifically the public nature of the affixed texts that undermined the honour of the victims.<sup>41</sup>

By the latter part of the fifteenth century, public writing was quite common, and scholars have noted that the increasingly urban society of Renaissance Italy led to the production of new types, including shop signs and advertisements for performances and fairs, as well as carnival posters; these were generally ephemeral and rarely survive. Cheap printing facilitated the distribution of propaganda, new legislation, religious pamphlets and the precursors of polemic broadsides throughout cities; these were sometimes posted on walls, scattered informally through fly-posting or affixed more formally at designated sites in the city.<sup>42</sup> Venice was a major centre for the printing industry, and it is perhaps unsurprising that innovations in news distribution and circulation are documented there; the proliferation of cheap print supported an economy of street sellers that survived on the sale of single sheets, sometimes directly in combination with the street performance of news, poetry and theatre.<sup>43</sup> In the late sixteenth century, Tomaso Garzoni’s *Piazza universale* (1585) indicates that the two hours before sunset were designated for buffoons and charlatans to perform on makeshift stages on piazza San Marco, where hawkers also peddled printed texts.<sup>44</sup> Print was so cheap that news and laws could be ‘thrown into print’ (*butada in stampa*) at very short notice, as the diarist Marin Sanudo noted in 1496 in describing the publication of the city’s involvement in an international alliance.<sup>45</sup> Thus a dual-channel process gradually emerged, where oral communication from the primary nodal sites – including San Marco and Rialto – passed to wider ephemeral distribution networks through the combined actions of printers and street sellers.<sup>46</sup>

Just as some sites emerged as privileged nodes for the exchange of news and information, there is some evidence that specific public sites came to be associated with the publication of parodic or anti-establishment public writing, most famously in Rome around the statue of Pasquino (fig. 118), a much damaged classical figure displayed on a street corner close to the central piazza Navona. This location, visible to passers-by along the key processional route of the via Papalis, seems first to have emerged as a site where erudite yet playful humanist poetry was posted.<sup>47</sup> During the first decade of the sixteenth century, it became a prominent site of public dissent, where the people of Rome expressed their anger and opposition by pasting paper leaflets displaying witty and direct critical statements, often in verse, first against Pope Alexander VI Borgia and then



118. Antoine Lafréry, 'Pasquino', engraving, 1550, from *Speculum Romanae magnificentiae* (Rome, 1574?), pl. 78, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome.

119. Gobbo di Rialto, Venice. Beside him stands the *pietra del Bando*, a low column on which the town crier stood to make announcements.

against Julius II della Rovere; the same practice for a similar purpose persists down to the present day.<sup>48</sup> One pronouncement, reported by the papal master of ceremonies, Johannes Burkhard, on 13 August 1501, began 'I have predicted it to you, Pope, ox that you are', referencing the heraldic emblem of the Borgia family, a bull.<sup>49</sup> A disgruntled comment on the funeral of Pope Leo X reflected on the extravagance and intrigue that had accompanied the Medici pontificate, in the form of a dialogue exchange over his tomb: "'Who lies here?'" "Deceit, trickery, fear, dark lust."<sup>50</sup> Pasquino's position on a street corner was important: this was a public site, prominently visible on one of the city's busiest thoroughfares, from which, as one scholar has put it, 'he commands an urban space shaped by gnarled pathways.'<sup>51</sup> To publish a text on Pasquino was both a very public act and one for which perpetrators sought to preserve anonymity in order to avoid prosecution.

Pasquino is the most famous of a group of so-called 'speaking sculptures' in Rome – others are Marforio, Madonna Lucrezia and 'il Babuino' – which came to be recognised as sites for the publication of anti-establishment and parodic texts.<sup>52</sup> As a number of scholars have recently argued, texts attached to such sculptures should be understood as articulating, through physical presence, the informal speech acts of town criers or the *cantimbanchi* who recited popular vernacular poems in most cities – material that often also circulated as cheap prints.<sup>53</sup> So it is not, perhaps, surprising to find similar but less well-known traditions of speaking sculptures in other centres such as Lodovico (Brescia), Omm de preja (Milan, though he is not documented before the seventeenth century), or the Gobbo di Rialto (Venice; fig. 119).<sup>54</sup> Most of these sculptures have in common that they are positioned at urban nodes, on centrally located intersections, marketplaces or, indeed, close to sites of government – all places in the city that came to be associated with subversive or non-normative behaviours and with gossip that took the form of ephemeral written texts posted for everyday citizens to share and enjoy.

## *Inscribing authority on the street corner*

These locations and their role in public writing subverted and mimicked institutional sites and modes of information exchange. It was these very same locations – street corners, market squares and public buildings – that structured the movements and communications of the city’s town criers (*banditori*),<sup>55</sup> whose pronouncements were made from these nodal points so that they would reach the greatest audience. Recent work on town criers reveals the ways in which officials operated to communicate central decision-making to all parts of the city; a map showing the sites where the *banditori* made their announcements in Florence reveals a close alignment with local nodes around street corners and parish churches.<sup>56</sup> With their own distinctive costume, the *banditori*, mounted on horseback and signalled by a trumpet blast, followed a carefully planned itinerary identified in the documents as *i luoghi consueti* (‘the usual places’), that radiated from the centre to the city’s edges, and stopped at as many as fifty-seven points, many of them *canti* (‘corners’), *crocicchi* (‘minor crossroads’) or the piazzas in front of parish churches.<sup>57</sup>

In Venice, official news and laws were first posted up at Rialto and San Marco, and a designated squat column – the *pietra del Bando* – was erected, from which the town crier (in Venice, the *comandatore*) could make his announcements (see fig. 119).<sup>58</sup> After these two principal sites, the *comandatore* would visit the main locations where people congregated, including the *traghetti* stations, parish churches, public squares (*campi*) and local bridges and bakeries; oral announcement by the *comandatore* was then often followed, in the dual-channel function already described, by the physical posting of a printed document.<sup>59</sup> A similar sequence was adopted in early modern Rome for the publication of papal bulls, which were read out and temporarily affixed on prominent church doorways as part of the publication process (*publicatio in valvis*), while new legislation (*bandi*) was similarly published by being affixed to the wall in various places around the city, for all to see.<sup>60</sup> Likewise, in the lead-up to Pope Julius II’s reconquest of Bologna and triumphal entry into the city in November 1506,<sup>61</sup> as part of the information war against the leading family, a papal bull of excommunication was issued against Giovanni II Bentivoglio and published widely in the cities of the region; not only was the bull read out, but printed versions were affixed to the doors of churches to ensure that ‘all Christianity’ would know about it.<sup>62</sup> A similar strategy was adopted as part of the Holy League of 1510, when a papal excommunication issued against King Louis XII of France was proclaimed widely and published on the doors of cathedrals throughout Italy, while cheap printed copies could be bought for a penny in Latin and vernacular on the Rialto bridge in Venice and elsewhere.<sup>63</sup> Through such practices, town criers and other officials transferred centralised decision-making to all parts of the city through acoustic and visual communication, so that the legislative text was published both by spoken word and as a written document.<sup>64</sup> Rimini’s *pietra ociosa* is the inscribed part of a similar dual-channel process, as the vernacular inscription clearly reminds us that the same message was communicated through the spoken word.

*Lapidi proibitorie* (‘stone laws’) – simple stone inscriptions that forbade certain types of behaviour – are clearly to be understood in exactly the same way.<sup>65</sup> Numerous such signs – prohibiting, above all, fly-tipping and soliciting for sex,

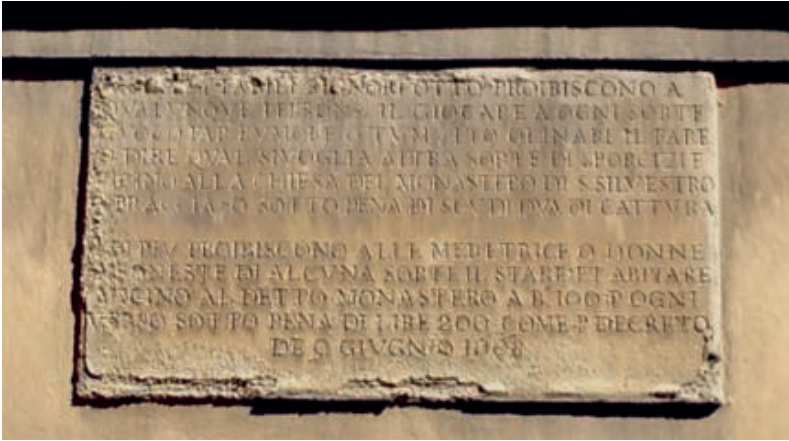


120, 121. A 16th-century 'stone law' declaring 'Li signori otto proibiscono farrci bruture', set high into the wall of a small oratory attached to the church of San Michele Visdomini, along via Bufalini, Florence.



but also such activities as playing ball games – survive on the walls of many Italian cities, the earliest dating from the later sixteenth century; their relatively late date seems to coincide with the growth in the bureaucracy of officials dedicated to the policing of streets and public health.<sup>66</sup> The predominant use of the vernacular, and the often rather direct tone the *lapidi proibitorie* adopt, imitate the verbal commands of officials and reinforce them by publishing the fines levied for contravention. Their position likewise addresses particular parts of the city: they can be found, more often than not, on the corners of side streets and narrow alleys, hidden-away spots that, more than others, were likely to be the objects of such legislation, or in the vicinity of sensitive locations, such as nunneries, where legislators were especially keen to prohibit the activity of prostitutes.<sup>67</sup> Such signage has received no systematic study, but is best understood not in isolation from the actions of officials, but rather as the embodied presence of their pronouncements, attached to the most significant areas for their operations. A sixteenth-century example in Florence thunders the regulation enforced by the *signori otto*, an office that oversaw public decorum, declaring that they 'proibiscono farrci bruture' ('forbid the throwing of litter') in the vicinity of a small oratory (fig. 120), while another from the following century hedges its bets and forbids games, soliciting and throwing rubbish in the vicinity of the nunnery of San Silvestro (fig. 122).





122. A 'stone law', 1668, forbidding, variously, the playing of games, soliciting and littering, near the convent of San Silvestro, Florence.

A question might arise as to why such signage is uncommon before the sixteenth century, even though archival records confirm that the practices it policed were nonetheless prosecuted in earlier centuries. One answer has to do with the growing bureaucracies that emerged to manage the city streets; the centralisation of these controls perhaps led to a reduction of local neighbourhood self-policing (as documented in the *denunzie*, discussed in Chapter 3), while at the same time the signage was part of an increasingly complex semantic environment, which saw city walls carry increasing numbers of visual markers, signs, announcements and regulations. A resonant edict of the rector of the University of Rome in 1689 declared that:

no one should dare paint or write with charcoal, pencil, chalk or other instruments on the walls, doors, capitals, windows, columns, cornices, podiums or desks, any images (especially rude), letters, signs, characters, verses, sayings, drawings, emblems or coats of arms, or in any other way vandalise them, even if they write or draw good things.<sup>68</sup>

Clearly writing – good or otherwise – could be and was applied to any part of the city and urban furniture. Some of this was sanctioned, but most of it was not. The presence of these markers, like the carefully situated oral pronouncements of the *banditori*, are perhaps the best evidence we have of the location and clustering of prohibited behaviours around the city. They are another, often overlooked, visual marker of everyday social practices and of how government institutions sought to control them.

Patterns can be discerned from these small-scale inscriptions, so we might use the remaining traces of *lapidi proibitorie* to propose a map of crime hot-spots in the early modern city, through the sites they identified as particularly requiring a permanent legislative presence.<sup>69</sup> Prohibitions on playing ball in Florence were carefully marked up on specific city streets, while the inscribed 'stone laws' that prohibited prostitutes from areas of sixteenth-century Florence have been shown to be directly correlated with the locations of nunneries, so that the presence of the former would not disturb the enclosed lives of the latter.<sup>70</sup> Similarly, in Siena, a set of stone inscriptions marks the edges of via di San

123. A 'stone law', 1689, prohibiting the residence of prostitutes and women of 'bad repute' in the via delle Murella (now via Pendola), Siena.



Pietro in Castelveccchio, beyond which prostitutes were not allowed to live or practise their profession (fig. 123). The inscriptions controlled a series of parallel streets that were densely populated with religious foundations, including the large Franciscan nunnery of Santa Margherita in Castelveccchio, an institution favoured by a number of the city's leading families, which became cloistered only in 1602.<sup>71</sup> As in Florence, the inscriptions clearly had the function of separating zones in the city through the visible placement of legislative measures that marked the physical boundaries being protected.

Furthermore, inscriptions and other markers were frequently used as a means of communicating the collective, distributed and participatory nature of urban expansion and renewal. A well-crafted inscription of 1512 in Rome (see fig. 32) marked the recently remodelled intersection of via dei Banchi adjacent to the Zecca (the papal mint) by recording the actions of the *maestri di strada*, Domenico Massimo and Girolamo Pichi, and celebrating Pope Julius II's interventions 'pro maiestate imperii ornavit'. A comparable but especially effective example survives in the form of a series of inscriptions from the last quarter of the fifteenth century onwards in Mantua. The inscribing of buildings, mostly on their most prominent corner, with a text that mentions the Gonzaga duke seems to have become a local practice, though no enabling legislation or edict has been traced to document its adoption; some of these buildings are marked 'aedes a fundamenta erexit' ('building constructed from the foundations' – that is, *ex novo*), and the inscriptions served to mark the ruling family's participation in the renewal and expansion of the small city. One of the earliest and finest examples is that on a candlestick pilaster on the corner of the Palazzo Arrivabene (see fig. 15); dated 1481, it refers to the fourth year of Marquis Federico, and declares that the palace was built anew, 'So that our descendants will know this' (*Noverit posteritas*).<sup>72</sup> Five years earlier, the court artist Andrea Mantegna had built his house from the foundations, 'On a site given to him as a gift by the Lord Lodovico, most excellent prince ... 15 November [1476]', as the street-level

corner inscription notes (see fig. 13).<sup>73</sup> More unusual is the inscription by a bridge at San Francesco sul Rio, which refers to Francesco Gonzaga as ‘altero Camillo’ – rather obscurely referencing the ancient story of Camillus, who entered Rome without using a bridge – for restoring the bridge for the benefit of the humanist scholar Battista Fiera who lived near it (1496).<sup>74</sup> Numerous similar inscriptions and short commemorative panels continued to be added throughout the city during the subsequent century and a half, and a visitor to the city today can still note the predominance of stone corner markers on even quite simple buildings (fig. 124). Viewed on a map, they reveal the gradual expansion of the city, as the urbanised area moved south from the piazza Sordello, connecting up the Gonzaga court precinct to the southern periphery bounded by the Rio canal (see fig. 17); in the light of the ruling family’s bid to expand their capital, the land donation to Mantegna formed part of a policy, to which the Gonzaga foundation of the church and *palazzo* of San Sebastiano also contributed.<sup>75</sup>

What other patterns might be discerned? Again, this is a subject that has received very little attention, though there is plentiful evidence throughout Italy, and especially in the larger centres, of inscriptions used to articulate non-elite identities. Among these, the marker stones of confraternity or guild associations are especially interesting; examples from the so-called *potenze* of Florence offer a counter-mapping to administrative boundaries, tracing out what David Rosenthal has described as ‘carnival kingdoms’, which were active only at particular times of the year, but whose geographic edges do not necessarily coincide with parish or tax wards (fig. 128).<sup>76</sup> Much the same can be said for the operation of the Sienese *contrade*, as they emerged in their more clearly spatially determined form through the sixteenth century.<sup>77</sup> Inevitably, in Florence as in Siena, it was the street-corner contact points between neighbouring factions that tended to be articulated through visual and textual signs, which would be reinforced at spoken, sung and shouted ritual encounters.<sup>78</sup> In Venice, to an extent, the function of the street corner as a hot-spot in neighbourhood rivalries was instead played out around bridges; here, both the ritualised battle – the ‘war of fists’ – and more everyday give and take took place at the central nodes of non-elite pedestrian movement around the city.<sup>79</sup> Here, then, though they are only sporadic, surviving inscriptions provide a tantalising glimpse of the complex, overlaid and spatially contested boundaries that applied to non-elite urban neighbourhoods every bit as much as they did to the grander clan precincts delimited by coats of arms and *all’antica* inscriptions.

As this survey has proved, markers, inscriptions and ‘writings on walls’ were not a uniquely elite practice, nor were they always an expression of centralised authority or power. While erudite *all’antica* inscriptions have tended to dominate scholarly attention, there is a host of other evidence that can be interpreted



124. Inscription, dated 1534, and corner marker on the house of Bartolomeo Panzera (via Filippo Corridoni), Mantua.

to show the ways in which everyday urban life was played out in the streets, as politics, ritual and conflict left their physical marks on the city's walls. Even textual inscriptions do not exist in a vacuum: rather, in most cases, we should understand these writings as embodied and material expressions of orality, or as part of complex and distributed communication networks. Only by interrogating these physical traces of the city's past through the wider social practices assembled around them is it possible to understand how meanings adhered to nodal sites in the city; the street corners of the early modern city thus become alive again with gossip, rivalry and dissent. Moreover, such an approach offers a worthwhile key to unlocking the meanings of the visual culture assembled around street corners. Adopting a similar approach, we shall now examine comparable interactions, this time of a devotional nature, that occurred at myriad street shrines in cities throughout Italy.

### *Street shrines and neighbourhood devotion*

In 1481 an unusual case was brought for arbitration to the elected rulers of Venice, the *signori*; it involved two families who were competing for the ownership of an unremarkable street shrine which had recently begun to perform a series of miracles. As reported in the personal accounts of Francesco Amadi, in 1408 his family had commissioned a painting of the Virgin Mary, known as the *Madonna degli Amadi*, which was 'placed in our alley, in our Venetian manner'.<sup>80</sup> It was more than seventy years before this unexceptional expression of local devotion began to change the sacred and physical topography of its neighbourhood. On the night of 23 August 1480, a woman stopped to pray in front of the image, as was her daily habit, and was violently attacked by her brother-in-law Francesco Bendi as she prayed. There had been some legal dispute between the two, and Bendi seems to have sought to settle the score by repeatedly knifing his sister-in-law before leaving her for dead; she instead stood up unharmed, and credited her survival to the intercession of the Virgin, to whom she brought her bloodied and tattered clothes as an *ex voto* the following day.<sup>81</sup> Following the woman's miraculous escape, the street shrine became the focus of considerable devotional attention, with people coming from all around the city to seek the Virgin's intervention, and many claiming beneficial outcomes, so that the image soon came to be known as the *Madonna dei Miracoli*. The peak of the image's power can be traced to the eighteen months following the first documented miracle (forty-four in the last months of 1480, seventy-one in 1481, thirty-eight in 1482), and by 1483 the number of reported miracles at the site had significantly fallen off.<sup>82</sup>

As the humble and commonplace street shrine rapidly achieved a reputation for its miracle-working powers, the families who lived in the properties immediately adjoining what was becoming a city-wide phenomenon (drawing the faithful to the neighbourhood of Santa Marina from all over Venice) sought to regulate access to the image. The Amadi family *memorie* report their attempts to remove the image from the external wall facing onto the street to the private courtyard of their house, where they could honour it with a temporary altar adorned with linen and greenery.<sup>83</sup> In these plans they were fiercely opposed by their neighbours the Barozzi, who protested at the removal of image and

threatened in turn to remove the image to their family chapel in the nearby church of Santa Maria in Formosa.<sup>84</sup> The dispute, for which arbitration was sought from Venice's ruling council, turned on the fact that the Amadi had been the original patrons of the modest image, though it was actually affixed to a wall belonging to their neighbours the Barozzi. As is well known, the ultimate result of the dispute was the construction of a purpose-built shrine to honour the image and facilitate devotion to it, the exquisite church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli, of which the Amadi were primary patrons.<sup>85</sup>

While it is easy to see that there may have been self-interest on the part of the rival families to highlight their primary association with the devotional image, the case of the *Madonna degli Amadi* provides a valuable illustration of the place of non-miraculous devotional images in the streetscapes of Italian cities in this period. Once the image acquired its miraculous powers, both temporary and permanent measures were put in place to remove it from the street – first by relocating it to a private courtyard, where access to it could be regulated and it might be better honoured, and then to a formal religious institution. But its transformation to cult image also enables us to see with far greater clarity the minutiae of its original placement, which Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan was able to reassemble from scattered references in the family *memorie* account.<sup>86</sup> From these we learn that, while the Barozzi properties faced onto the principal street, the houses of the Amadi were distributed around a courtyard, set back from the main street and linked to it by a private alley (*calle*). Thus, when Francesco Amadi had commissioned the devotional image in 1408, he had it placed on the corner of the Amadi alley and the main street, in a position where it could be 'honoured by everyone [...] in sight of all passers-by', who would say prayers there; but as his own family home had no street front, the painting was attached to property that actually belonged to his neighbours.<sup>87</sup> Until the events of 1480 transpired, the *Madonna degli Amadi* was little different from any of the many street shrines in Venice, and although it was associated with the Amadi, who owned a number of the shops along their *calle*, its day-to-day maintenance appears to have been taken care of by a tenant called Marco Rasti, who kept a lamp burning and provided for flowers.<sup>88</sup>

In these respects, the *Madonna degli Amadi* – later *dei Miracoli* – was wholly typical of a myriad shrines that were distributed throughout most pre-modern cities, and still survive in considerable numbers in Italy. In Venice it has been suggested that the incidence of such shrines almost certainly pre-dated twelfth-century legislation requiring that lamps (*cesendéli*) be kept alight at night beside bridges, covered alleys and narrow street corners – that is, the same locations that were widely chosen for street shrines.<sup>89</sup> The same connection between popular devotion and a rudimentary form of lighting provision in the darkest corners of the city was remarked upon by the German Dominican pilgrim Felix Fabri, who reported on the many street shrines in Venice in his account of his travels.<sup>90</sup> As with the Amadi example, maintenance of these street shrines was somewhat informal and fell to local residents, or might be coordinated by parish clergy; however, when, in 1450, the Council of Ten promoted the erection of new *capitelli* (as street shrines were often called in Venice), they also established new rules whereby local patrician families would be charged with the oversight of the local street shrines in their district, or *sestiere*.<sup>91</sup>

Street shrines in Venice took various forms: they might be sculpted in low relief, or take the more inexpensive but perishable form of painted panels or frescoes mounted in small tabernacle structures. They were usually positioned at locations raised above eye-level, above shop openings or doorways, or in aedicules that straddled narrow alleys, and still more often on the corners of buildings, from where the gaze of the sacred image might cover a wider segment of urban space.<sup>92</sup> Some were located by the *traghetto* stops, where people waited for the ferries that criss-crossed the wider canals.<sup>93</sup> Their numbers across the city were prodigious; one count identified 406 such street-shrines dedicated to the Virgin Mary alone, and well over a thousand if all depictions of other members of the Holy Family, angels and saints were included.<sup>94</sup> As such, they indisputably formed a key element in the visual culture of pre-modern Venice, constituting what can be described as a capillary or pervasive network of the sacred, which spread through the entire city. This implicated everyone in what Edward Muir termed a ‘procession of the everyday’, as people went about their business interacting with, and under the watchful gaze of, these many religious images.<sup>95</sup>

When Francesco Amadi described the devotional shrine at the corner of the alley leading to his family’s properties as being ‘al modo nostro Venetiano’ (‘in our Venetian manner’), he was stating no more than a fact, though the exceptional circumstances associated with his image have resulted in our knowing more about it than the majority of these ubiquitous sites of popular piety. In fact, the ‘modo nostro’ of the Venetians differed little from that of other cities, as we shall see; while some of these shrines (like that of the Amadi) were family sponsored, far more were locally managed by a confraternity, guild, parish or neighbourhood, and only a few – at more strategic or monumental sites – were sponsored by central government institutions. In the majority of cases we know very little about the street shrines of Venice, as indeed is the case for most other Italian cities; in some instances, what little we do know is extrapolated from evidence internal to the objects themselves, or more occasionally from chance references in documentary evidence. Thus, for example, a sculpted marble relief of the *Madonna della Misericordia*, with the arms of the Scuola Grande della Carità emblazoned on her chest, was erected in rio Santa Caterina, on one of the boundary walls of a property block that had been redeveloped as rental housing, the profits from which were destined for poor relief.<sup>96</sup> In addition to the figures of members of the *scuola* kneeling beneath the protective cloak of the Madonna, the relief includes the large coat of arms of Tomaso Cavazza and an explanatory inscription: ‘It was erected from the proceeds of the sale of the house of Tomaso Cavazza, which he had left to the governors of the Scuola della Carità so that the profit would long be fruitful for the care of the poor.’ Thus, we can say that this marble relief performed multiple functions in shaping the local devotional landscape, by representing the interests of the *scuola* as much as those of the Cavazza, whose testamentary bequest had enabled the investment, while also expressing their shared pious dedication to improving the lot of the city’s poor.

Usually street shrines remained more or less as they were originally intended, though there are exceptions – as, for example, is the case for the *Madonna della Misericordia*, which topped the narrow entrance to the calle del Paradiso (near

Santa Maria in Formosa).<sup>97</sup> Here, the Virgin is shown flanked by the kneeling figures of Pellegrina Foscari and Alvise Mocenigo in recognition of the dowry Pellegrina had brought to her marriage in 1491 in the shape of twenty-six low-rent row-houses along that same narrow street. What is fascinating in this instance is the way the original fourteenth-century relief of the *Madonna della Misericordia* was ‘edited’ to the new circumstances of the ownership of the real estate in the area by the addition of a second similar image on the reverse, which marked its transfer from one family to another. The sculpted relief straddled the access to the narrow street, ensuring that the prayers said at the protective image of the Madonna of Mercy by residents of the rental properties would also be directed to their patron–landlords; so, with the change in ownership of the property block, the devotional functions of the image were modified. Furthermore, the relief panel made the most of its location, framed on one side by the narrow *calle* and on the other by access to it across the bridge leading to the main neighbourhood church and public space around Santa Maria Formosa.

It is clear that street shrines operated in similar ways in most other cities, and were, indeed, distributed in a similarly pervasive manner. Focusing on Florence and concentrating predominantly on religious images that were credited with miraculous power, Megan Holmes has recently shown how devotional images created a sacred web, to form what she has described as a ‘topography of the sacred’.<sup>98</sup> Mapping the location of miraculous images reveals a relatively even distribution across the city, and shows that these powerful sites of veneration were almost all enclosed within churches.<sup>99</sup> As we have seen from the example of the *Madonna degli Amadi*, where particular miraculous events transpired, a local image might be transformed into one of city-wide or national significance, and this change of status was often marked by the erection of monumental architecture to honour and control access to the image. Such was the case in Florence, where many of the most venerated images began life outdoors – as in the most famous example, the Madonna of Orsanmichele – and were moved to, or simply enclosed within, churches and oratories as their reputation grew.<sup>100</sup> So then, the *Madonna della Palla*, a now lost fifteenth-century terracotta low relief, which was originally displayed in a street close to the Annalena nunnery in Oltrarno, was relocated to that nunnery after the Madonna was said to have caught a ball that a boy had thrown at the Christ Child.<sup>101</sup> A similar foundation legend explains the construction of an oratory on the east side of the Santa Maria Novella complex, to protect the *Madonna della Pura*; here, in 1472, one of a group of boys fighting with sticks was called by the Virgin to clear her image of dust and cobwebs, giving rise to intense popular veneration of the fourteenth-century image.<sup>102</sup>

The process by which street shrines were ascribed miraculous powers marked the city in significant ways, as space needed to be found to erect shrines or entire new churches. When these miraculous images were located in marginal or suburban locations, it was easier to construct large centrally planned pilgrimage churches, such as Santa Maria del Calcinaio at Cortona, or Santa Maria delle Carceri at Prato, to name just two examples of a widespread phenomenon of new church building from the late fifteenth century to the early sixteenth.<sup>103</sup> On other occasions, considerable modifications to the city fabric might be required; for example, when miracles were reported at the street-shrine Madonna

originally painted on the inside wall of one Siena's western gates, it became the focus of a new centrally planned church around the miraculous image of the *Madonna di Fontegiusta* (1479).<sup>104</sup> Similarly, in 1470 a new church was consecrated at the foot of the Tarpeian Rock in Rome, a site of capital punishment through the early modern period, after a fourteenth-century image of the Virgin Mary – the *Madonna della Consolazione* – interceded on behalf of a wrongly convicted man, saving him from hanging when the hangman's rope failed.<sup>105</sup> Veneration of the Madonna increased and Antoniazio Romano was commissioned to repaint the image, which was moved to an altar in the new church.

While miraculous images have tended to leave a heavier trace on the built fabric of cities through the devotional narratives attached to them and the monumental architecture with which they were frequently later adorned, the majority of street shrines remained local expressions of piety. A recent study of miraculous images in Liguria has documented intensely localised devotional practices throughout the region, and reports as many as 890 street shrines in Genoa alone, which were often adorned with copies of more important miraculous images from the area.<sup>106</sup> A similar census of *edicole* in Rome recorded 1,100, while estimates for Florence in the sixteenth century suggest simply that there were many hundreds.<sup>107</sup> Ferdinando Leopoldo del Migliore recorded in his seventeenth-century history of Florence that: 'it is an ancient custom in Florence [...] to place in certain tabernacles [...] almost on every street corner or cross-road, the image of Christ, of the Virgin Mary or some other patron saint, protector of the house or patron who had it painted there.'<sup>108</sup> It was the ubiquitous presence of these humble yet public devotional images that led Walter Benjamin to comment of their presence in Naples: 'within the tenement blocks, it [the city] seems held together at the corners, as if by iron clamps, by the murals of the Madonna.'<sup>109</sup> Such ubiquity, of course, ensured that the presence of the divine was visible everywhere, throughout the city, giving thus a material or embodied presence to the holy in the everyday spaces of urban life.<sup>110</sup> It is, perhaps, unsurprising to find that the best-known of these images were credited with miraculous powers, but it is nonetheless equally evident that the majority were not, and remained largely the focus of almost exclusively localised devotion.

The sort of daily interactions that such street shrines elicited was captured by the Franciscan preacher San Bernardino of Siena, who makes a passing reference to the daily encounters with the divine that they might facilitate: 'you should know that when you salute the Virgin Mary she will immediately respond. Don't think that she's anything like those rough peasant women, of whom there are so many: far from it, she's always pleasant.'<sup>111</sup> His comments provide a glimpse of the ways in which devotional gestures – a nod of the head, a short prayer, or a break in step – marked movement about the city, with a continuous exchange between citizens on the street and the holy images that occupied those same spaces. As Muir suggested of the 'Virgin on the street corner', these images dotted around the city 'offered citizens an immediate and personal intimacy with the saints', as they went about their daily business.<sup>112</sup> Locally appointed guardians of street shrines – sometimes known as *madonnare* – kept them clean and furnished with flowers, and maintained the devotional lamps or candles that were kept alight, while confraternities and other groups managed sung litanies that might be performed in these open-air street-side settings.<sup>113</sup>





125. Antonio Allegri, known as Correggio, *Madonna della Scala*, 1523–4, fresco, originally beside the Porta San Michele, Parma, now in the Galleria Nazionale, Parma.

No systematic comparative study has been made of street shrines in early modern Italian cities, the ubiquitous nature of which certainly speaks of the universal and rooted character of popular beliefs. Within the city, street shrines are a truly pervasive phenomenon, and their locations ranged widely, as did the nature of their patronage. Those instituted and managed by government offices – often the grandest – ranged from huge devotional frescoes painted over city gates to smaller images that frequently adorned the offices of city-gate tax officials or stood at sites of public punishment.<sup>114</sup> The survival of works such as Correggio’s *Madonna della Scala* (fig. 125), originally situated by the eastern Porta San Michele in Parma, not only provides evidence of the sort of location where such representations were common, but is also a reminder that their survival has tended to be dictated by the artistic significance of individual works.<sup>115</sup>

126. Giovanni della Robbia (attrib.), Biliemme tabernacle (or *Madonna delle fonticine*), 1522, glazed terracotta, via Tedesca or via Santa Caterina (now via Nazionale), Florence.



Originally positioned on the wall on the city side of the gate, and perhaps once including Hilary (another of the city's patron saints), Correggio's fresco of the Madonna and Child addressed citizens, pilgrims and other travellers as they exited the city along the via Emilia. Gates – particularly those coinciding with the principal roads that connected cities together – were naturally favoured sites for the display of images that protected travellers, while also providing the apotropaic support of patron saints for the city itself.<sup>116</sup>

Significantly, within the city, most street shrines were erected on visible street corners. As was noted above for Venice, the majority were managed locally – by a confraternity, guild, local community, neighbourhood, or family – as opposed to being sponsored by central government institutions. Although del Migliore noted that such paintings appeared on 'almost on every street corner' of Florence, it is not always simple to reassemble their history; unless they were believed to have miraculous qualities, or were painted by well-known artists, they tend to be poorly researched and documented.<sup>117</sup> So, for example, Vasari's comments on a fresco by Sodoma, painted for the shoemakers of Siena, are indicative: 'on the corner near the Piazza de' Tolomei he painted in fresco, for the Guild of Shoemakers, a Madonna with the Child in her arms, St John, St Francis, San Rocco, and San Crispino, the patron saint of the men of that guild, who has a shoe in his hand'.<sup>118</sup> Vasari's remarks

reveal a successful combination of elements coming together in the work, which was placed at a prominent site and depicted the goods that the patrons produced, as well as their patron saint, thus serving a double function of self-promotion and devotion. In fact, guild commissions of this sort were not uncommon: in 1423, the notaries' guild of Siena commissioned the prestigious artist Gentile da Fabriano to paint them a fresco of the Madonna and Child for the corner of the piazza del Campo and via del Casato, where their offices were.<sup>119</sup> The image (which is now lost) came to be known as the *Madonna dei Banchetti*, on account of the outdoor desks where the notaries did their business, and in 1516 an unusual hanging loggia was erected at the site to protect the painting and the notaries' meeting space on the street corner.<sup>120</sup>

In Florence, large numbers of *tabernacoli* survive, many of them on street corners. So, for example, the *Madonna della Tromba* was originally in the heart of the city's commercial area on the corner of via di Calimala and vicolo delle Trombe, near Orsanmichele, an intersection where the town criers (the *trombetti* – so named for the trumpet blast that preceded their proclamations) had their offices. Although the original setting was altered as part of the nineteenth-century reordering of the Mercato Vecchio precinct, the sizeable tabernacle, which was decorated with a Madonna in Majesty by Jacopo del Casentino, underlined both the presence of the town criers and signalled the significance of street corners, favoured sites for their public announcements, in their activities.<sup>121</sup> The nearby Orsanmichele could likewise be said to have offered a monumental expression of the street-corner shrine, through the prominent, guild-sponsored niches facing each of the streets that surround its free-standing structure. Not all guild groups were assured a space on the exterior of Orsanmichele; so (for example) the lowly wool-beaters (the *battilani*) erected a tabernacle decorated with the Madonna and Child, flanked by Sts John the Evangelist and John the Baptist, well outside the centre on the corner of via Santa Reparata and via delle Ruote, near an oratory where they gathered.<sup>122</sup> Similarly, the city's community of German wool-weavers gave a visual articulation to their presence in the city by commissioning the Biliemme tabernacle (fig. 126), a grand polychrome low relief of the Madonna and Child flanked with saints, produced by the della Robbia workshop and installed over a public water fountain (thus explaining its other name, *Madonna delle fonticine*, which refers to its multiple water spouts).<sup>123</sup> The Biliemme tabernacle stands to the west of San Lorenzo on what was at the time variously known as via Tedesca or via Santa Caterina (now via Nazionale), where many of the migrant German weavers lived; it was also prominently visible from other streets converging on the site, including via Ariento, where the weavers gathered at the Cella di Ciardo tavern.



127. Città Rossa symbols (on the corner of the church) and a statue of St Ambrose (on the adjacent building), piazza Sant' Ambrogio, Florence.

128. Detail of Città Rossa symbol on the corner of the church of Sant' Ambrogio, Florence.



129. Puccio di Simone, Monteloro tabernacle, 14th century (with later stone frame), at the corner of borgo Pinti and via dei Pilastri, Florence. The many stone markers on the adjacent corner document conflict around this nodal site.

Street corners were favourable locations for the display of images for the simple reason that they could be viewed from multiple directions, but they were also potentially places of conflict or contestation, as ‘edges’ often marked the property boundaries between rival families or other community groups. Images and symbols displayed on corners might therefore gain further significance as turf-markers, as has been suggested for the Città Rossa symbols (fig. 128) and the statue of Sant’Ambrogio on the corners of the piazza of the same name in Florence (fig. 127).<sup>124</sup> Here, local devotion and neighbourhood loyalties overlapped, giving the street corner a multi-faceted function in defining the edges of the area and marking its nodes of social encounter (see the final section of this chapter).

A short distance from the same piazza, along via dei Pilastri at the intersection with borgo Pinti, the Monteloro tabernacle provides another interesting example of the way in which street corners could become contested sites of devotion (fig. 129). Here, a fourteenth-century fresco of the Virgin attributed to Puccio di Simone is framed in a later *all’antica*-style *pietra serena* frame, of uncertain date.<sup>125</sup> The altar base and the capitals of the tabernacle carry a distinctive device of hills topped by a cross (Monti d’Oro) – possibly a reference to the arms associated with one of the nearby convents, Santa Maria Maddalena (the Cestello) or Santa Maria di Candeli, but specific to the confraternity that managed the street shrine and may also have met in those churches.<sup>126</sup> Certainly, these convents exerted some sway over the neighbourhood, and, in fact, during the fifteenth century the nuns of Santa Maria di Candeli had a hand in closing down a tavern that operated on the crossroads, marking their

corner of the street with a short inscription proclaiming ‘Timor Domini’ in 1473.<sup>127</sup> Tussles continued well into the sixteenth century regarding the tavern; a law of 1488 establishing minimum distances between taverns and convents mentioned Monteloro, but was evidently not effective in the long term, as a tavern called the Fiasco d’Oro (‘Golden Flask’) was recorded close to Monteloro in the census of commercial properties of 1561.<sup>128</sup> Indeed, the tension between the religious and profane clustering of activities around the street corner continued well into the seventeenth century, when a stone plaque affixed by the *otto di guardia* repeated a law of 1461 that had forbidden prostitutes from living or working within 100 braccia of the nunnery walls.<sup>129</sup>

What emerges here is the degree to which activities of various sorts clustered around street corners. Evidently such nodal points in neighbourhoods on the working-class periphery of the city might serve as magnets for sociability around taverns, and in turn also drew prostitutes to the same clientele; prostitutes were often described as *femmine meretrici cantoniere*, clearly defining their trade in relation to the street corners (*cantoni*) where they solicited.<sup>130</sup> To this day, shops cluster at the Monteloro crossroads, a pharmacy replacing the site occupied by a baker in the sixteenth century, and the original visual markers still showing how control of urban space was staked out by the tabernacle and other inscribed stone signs.<sup>131</sup> There is, furthermore, some documentary evidence of the lay religious confraternity dedicated to worshipping at Monteloro from at least 1471, and a later rubric in their statutes stated in 1578:

they are obliged, above all, to keep the tabernacle clean, and every first Sunday of the month and on all the feast days of the Virgin Mary to prepare its altar, place a mantle on the Virgin and a crown on her head, and keep good care that no one should deface or dishonour the said place.<sup>132</sup>

Though brief, the rubric offers an unusual glimpse into the localised ritual and devotional practices that revolved around the street shrine: the day-to-day maintenance and honouring of the tabernacle, but also the ways in which the image was adorned with accessories at regular intervals. The Monteloro tabernacle is only one of hundreds of such locally managed devotional sites in Florence, and although it has left only a slight documentary trace it conforms to the observations, derived largely from later evidence, made for Liguria and discussed above.<sup>133</sup> Although it may not be possible to extrapolate from this single example the idea that all shrines were the object of structured collective local devotion, it nonetheless helpfully illustrates their far greater significance in the everyday life of early modern streets than is usually suggested.

### *Topography, authority and the sacred gaze*

The degree to which these neighbourhood sites were considered important expressions of the pervasive presence of the sacred in the public spaces of the city is further reinforced by instances of blasphemy perpetrated against street shrines, which was punished in a variety of ways. As we saw in Chapter 3, Antonio Rinaldeschi’s desecration of a street shrine near Santa Maria degli

Alberighi in 1501 was ultimately punished by Florence's city authorities in his very public hanging from a window of the Bargello; Antonio's fate was more severe than was common, perhaps as a result of the Savonarolan populist religious fervour that still influenced the city.<sup>134</sup> A later, similar, example of a gambler insulting the Madonna at Porta dei Borghi in Lucca (March 1588) resulted in the image itself working its own punishment, as the would-be blasphemer's arm was broken; this event gave rise to mass popular devotion for the Virgin's miraculous intervention, which resulted in the removal of the image to the city hall and then to the church of San Pietro.<sup>135</sup> The miraculous agency of the Virgin again intervened on 2 July 1552, when an occupying Spanish soldier aimed his arquebus at a glazed low-relief terracotta sculpture of the Madonna installed on the front of a house in a simple tabernacle in the working-class district of Provenzano in Siena.<sup>136</sup> The arquebus backfired, the soldier was killed and the Madonna was saved, as the sculpture sustained only some damage to the lower part, below the Virgin's shoulders. These events were interpreted as miraculous, and the site became a focus for popular devotion, marked by a new church built to house the image at the end of the sixteenth century; thus, an act of sacrilege laid the foundations for the city's second most venerated religious feast, dedicated to the image of Santa Maria di Provenzano.

Perhaps the best-known of all the examples of street-shrine Madonna images considered by contemporaries to have been subjected to an act of blasphemy is the fresco of the Virgin and Child with saints that originally adorned the house of the Jewish banker Daniele da Norsa in Mantua.<sup>137</sup> When Daniele bought the house on borgo San Simone in 1493, he was granted permission by the vicar of the Bishop of Mantua to whitewash the fresco. In spite of the permit, erasing the fresco was considered by many to be an act of sacrilege, and, following various attacks on his property by the local populace, Daniele sought the support of the Marquis Francesco II Gonzaga with a petition dated 29 May 1495. While Isabella d'Este offered Daniele her protection, Francesco wrote from the battlefield at Fornovo (where he was commanding the Venetian army against the French forces of Charles VIII) to repeal his wife's decision; he demanded first that Daniele have the fresco replaced with one 'more beautiful and ornate', and subsequently commanded that he should pay 110 florins for Andrea Mantegna's monumental *Madonna della Vittoria* altarpiece (now in the Musée du Louvre, Paris).<sup>138</sup> Daniele was later required by the marquis to forfeit his property, which was razed to make way for a commemorative chapel where Mantegna's altarpiece was installed (fig. 130); only at this point, in August 1497, was Daniele cleared of the charge of having profaned a religious image.<sup>139</sup>

It is evident that Daniele da Norsa was the victim of anti-Semitic persecution, both by the local citizens of Mantua and by the marquis, who sought to make the most of the situation to underwrite an expensive act of religious patronage that celebrated his military prowess. However, it is also significant that the extant chapel of Santa Maria della Vittoria stands on a crossroads, the very same site previously occupied by Daniele's house and the whitewashed fresco. There can be little doubt, therefore, that the visibility of the site and the public nature of the fresco itself served to highlight the changes made by Daniele to his home, and, indeed, to showcase both his punishment and the new church that resulted from it. That the site was central to the case is underlined



130. Chapel of the Madonna della Vittoria, Mantua, 1497.

by Francesco Gonzaga's letter demanding funding for Mantegna's altarpiece; he threatens that, if the money is not forthcoming in three days, '[Daniele] will be hanged in front of his house, on the very spot where the aforementioned image of the glorious Virgin was painted'.<sup>140</sup>

Although Daniele da Norsa faced an extraordinary series of punishments for erasing the fresco of the Virgin and Child that adorned the house he acquired in Mantua, the image itself was unexceptional and the same subject graced the façades or corners of many houses and palaces throughout Italy. While, as we have seen, a number of street shrines were commissioned to serve as the focus of local confraternity or guild devotion, the majority were almost certainly the product of family patronage. The history of these commissions is often obscure, and inevitably those that have received most attention are by the hand of significant artists. By their very nature – as artistic and devotional objects created for outdoor settings and thus subjected to centuries of atmospheric damage – the works that have attracted scholarly interest have tended to be discussed, above all, as artistic objects in isolation, and conservation strategies have led to the removal of many of them from their original settings.<sup>141</sup>

In Prato, for example, a tabernacle damaged by bombing in 1944 and now displayed in the Museo Civico was painted by Filippino Lippi for a site on the central Mercatale; Vasari suggested that this was a Lippi family commission, as the artist's family residence was nearby, while the street shrine was adjacent to the nunnery of Santa Margherita where Filippino's mother, Lucia Buti, had been a nun (fig. 131).<sup>142</sup> While Vasari's story offered a biographical significance to the shrine, the late-fifteenth-century fresco was in fact a commission of the Tieri family; firm documentary evidence indicates that Lippi had business contacts with the Tieri di Antonio Tieri, whose family arms and name saints were depicted on the tabernacle, and on the corner of whose property, close to Lippi's own family home, the tabernacle was painted.<sup>143</sup> Just as the fresco's location, on the canto del Mercatale, made it a visible focus on the northern edge of the city's vast open market space, so also many of the city's other street shrines were on street corners. Close to the Mercatale, and running parallel to it, is the via dei Tintori, which takes its name from the dyers who worked in the wool industry centred in this peripheral area of the city, near the river Bisenzio; on this street is the tabernacle of the Cantaccio, or 'bad corner', whose unusual name may derive from the fact that the intersection was a haunt for prostitutes in this working-class district, though it may simply refer to a tight and busy crossroads that was difficult to negotiate.<sup>144</sup> Either way, the chamfered street corner that accommodates the early-fifteenth-century tabernacle must have provided additional space for the devout to gather, while also perhaps easing congestion.<sup>145</sup>

That street corners were a favoured site for family-sponsored tabernacles in Prato is again illustrated by a commission of 1485 to the local artist Tommaso di Piero del Trombetto, which stated that the image of the Virgin and Child he was to paint for Masnieri di Benino on via Santa Trinità should be 'on the corner of his house', where it can still be seen in the small niche carved out from the corner property.<sup>146</sup> The same artist is identified with the heavily abraded fresco of the same subject in via San Fabiano, contained in a niche scooped out of the corner of the house on the crossroad; the flat floor of the hollow creates a surface that could be used for displaying flowers or candles to honour the image. Variations of this arrangement were not uncommon, in Prato and elsewhere, since by creating a chamfered edge on the street corner, a small functional space, resembling that in front of an altar table, could be made before the devotional image; at the same time, setting back the image into the wall space provided protection from the bustle of the street and especially the throngs that gathered on street corners.

Again in Prato, the famous merchant Francesco di Marco Datini had a street shrine painted in the late fourteenth century (1391) by Niccolò di Pietro Gerini, attached to the enclosing wall of the garden he owned across the street from his large, centrally located house.<sup>147</sup> Today an aedicule still marks the site, although the fresco has been removed to the city museum, and the urban context has changed somewhat, as the garden has gone and the tabernacle appears less closely associated with Datini's properties, which originally it may have served to link together. As is well known, Datini was a prolific writer of letters, and as part of this correspondence a letter, probably of 1395, from his right-hand man in Prato, Lapo Mazzei, notes: 'you say, I have Our Lady made on my street corner in Prato, [but] I say to you, She is in the city, which is





filled with churches, hospitals and images.<sup>148</sup> While confirming the sense of ownership and proximity associated with the family tabernacle on ‘my’ street corner, Mazzei’s observation gives a clear sense of quite how many sites of devotion and street shrines jostled for the attention of devout viewers in the city. In fact, Mazzei’s comments preface remarks that sought to encourage Datini to commission another street shrine, this time in the countryside outside the south-western edge of the city at Romita.<sup>149</sup> Mazzei’s comments are about as clear a statement as one could hope for of a donor’s possible motives in paying for a religious image in a public space, and of the reason why street corners were especially favoured sites for them:

I’ll tell you this much, that even though a million people will pass by your front door after you die, few of them looking at your house [Palazzo Datini] will spare a prayer to God for you; but making that Blessed image, here, on the crossroad and intersection [at Romita], through the centuries people will kneel daily, and there’s no way that you won’t have prayers said for you every day.<sup>150</sup>

Mazzei’s remarks imply that perhaps the sight of Datini’s grand house might make passers-by feel less inclined to pray for him. Above all, however, he

131. Filippino Lippi, *Madonna and Child*, 1498, fresco in a tabernacle, originally located ‘in sul Canto del Mercatale’, now in Museo Civico, Prato.

132. Domenico Veneziano, *Madonna and Child Enthroned*, c.1440, fresco, originally in a street shrine on canto dei Carnesecchi, Florence, now in the National Gallery, London.

makes it quite clear that in the city centre the huge number of institutional and more informal familial sites of devotion vied for the prayers of passing citizens in their daily kinetic devotional practices. Street corners were hubs in the communication network of the early modern city, and individuals and families competed for a space on these crowded information points. Like the images at city gates, which were both devotional and apotropaic, the widespread distribution of sacred images in the public space of the city's network of streets and alleys brought the gaze of the divine to bear on the polity, while also associating divine oversight with a specific family or neighbourhood.

The city's very topography came to be marked by the names attached to popular shrines, as, in an age before the numbering of houses, way-finding used these markers as reference points, as it did family clan areas, or more prosaic referents such as bakeries, taverns or prominent signage.<sup>151</sup> It is this practice of describing location in relation to prominent sites, waypoints or landmarks that led Nicholas Eckstein to speak of the 'prepositional city', very much in the same way that Kevin Lynch's analysis reveals the practices and experience underpinning modern descriptive cartographies.<sup>152</sup> Thus, for example, it has recently been shown that a house on the *canto dei Carnesecchi* in Florence came to be identified as the 'c[h]asa della Vergine Maria', on account of the street-shrine fresco of the Virgin and Child painted by Domenico Veneziano around 1440 (fig. 132).<sup>153</sup> Vasari noted that Veneziano's fresco was especially well placed, as the tabernacle site aligned in one direction towards the cathedral and was sited at the intersection of the two main streets leading to the Dominican complex of Santa Maria Novella.<sup>154</sup> As Amanda Lillie has observed, 'this work once had street power and a defined ceremonial and religious purpose', resulting from its prominent location on an important ceremonial axis and its position raised well above street level, which afforded it greater visibility.<sup>155</sup>

A comparable case can be made for Sodoma's fresco of the Lamentation, called the *Madonna del Corvo* (c. 1530), painted over the entrance of the Palazzo Marescotti, right in the heart of Siena, close to the main intersection of the principal ceremonial axis leading to the cathedral (fig. 133).<sup>156</sup> It seems that the work's unusual name derives from its proximity to the family coat of arms (an eagle), which stood directly beneath it in the door frame of the family palace; however, already in 1536 – on the occasion of Charles V's entry into Siena – the location was referred to as the 'canto della Madonna', indicating how rapidly the image had made its mark on the description and experience of urban topography.<sup>157</sup> Examples such as these give a clear indication of how street shrines on residential properties might become associated with the owner or patron's family through local usage and naming that linked the religious subject to the family in question, just as occurred with the *Madonna degli Amadi*, discussed earlier. Such naming strategies and associations have in many cases been lost over time, and only in some instances is it possible to recover them, though we can probably assume that the majority of street shrines and tabernacles created through family commissions conveyed this connection in some way by their local identification, as we have seen for a number of the examples from Prato.

Beyond the widespread commissioning of street shrines by families or local devotional groups, common themes or tropes can be identified among the more exceptional foundation narratives for such shrines throughout Italy. In Rome, a



133. Sodoma, *Lamentation*, the so-called *Madonna del Corvo*, c.1530, fresco in a tabernacle, Palazzo Marescotti, via Madonna del Corvo, Siena.

city with perhaps more than a thousand such images – locally known as *Madonnelle* – a number of emblematic examples stand out.<sup>158</sup> Numerous images were associated with miraculous responses to varying degrees of sacrilege or insult perpetrated upon them by gamblers and people playing ball games. For instance, the devotional image that is now the centrepiece of Pietro da Cortona's church of Santa Maria della Pace is a Virgin and Child that was originally located in the portico of Sant'Andrea degli Acquaricciari, a site managed by the city's water-sellers.<sup>159</sup> Local residents were much impressed when the image bled after a gambler threw a stone at her, and Sixtus IV, a dedicated supporter of devotion to the Virgin Mary, went there in solemn procession, commanding that a new church be built to honour the image after the end of the Pazzi war.<sup>160</sup> A similar story is that of the *Madonna della Misericordia* originally located on vicolo delle Palle, near the church of San Giovanni dei Fiorentini; allegedly an angry player of *bocce* (boules) threw the ball at the Madonna when he lost, and the image developed bruising beneath the right eye. The boules player lost the offending

arm, naturally sought mercy and did penance, and the arm miraculously returned forty days later, after which time the image was moved into the nearby church.<sup>161</sup> The *Madonna della Vallicella* was originally located on the via di Parione, where, in 1525, someone playing in the street hit the image with a stone; the Virgin bled, and the fresco was detached from the wall and taken to the local parish church before it found its definitive home in a newly built eponymous oratory in 1575.<sup>162</sup> Other images owed their importance to their intercession on behalf of individuals caught up in street violence, as in the case of the fresco that gives its name to the church of the Madonna del Pianto.<sup>163</sup> Here, a fourteenth-century painting of the Madonna and Child, originally installed on one of the arches of the Teatro di Pompeo (in front of Arco dei Cenci), was rehoused (first at San Salvatore dei Calderai and then in the purpose-built new church) after witnessing a street brawl between two men on 10 January 1546, weeping when one of them was killed. Others still had names that merged with the local topography, like the *Imago pontis*, a Coronation of the Virgin located on the via Coronari adjacent to the bridge used by pilgrims to cross to the Vatican precinct.<sup>164</sup>

As these examples from Rome show, myriad foundation stories were attached to these local sites of devotion, which in turn created distinct and local webs of meaning in the everyday lives of city dwellers. Observation reveals that, throughout Italy, street shrines and other religious symbols affixed to buildings often occupy locations on house and palace façades that are comparable with those commonly used for coats of arms and other heraldic insignia. Indeed, religious signs are more common across the social spectrum than coats of arms, which tend to be associated more exclusively with urban elites. In her biography of the popular preacher Bernardino of Siena, Iris Origo commented on the widespread, spontaneous adoption of marble or terracotta plaques bearing the monogram of Christ (IHS) installed on domestic residences of all social conditions, as an expression of the widespread popular devotion to the saint.<sup>165</sup> In displaying IHS plaques, householders followed the example of erecting images of the Virgin Mary in the form of ubiquitous signs on the street to express their everyday devotion to her. It is interesting that family coats of arms project towards the city, while street-shrine niches usually intrude into wall surfaces and are often protected – as it were – by fictive window frames.<sup>166</sup> And yet these devotional windows look down on the street, offering a form of ‘soft’ surveillance: they provide a divine version of the protective eyes on the street that Jane Jacobs described in her famous ethnographic study of New York.<sup>167</sup> The mundane procession of the everyday, whereby urban populations moved about the city under the watchful gaze of these countless public shrines, created a pervasive network that overlapped with the nodes of information and exchange, intertwining the devotional with the quotidian at street level.

### *Locating community: depicting neighbourhoods and the public realm*

As we have noted, street corners, intersections and small piazzas formed vital nodes in the pre-modern city, around which a variety of activities clustered. Proximity to these key sites in the urban network was much prized, as they guaranteed a high level of visibility because of footfall, as well as because people

loitered around these hubs of information and gossip. Certain categories of shop, which were frequently visited or the nature of whose trade required prolonged waiting times, clung to these sites; bakeries needed to be within easy and daily reach, much as did taverns and apothecaries (and, in some cities, book-sellers), and in these places customers tended to have to wait and consequently had time to talk to other customers. These nodal sites likewise stood out as marking the edges of areas of influence in the city, whether these were administrative borders between districts and parishes, or the boundaries between one family residential enclave and another, or indeed the more ephemeral dividing lines between factions or working-class festive kingdoms or areas. Furthermore, as we have seen, information of all sorts adhered to these sites, as news and gossip, official proclamations and subversive writings all reached their audiences from these strategic points in the fabric. These largely secular functions and social practices were further enriched by the layering of devotional activities articulated around street shrines. A dense visual language of signs and markers – shop signs, coats of arms, neighbourhood emblems, inscriptions and religious images – distinguished these socially constructed spaces, traces of meaning that it is possible carefully to unpick, even though it is not always simple to resurrect the complex interactions that brought these street corners to life.<sup>168</sup>

One way that we can catch a glimpse of the ‘specific use of space[s], and hence [the] spatial practice that they express and constitute’ (to continue with Henri Lefebvre’s formulation) might be through contemporary images, informed by our reading of the physical fabric, so that ‘a space [may] be read or decoded’.<sup>169</sup> In adopting such an approach, we would be deploying Michael Baxandall’s well-known methodology of applying the ‘period eye’ – in this case, to consider works that are shaped by the Renaissance built environment, specifically pictorial compositions that might be inscribed with the meanings of everyday actions and rituals of the kind we have been discussing.<sup>170</sup>

Cosimo Rosselli’s fresco from Sant’Ambrogio in Florence, depicting the Procession of the Holy Blood (1484–6), offers a good point of entry, with its depiction of events that transpired in the small neighbourhood piazza adjoining the convent church of the Benedictine nuns, which doubled as the local parish church of this working-class district on the eastern edge of the city (fig. 134).<sup>171</sup> Rosselli’s fresco was painted as part of an elaborate and extended programme to embellish a chapel inside the church, where a vial of precious liquid, allegedly the Holy Blood of Christ, was preserved following a miracle of 1230 recorded by the local parish priest, Ugucione.<sup>172</sup> This significant relic was honoured through processions and display in the church on three days each year: the Sunday within the Octave of Corpus Christi, the local feast day of St Ambrose, and the day of the miracle, 30 December; increasing its devotional significance, in 1459 Pope Pius II awarded major indulgences to visitors to the church on specific feast days.<sup>173</sup> It was this honour that appears to have provided new impetus to devotion at the shrine of the Holy Blood, and this, in turn, led to the construction of a new chapel, the main wall of which was decorated with Rosselli’s fresco.

While there is still some discussion as to the precise nature of the events depicted in the scene, what Vasari first recognised was that it represented ‘a procession on the piazza of that church’.<sup>174</sup> What is also clear is that Rosselli depicted the piazza as it appeared in his day, a relatively small public space



134. Cosimo Rosselli, *The Miracle of the Holy Blood*, 1484–6, fresco, Sant’Ambrogio, Florence.

closed off to the east by the church and to the north by convent properties, while the left side of the image is left somewhat more open, with views to the countryside and a suggestion of the housing along via dei Pilastri. Corners stand out in the composition; on the extreme right side, the stone quoining of the church façade is in evidence, with the stone marker of the local neighbourhood festive kingdom (or *potenza*) called the Città Rossa, which had only recently been installed, visible just above heads of the bystanders (see figs 127 and 128).<sup>175</sup> The middle ground is filled by the corner of the flight of steps that ascends to the main entrance of the church, serving to draw the viewer’s eye towards the focus of the scene at the church door, while the background is divided by a vertical band created by the hard *pietra serena* stone quoining of the house overlooking the square. With the exception of the windows onto the piazza, the only openings are the door of the church, where a group of nuns gather around the reliquary held by the cleric, and beyond it the entrance to the convent.

The rest of the scene is made up of the open space of the piazza, filled with a crowd of onlookers, whom we can assume to be local residents gathered on the piazza on the occasion of an event of ritual importance – probably the end of

a procession, as implied by the numerous clergy and altar boys carrying candles – as the reliquary of the Holy Blood is brought back into the church. What is striking about the scene is the fact that it seems to represent a local crowd, though a tradition, established by Vasari, suggests that the group of three younger men standing in the foreground might include the philosopher Pico della Mirandola (centre). In marked distinction to many religious scenes, where contemporary figures are introduced in quite strictly segregated gender groups, the piazza of Sant’Ambrogio is filled with a diverse assembly of young and old, men and women, most them in small animated knots of three or four – a naturalistic portrayal of a crowd breaking up after the main event has ended. It is the variety of poses, with facial expressions captured mid-conversation, that imbues the occasion with the life-like quality of a scene observed rather than imagined.

Cosimo Rosselli was probably a local resident, and certainly had become so within a couple of years of painting the fresco, by which time it is known that he had bought a house in the vicinity from the nuns.<sup>176</sup> Either way, he captured the feeling of this local piazza, transmitting onto the wall of the church a scene familiar to parishioners as their own neighbourhood space. In so doing, he rendered the scene as a non-elite urban area, populated by local residents, to be viewed by those same residents; it was their piazza, their miracle, their church. Moreover, as the account books of the nunnery and later censuses reveal, the relationship between the citizens on the piazza and the nuns in the convent was in many cases symbiotic, as many of the former were tenants of the latter.<sup>177</sup> Fanning out from the piazza Sant’Ambrogio are five streets, all of them originally of a similar type containing artisan row-housing, though nineteenth-century renovations have somewhat altered their appearance. The view of via dei Pilastrini in Bonsignori’s map of Florence (1584) reveals the street to be made up of recognisable terraced housing, a standardised form that adopted two doors for each housing unit, with two upper floors and narrow garden allotments behind (see fig. 104). Such arrangements – sometimes known as *casolaria* – were common outside the centre, and were favoured by developers such as religious institutions.<sup>178</sup> Facing the church across the piazza on the tight corner of via di Mezzo and via dei Pilastrini stood the confraternity oratory of San Michele della Pace (built 1444), which also signalled its devotion to the local relic by means of a carved marble roundel decorated with the Eucharistic symbol of the infant Jesus rising out of the chalice, dated 1473 (fig. 135).<sup>179</sup> A further corner on the complex intersection formed around the piazza, where via de’ Macci meets borgo la Croce, was marked in the first quarter of the sixteenth century by an elegant della Robbia polychrome terracotta sculpture of St Ambrose (fig. 127). Interestingly, the neighbourhood patron was co-opted by the Città Rossa festive *brigata* as their protector, and their symbol appears in della Robbia’s work with an image of the nearby church (framed by cornucopia) beneath the saint’s feet.<sup>180</sup> It is from this corner of the piazza that Rosselli framed his view.

The fresco therefore figures a microcosm of the neighbourhood, a scene set in the piazza, to be viewed within the church; notably, the angle from which the viewer approaches the fresco in the chapel mimics that in the composition, leading from the piazza towards the church door, creating a fluid experiential connection between the act of being in the urban space, and viewing that same space inside the church. Within the fresco, people and the recognisable

135. Oratorio della Compagnia di San Michele della Pace, piazza Sant’Ambrogio, Florence. A Eucharistic symbol, dated 1473, is fixed above and to the right of the door.



built environment embody the community of Sant’Ambrogio in ways that only locals would properly understand – the officiating presence of the nuns, and the predominantly working-class residents, perhaps even known individuals picked out here and there. Moreover, a small detail such as the visible stone marker of the Città Rossa would have had meaning only for local viewers, who would understand its key function in the informal topographies of artisan ritual.<sup>181</sup> Much as was described above in relation to the complex layering and contestation of urban space around the nearby corner of Monteloro, the Città Rossa marker stone was inscribed with meanings specific to a group of local residents. The fresco thus conforms with Clifford Geertz’s well-known formulation of the ‘story [people] tell themselves about themselves’, in that its primary audience was the community that regularly engaged with it and interpreted their experiences through it.<sup>182</sup> Further, its position in a side chapel of the



parish church of Sant'Ambrogio meant that a wider audience of viewers also had access to it, and to the image of the neighbourhood and local community that it presented.

In this regard, it is worth considering the broader implications of Cosimo Rosselli's fresco and the eye-witness account it provides of neighbourhood life around a locally significant node. It raises the issue of the degree to which naturalistic depictions of recognisable urban spaces, which increasingly found their way into the settings of religious cycles on the walls of churches throughout Italy, were intended to create comparable degrees of resonance between viewers and the neighbourhoods that they inhabited. This issue is further complicated by the question of the relative and variable extent to which audiences could access these works, which might be readily viewed if on the façade of a building, or the main body of a church, but in other cases might be accessible only to specific categories of viewer.<sup>183</sup>

In Florence, a group of paintings produced between around 1424 and 1486 chose as their settings the public spaces outside churches as a fitting stage for representing ceremonial occasions of local significance.<sup>184</sup> Bicci di Lorenzo's *Consecration of the Church of Sant'Egidio by Pope Martin V* (c. 1424) and Masaccio's now lost *Consecration of the Carmine* (before 1426) both focus on crowd scenes, set in the public space outside the respective churches, and both include portraits of identifiable important personages.<sup>185</sup> Bicci di Lorenzo's work was widely accessible to viewers, as it originally appeared on the façade of the hospital church of Santa Maria Nuova; some debate remains as to the precise location of Masaccio's lost work.<sup>186</sup> It is not clear how widely accessible Ghirlandaio's portrayal of the *Resurrection of the Roman Notary's Son* was in the Sassetti chapel at Santa Trinita, though it performed a similar task of figuring a neighbourhood piazza to the almost contemporary fresco in Sant'Ambrogio.<sup>187</sup> Here the composition is arranged to showcase the Sassetti clan, but the street scene in the background is rich with accurate architectural details, including the Palazzo Spini Feroni on the left and the church of Santa Trinita on the right, from which can be seen exiting a number of Vallombrosan monks; it was, indeed, the monks and the Sassetti family who were the most likely to enjoy unfettered access to the scene.

In these images, as in many others from across Italy, the recognisable depiction of local settings in religious scenes of local significance gave rise to what has been described as an eye-witness style.<sup>188</sup> Such an approach encouraged a typology of painting that interwove foundational mythologies and saints' lives with contemporary characters and events, in which recognisable urban settings articulate the narrative, blending historical events with contemporary settings so that past meanings could be constantly relived in the present. To an extent, these recognisable settings became increasingly common for all religious art of the fifteenth century, as the new science of perspective facilitated naturalistic depictions that collapsed the boundaries between past and present. This allowed direct visual connections to be drawn between subjects such as local saints and their community of devotees, so that 'places themselves became sacramental through their participation in the holy life of the [...] saint'.<sup>189</sup> As social practices – devotional and secular – inscribed meaning upon the public spaces of the city, so too they informed the ways that viewers understood these artworks, which located the holy in the urban everyday.

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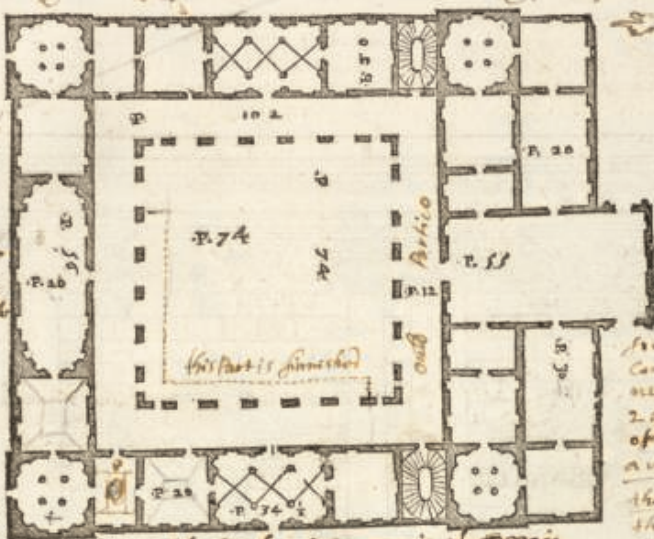
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This passage Entrance is  
to be finished and of this  
Rooming of P. 10 and P. 11  
there is the tower!



A  
The Cornice is all  
of Ruth bricks  
B  
The other Pilasters  
Stems. the arches  
Brick  
To observe that  
the Stucco that  
covers the columns  
is bricks and is  
not made of stone  
and that with  
have in only 1  
smaller

The defect of the tower is that there is dark but that is  
because of the highness of the tower

DE I DISEGNI che seguono in forma maggiore; il primo è di parte  
della facciata, il secondo di parte del Cortile della sopraffatta fabrica.

HANNO

# The Palace and the Street

## *Private Identities and Public Spaces*

The following designs are of a building in Vicenza belonging to Count Ottavio de' Thiene, once belonging to Count Marc'Antonio, who began it. The house is situated near the square in the centre of the city, and so I thought it a good idea to put some shops in the part facing that square because the architect must also take into account what is useful for the patron [*fabricatore*], which he can do comfortably when the site is large enough. Each shop has a mezzanine [*mezato*] above it for the use of the shopkeepers, and above are the rooms for the master. This house forms a block; that is, it is surrounded by four streets. The main entrance, or as we may call it the master gate, has a loggia in front and is on the busiest street of the city. The great hall will be above and will project flush with the loggia. There are two other entrances at the sides with columns in the middle, which have been placed there not so much for ornament as to make the room above stable and to make the breadth proportional to its height. From these entrances one enters the courtyard [*cortile*], surrounded on the inside with loggias of piers [*pilastro*], which are rusticated on the ground floor and Composite on the first floor. In the corners are octagonal rooms, which work out very well not only because of their shape but also because of the different uses to which they can be adapted. The rooms of this building that are now finished were decorated with superb stucco work by Master Alessandro Vittoria and Master Bartolomeo Ridolfi and the paintings by Master Anselmo Canera and Master Bernardino India, both from Verona, who are second to none in our time. The cellars and similar places are underground because the building is in the highest part of the city where there is no danger that water will be a nuisance.<sup>1</sup>

So wrote Andrea Palladio of the Palazzo Thiene in Vicenza in his treatise on architecture, the *Quattro libri* (1570), effectively claiming the primary authorship for a building erected for the richest and most politically ambitious family in the city. In fact, the design was almost certainly initiated by the prestigious and highly sought-after court architect of the dukes of Mantua, Giulio Romano, who visited Vicenza in 1542; Palladio took up the lead role of controlling architect on the site only after Giulio's death in 1546.<sup>2</sup> Much has been written about the palace design, and its disputed authorship has

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136. Andrea Palladio, plan and elevation of the Palazzo Thiene, Vicenza, woodcut from *I quattro libri dell'architettura* (Venice, 1601), Book II, p. 13, with annotations by Inigo Jones, 1613–14, on his own copy of the book, Worcester College, Oxford.

been the subject of comment since the early seventeenth century, when Inigo Jones annotated his copy of the *Quattro libri* to that effect (1613–14; fig. 136); however, less attention has been paid to what Palladio himself actually wrote about the building.<sup>3</sup>

### *Palaces and the urban ecosystem*

Turning, then, to Palladio's text, we can observe what most commentators have highlighted – namely, that no mention is made of Giulio Romano, in spite of the fact that a number of lesser-known figures are listed as being involved in the interior decoration of the palace. More remarkable, however, is the fact that so much of the text focuses on issues relating to the palace's location; Palladio dwells on its central location near Vicenza's main square, facing onto its 'busiest street', while also commenting that he was able to accommodate cellars in the design on account of the fact that the site is raised and thus less prone to flooding. The palace was never completed to the published design: only the north-east corner was constructed to plan, while the rest of the huge palace incorporated earlier residential properties erected by Ludovico Thiene to create a unified property block, bounded on four sides by streets. Again, the text refers only to the property block 'surrounded by four streets', while the accompanying plan implies its unified completion. The grand 'master gate' and loggia that were to face onto the main street – today's corso Palladio – were never constructed, although text and plan show them pushing into the street, thus also projecting the great hall on the *piano nobile* ('first floor'), and with it the Thiene family's identity, into the public realm. Giving visual expression to the status and ambition of the family was, after all, a primary function for most palaces. And yet perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the short descriptive text in the *Quattro libri* is the fact that almost a third of it describes plans to furnish the Palazzo Thiene with shops along its principal façade. Palladio observes that the architect should take into account what will be useful for his client, implicitly recognising the material benefit of rental income that might be derived from shop ownership in an area of prime commercial real estate at the centre of the city, on its most bustling thoroughfare and close to the main business district around the main square and market.

Palladio's comments throughout the text link the palace inextricably to its wider context in the city, rather than focusing on it as a monolithic structure defined exclusively by architectural features in a fashionably imported new style. By discussing the palace in relation to the network of streets defining its edges, its proximity to the main piazza, its position in relation to the water table, and its potential to generate income through shops, Palladio describes a palace that is integrated with the city. This proximity to streets – and especially the main street, with which even the most important interior space of the home, the *sala* ('great hall'), was in direct visual contact – suggests that we should think about the palace as part of a wider urban ecosystem. How was elite residential architecture implicated in the wider public sphere, and might we propose that such buildings, in turn, sustained their own localised ecosystems, which participated in the wider and more complex system of the city as a whole?

Writing forty years ago, Stanford Anderson discussed the complex overlapping socio-physical environment of the street:

Streets are integral parts of our movement and communication networks; they are places where many of our conflicts or resolutions between public and private claims are played out; they are the arenas where the boundaries of the conventional and aberrant behaviour are frequently redrawn.<sup>4</sup>

He was writing about the present (at least, the present of 1978), though his comments have obvious resonance and value for considering conditions in the past. Anderson went on to suggest that ‘architects aggrandize themselves by conceiving their works to be powerfully deterministic of social behaviour’, and posited a rival ‘ecological approach to people and the physical environment’, where architecture is only one of numerous factors that affect the way people interact in and with the urban environment.<sup>5</sup> The approach is informed by urban analysis and by the idea of the city as ecosystem, freeing the built object from the skewed priorities of scholarly analysis, which privileges the monument, the style, the authorial hand over the meaning, function, agency of significant structures. In the Foreword to the new edition of the seminal *Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1992), Jane Jacobs wrote:

Cities are in a sense natural ecosystems too – for us. They are not disposable [...] It is urgent that human beings understand as much as we can about city ecology – starting at any point in city process. The humble, vital services performed by grace of good city streets and neighbourhoods are probably as good a starting point as any.<sup>6</sup>

Jacobs’ comment looks at the wider ‘system’ of the city, but her approach is fine-grained and works from the street up, house by house, block by block. It encourages the reader to look at the interactions between people and their residential environs.<sup>7</sup> Again, to borrow a very general definition of these spaces from contemporary urban theory, the approach here proposed is concerned with the ‘life between buildings’ that is at the heart of the work of Jan Gehl, whose urban-planning practice has reinvigorated numerous contemporary cities through the promotion of mixed use (by contrast with the consumer-led developments that have tended to prevail in recent decades). Although Gehl’s representation of the changing form of urban living has a short-range historical perspective, we can use it to explore how, in the pre-modern period, a great deal of ‘essential activity’ took place in public space. His aim, to disrupt the assumption that human behaviour and actions in the public realm are most closely shaped by buildings,<sup>8</sup> is directly applicable to the early modern Italian city, where it subverts the dominant approach of architectural historians, whose attention has mainly been directed at monumental buildings, and much less at the wider ecosystems that they supported.

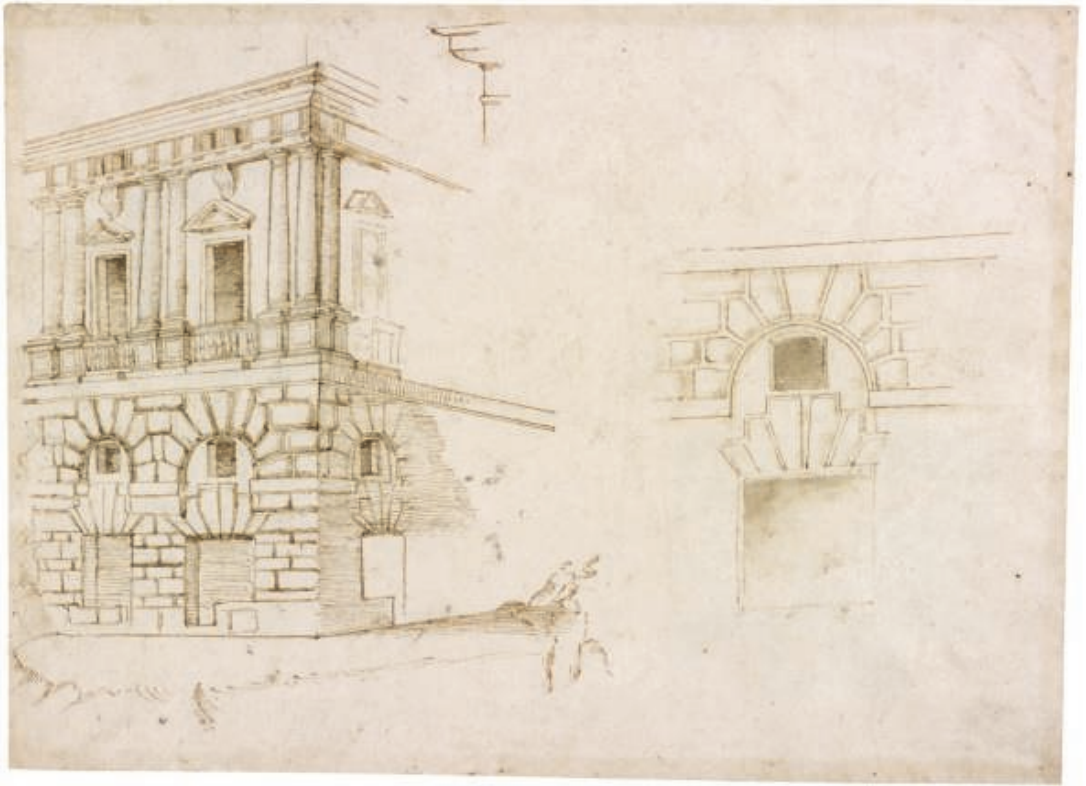
In this chapter, the focus of inquiry into the street shifts to a consideration of the early modern Italian *palazzo*, in order to consider how the exteriors of these magnificent residential structures articulated quite complex relationships between the public realm and the domestic interior. Since the focus of this study

is the street, the discussion will concentrate on façade elements, albeit that a number of scholars have recently challenged the validity of previously held assumptions about a neat divide between public and private in the exterior/interior distinction of these domestic structures.<sup>9</sup> We shall review the palace façade as a permeable surface that mediates and articulates this more nuanced relationship between the palace interior and the city street. In so doing, we shall open up these façades to a novel reading, according to which architectural elements and features are shown to have a social function and significance that enable and give visual expression to activities both inside the home and on the street, and also between these two realms.

The palace provides a good starting point for the interdisciplinary and comparative analysis of built form: a discrete unit of urban living (of variable scale), which developed to become prevalent among the elites of most cities from at least the fifteenth century.<sup>10</sup> We know a good deal about the stylistic features and models that emerged and evolved to give *all'antica* forms to these houses, for which architects provided sophisticated, innovative and sometimes even repetitive solutions. However, while there has been some discussion of the social world of the Renaissance palace – for example, in the debate over whether Florentine palaces represented a nuclear or kinship model of familial residential association – it is surprising that the palace as architectural typology has so rarely been discussed collectively or comparatively in relation to its urban context.<sup>11</sup>

This is all the more surprising as so many authors of architectural treatises do exactly that. The comments of Francesco di Giorgio, Sebastiano Serlio and other authors regarding residential architecture are by no means restricted to stylistic considerations: a common theme of social stratification and zoning of professions and socio-economic groups can be identified.<sup>12</sup> While it has been shown that this theme offers an idealised conception of city layout more than the reality of the heterogeneous mix of housing that was the norm, it is also true that architectural treatises make numerous comments that are more obviously derived from observed conditions. Thus, recommendations can be found for the use of porticoes (Palladio), balconies (Serlio), windows (Francesco di Giorgio) and benches and loggias (Alberti), and the creation of urban garden spaces in lawyers' palaces for clients to use (Palladio), meeting rooms and offices at *mezzascala* ('mezzanine landing') level where merchants can meet clients (Alberti), and ground-floor armouries and theatre spaces in the homes of cardinals (Cortesi), to name but a few.<sup>13</sup> What all these examples have in common is that they describe transitional spaces between the domestic (familial) sphere and the activities of everyday life that were predominantly transacted in the public spaces of the city streets and squares. In addition to these, all treatise writers mention – with varying degrees of insistence – the shops (*botteghe* or *apotheche*) that frequently lined the ground floors of elite residential buildings.

Features such as these satisfied the multiple requirements of palace resident-patrons, and were, of course, adapted to their particular needs and the conditioning factors of local contexts. To illustrate this wider point, we might consider the Palazzo Caprini in Rome, as Palladio knew it through a drawing that he almost certainly owned, so as to identify a series of elements that encode the building's social functions and meanings (fig. 137).<sup>14</sup> Palazzo Caprini



was designed by Bramante in the first decade of the 1500s for two brothers employed in the papal court: Adriano was an apostolic protonotary and secretary to Cardinal Capuano, while Aurelio was in charge of the papal mint. It stood on a prominent site on the new papal street through the Borgo (the via Alessandrina), facing onto the grand set piece of piazza Scossacavalli.<sup>15</sup> Its design was enormously influential for the subsequent development of the palace type, and remains the benchmark against which the palace designs of Raphael – a resident of the palace in 1517–20 – are measured.<sup>16</sup> The significance of the palace in the traditional narrative of the history of architecture has conditioned the ways in which this (now demolished) building has been discussed in the scholarship.

Although incomplete, the drawing shows that the building had two similar façades, which addressed both the new piazza Scossacavalli and via Alessandrina, the most prominent new papal street in the Borgo, a processional axis leading directly from the bridge at the Castel Sant'Angelo to the square in front of St Peter's basilica. Location was key to the success of the building for its patrons and designer, as it filled an enviable site, adjacent to the properties of other high-ranking members of the curia.<sup>17</sup> The orientation of the palace suggests that the façade shown on the unfinished side of the drawing fronted the street and the other faced towards the piazza, and we can observe how Bramante has marked this significant corner by the innovative grouping of the paired applied Doric order that marks the *piano nobile*.<sup>18</sup> This upper floor is

137. Unknown draughtsman, drawing of Palazzo Caprini, Rome, 16th century, pen and ink, Royal Institute of British Architects, London.

also distinguished by elegant aedicular windows that appear from the shading to be cut all the way to floor level so that, with their protective stone balustrades, they function as balconies, a feature probably reserved to the piazza façade only. Above these windows, and below the Doric frieze, coats of arms are prominently displayed. The ground floor – unadorned by a columnar order but instead defined by strongly cut stonework, with voussoirs framing the openings – is clearly marked by shops on both the piazza and street façades.<sup>19</sup>

Setting aside the classical references of the architect's design, the elements picked out in the comments above underline the means by which the palace communicated with its surrounding social and physical environment. As is explored in detail in the discussion that follows, these elements disrupt the simple demarcation of boundaries between owner–patrons inside the palace and the wider public on the street: shops raise interesting questions regarding the permeability of ownership and control of the palace as a monolithic unit, while windows and balconies remind us that palaces were places to look out from as much as façades to be observed and admired. While coats of arms 'advertised' ownership, the architectural accenting of the corner is a visual reminder of the power of building's edges and of street corners in marking urban topographies. At the Palazzo Caprini, these and other factors converge because of the building's prominent location, so that urban placement becomes perhaps the most significant conditioning influence upon architectural design.<sup>20</sup> As Palladio's comments regarding the Palazzo Thiene suggest, we can observe that palaces were designed for their environment, and that they structured and supported quite varied social encounters and relationships. It is for this reason that this chapter proposes the model of the palace as an ecosystem.

### *Palaces and the street: Corners, loggias and benches*

The Italian *palazzo* as a residential typology equated family status with prominently placed, large-scale classicising architecture. As David Friedman has conclusively shown, through the fifteenth century and across the peninsula elite urban housing became increasingly focused on the development of large and uniformly styled palaces, whose main façades projected towards primary city thoroughfares.<sup>21</sup> While Florence and Venice may provide the best-known instances of the residential 'building boom' that transformed the urban centres of early modern Italy, it is fair to say that the Renaissance palace type was instrumental in reshaping most cities from the mid-fifteenth century, marking them permanently with the invasive presence of architecture on a monumental scale, which occupied ever increasing tracts of centrally located real estate.<sup>22</sup> What has been described by Friedman as the symbiotic relationship between streets and palace façades has tended to be discussed primarily in visual and design terms, interpreting the street as affording the essential context for the palace façade to be viewed and to develop 'expressive form'.<sup>23</sup> Much less attention has been paid to the wider significance of that symbiosis, defined by the more complex social interactions and interdependence between these residential domestic environments and the public spaces of the city.



This is surprising, especially in the light of the recent growth of scholarly attention to the domestic interior.<sup>24</sup> While it is now possible to view both internal architectural features (rooms, courtyards, gardens, etc.) and the increasingly elaborate movable goods with which they were filled as articulating the complexity of life for men, women and children within the Renaissance house, no such attention has been paid to the exterior of these buildings. It would, therefore, be all too easy to view the widespread development of the *palazzo* as having a negative impact on the built environment, as the palace type transformed streets, increasingly turning central neighbourhoods into canyons, bounded on both sides by the proud, stone-built façades of impenetrable private residences. And yet this was clearly not the case, as most central districts and city streets retained quite a varied social mix, and the palaces themselves supported a range of social interactions. In most cases there is little surviving documentary evidence to allow us to reassemble the detail of such interactions for any one building, though we can nevertheless trace the uses, social meanings and lived experiences that were encoded in the design elements that combined to create the palace façade.

Leon Battista Alberti cautioned patrons to ensure that they spent more lavishly on the 'parts [of the palace] that are particularly public or are intended principally to welcome guests, such as the façade', and there can be little doubt that the façade was the principal setting for the display of family identity, expressed most obviously through the prominent placement of large sculpted heraldic shields and other emblems.<sup>25</sup> Throughout Italy during the fifteenth century, it became increasingly common for palace patrons to display family arms on the fronts of their homes, where they could best be seen from a distance and from multiple directions, with the consequence that greater attention was also given to the subtle positioning of buildings in relation to the surrounding street environment. Just as the Palazzo Boni-Antinori on via dei Tornabuoni in Florence is carefully angled to make the façade and centrally placed coat of arms visible to viewers from the distant piazza Santa Trinita, so too Ca' Foscari in Venice fills a curve on the Grand Canal so that the emblazoned arms of Doge Francesco Foscari is visible to water traffic travelling in both directions (fig. 138).<sup>26</sup> Similar careful positioning to maximise visibility can be identified across the peninsula in buildings such as the Palazzo Spannocchi and Chigi-Marescotti in Siena, and the Zecca and Cancelleria palaces in Rome.<sup>27</sup> This careful adjustment of the alignment of façades to make the most of sight-lines along streets was widely adopted, and the strategy acknowledges the fact that palaces were not simply monumental objects in static environments, but rather their design catered to the kinaesthetic experience of viewers on the move.

So, for example, the central piazza ensemble around Palazzo Piccolomini in the small papal town of Pienza is best understood in the light of visitors moving along its main street, each step revealing new details; rather than attempting a grand set piece of centralised urban design, Pienza adopts the strategy advocated by Alberti for the design of small towns, using a sinuous main street to create a varied and changing vista, so that 'at every step visitors meet yet another façade'.<sup>28</sup> At Pienza this results in a sequence of Piccolomini displays, with the coat of arms appearing multiple times on the palace exterior, and then even more grandly as the centrepiece of the cathedral façade. A similar strategy was adopted by the architects who developed the city front of the Palazzo

138. Ca' Foscari,  
Grand Canal, Venice.



Ducale in Urbino, whose distinctive L-shaped façade (*facciata ad ali*) opens up gradually to reveal a piazza, the cathedral and the main entrance to the palace (fig. 139).<sup>29</sup> The solid mass of the residential palace intentionally blocks and controls the view of the piazza from the street approach, so that the multiple grand, stone-framed openings of the principal façade, emblazoned with Federico da Montefeltro's heraldic devices and proudly inscribed with his monogram FE DUX (Federicus Dux), are revealed by stages.

This ubiquitous presence of family coats of arms – especially notable in those cities where one family dominated local affairs – was common throughout the peninsula. Thus the humanist scholar Filippo Beroaldo was able to make an effective comparison between invasive creeping wall plants (*herba parietaria*) and the omnipresence of the Bentivoglio arms (a saw), which appeared on the exterior of public and private buildings throughout Bologna during the period of their supremacy.<sup>30</sup> These have all but vanished, as a result of the zealous cam-



139. The approach from the south to the Palazzo Ducale (left) and the cathedral of Santa Maria (right), Urbino.

paign promoted by Pope Julius II from 1506 to have them all removed, following his reconquest of the city and the resulting deposition of the Bentivoglio.<sup>31</sup> The policy closely resembled one pursued in Rome against the arms of the pope's predecessor Alexander VI Borgia, scars of which can still be found on the façades of various buildings. Likewise, following the conquest of Ravenna by papal forces in 1509, the lion of St Mark that stood on the city's main square was first emasculated then removed from the square and sent to the papal legate in Bologna, where its wings were broken off and the mutilated sculpture was put on display chained to the city hall, a potent symbol of the triumph over Venice (see fig. 48).<sup>32</sup> Such competitive erasure and substitution underlines the significance of symbols in marking out territories of ownership or spatial influence.

It is all too easy for the modern viewer to take for granted the sculpted heraldry emblazoned on palaces throughout the fabric of Italian cities, and thus overlook them; it is evident, however, that these were essential features reserved



140. Canto degli Alberti, Florence.

for positions where they might have the greatest visual impact.<sup>33</sup> It is almost certainly for this reason that so many are placed on the corners of buildings, raised well above the street, often level with the string course that marks the residential first floor (*piano nobile*). On palaces that filled sizeable property blocks, bounded on more than one side by a street, they could thus be seen from more than one direction, while at the same time marking the corner with firm familial associations. In this way, family palaces came also to mark the city's topography, directly influencing the way people described their movement, as street corners and crossroads came to be associated with their powerful local residents.

A clear indication of the way in which navigation of the city was expressed through reference to family associations with local neighbourhoods is offered by Luca Landucci, whose diaries are so informative about the construction of the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence. He noted: 'On 27 June 1490, I Luca Landucci opened my new shop here, opposite the said palace of the Strozzi; and I set up the sign of Stars. And I left that old shop on the corner,

which belongs to the Rucellai. And this new one belongs to the Popoleschi.'<sup>34</sup> Here, interestingly, ownership and clan associations overlap. Three families are mentioned: the Rucellai, owners and local worthies where Landucci's last shop was, the Strozzi his new neighbours and the Popoleschi, the owners of his new shop. While his diary earlier noted the construction of the massive Palazzo Strozzi foundations as being in the vicinity of the canto de' Tornaquinci (May 1490), as the building progressed it acquired its own identity; by November 1500, huge torch braziers had been installed on each corner of the palace at a cost 100 gold florins each, literally highlighting its location in the city day and night.<sup>35</sup> Landucci's comments give a sense of how a palace acquired its own identity, and expressed it visually in a neighbourhood – in this instance, carving out and claiming spatial dominance over rival neighbouring family clans.

The process by which street corners articulated family pre-eminence in areas of the city is especially well documented in Florence, where street corners have a name – *canto* – which was frequently associated with the leading family resident in the environs, who marked the corner with their arms; good surviving examples are the canto degli Alberti (fig. 140) and canto dei Pazzi.<sup>36</sup> It was around locations such as these corners that residents of the palaces met and chatted with neighbours and local residents; town criers selected these *canti* to announce their news, and naturally gossip was also exchanged.<sup>37</sup> This convergence of sociability and architectural marking singles out the palace street corner as a significant site in the urban landscape, and provides a further reason why corners in particular attracted decoration with coats of arms. Palaces extended their symbolic ownership over adjoining urban space and streets through the bold display of family arms on stone shields, ironwork such as



torch braziers or rings to tether horses to, and architectural detailing such as bold, rusticated stone quoining, but also more ephemeral marking such as flags and other heraldic displays.

This marking out of space – and consequently the demarcation of areas for sociability outside the palace but under its influence – was by no means a uniquely Florentine phenomenon. So, for example, in many of the brick-built cities of the Po valley, palace architects reserved the use of more expensive stone to their corners. In Ferrara, these embellishments stand out particularly, in the form of the elegant candlestick pilasters that adorn the numerous new palaces built as part of the ambitious *Addizione Ercolea* (from 1492), commanded by Duke Ercole I.<sup>38</sup> In the grandest palaces, elaborately decorated strips of white Istrian marble mark the corners, deeply carved with *all'antica* foliage or simpler fluted pilasters topped by Corinthianesque capitals, in sharp contrast to the expanses of brickwork that make up much of the built façades (fig. 141). In some instances, stone quoining – sometimes canted to create a defensive edge to the building – or simple stone string courses were also employed, again breaking the tyranny of terracotta. While these strategies were employed for the grandest houses along the main arteries of the new district, simpler stone strips were used widely to mark the corners of secondary streets, affording some dignity even to blocks of two-storey row-housing. In other instances, such as the house identified as the home of the court poet Ludovico Ariosto, a cheaper solution to classicising decorative detailing was achieved using moulded brickwork that imitates sculpted stone, perhaps originally intended to be covered with a plaster skim (fig. 142).<sup>39</sup>

141. Intersection of via degli Angeli (corso Ercole I d'Este) and via dei Prioni, Ferrara, with Palazzo Prosperi-Sacratì (foreground) and Palazzo dei Diamanti (beyond), both built in the 1490s.

142. Ludovico Ariosto's house, from 1527, contrada Mirasole (via Ludovico Ariosto), Ferrara.

Such practices were widespread in many cities of the Po valley. In Mantua they took on quite a distinctive variation, as these stone corner pilasters were often marked with inscriptions that recorded the foundation date of a building, and sometimes connected this to the reigning Gonzaga duke. One such example is the palace of the Arrivabene brothers, built from 1481. Here, the street-corner pilaster bears inscriptions recording its foundation date and an unusual motif of a snake entwined with a staff, perhaps Hermes' caduceus or the Asclepian rod.<sup>40</sup> The palace patrons, Giovanni and Giovan Pietro, were highly educated humanists and members of the Gonzaga court, where Giovanni was chancellor; their high status can be discerned from facts such as that the palace may have been designed by the Gonzaga architect Luca Fancelli and that they were granted special permissions to have an oratory inside their home.<sup>41</sup> Notably, it is the principal corner where the palace meets the crossroads that is visually most heavily accented; an imposing tower fills the corner, below which the family arms were originally emblazoned – only the ribbons and bracket survive on the façade today (see fig. 15) – with the stone marker most visible at street level.

If the street corner made visible the public dimension of the palace as a hub in the network of neighbourhood sociability, thus extending the patron's reach into the public realm of the street, the benches that often lined the front of a palace façade provided the essential furniture for those gatherings. These benches are usually explained as an expression of the *magnificentia* of patrons, who generously offered a public amenity as an expression of their munificence.<sup>42</sup> And yet they were also key sites for the exchange of political gossip, in which the palace owners themselves were very much implicated.<sup>43</sup> So much was this the case, in fact, that the very word for 'bench' – *panca* – was widely adopted in a negative form to describe time-wasting gossip-mongers who sat around on benches all day (*pancaccieri*).<sup>44</sup> An amusing incident in this connection is reported by the Anonimo Magliabecchiano – a sixteenth-century diarist who appears to have known many artists; he reports an argument between Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, which allegedly took place at the *pancaccia* of the Spini palace in Florence, by Ponte Santa Trinita (perhaps in 1503).<sup>45</sup> The story goes that a group of gentlemen (*huomini da bene*) were talking over a passage from Dante when Leonardo walked by; they shouted out to him to recite the passage for them. Coincidentally Michelangelo was walking by too, so Leonardo bounced the request on to his rival, who replied: 'Why don't you recite it? After all, you made a drawing of a horse, intending to cast it in bronze, and you couldn't, and so you walked away from it out of shame!' Michelangelo – who turned on his heel and walked off – was, of course, referring to the equestrian monument project that had won the Duke of Milan's favour for Leonardo but was never accomplished; he was implying that, by the same measure, his rival was incapable of reciting the passage from Dante himself.

The incident sounds somewhat spurious, resembling the colourful stories about artists for which Vasari is famous, but it nonetheless gives us a good sense of how the *pancaccie* attracted largely male gatherings to these public venues.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, in Niccolò Machiavelli's satirical play *La mandragola* (published in 1524), the middleman, Ligurio, searches through Florence for Callimaco, and makes it clear to the audience that he has looked for him everywhere: 'I have been to his house, the piazza [della Signoria], the market, and the *pancone*



143. Supper at Emmaus and street scene, detail from Jacopo del Sellaio, *Christ with the Instruments of the Passion*, c.1483–5, tempera on panel, Samuel H. Kress Collection, Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama.

[bench] of the Spini [family], and the loggia of the Tornaquinci [family], and haven't found him.<sup>47</sup> Beyond the main piazzas of the city, it was around the benches attached to private homes that men passed the time. In spite of various negative comments about the sort of exchange of gossip that took place around city benches, palaces built well into the sixteenth century included them, and instances of their survival can be found lining streets in numerous Italian cities, as well in depictions of them. To name one of many examples, a late-fifteenth-century painting by Jacopo del Sellaio, *Christ with the Instruments of the Passion*, shows some interesting details through the background window; in the middle ground Christ can be seen eating with the two disciples who failed to recognise him on the road to Emmaus, while in the background a partial street scene can be viewed through a further window frame (fig. 143).<sup>48</sup> It is not clear whether

144. Loggias along the strada Maggiore (now corso Palladio), Vicenza, with Palazzo Braschi, 15th century (foreground).



Jacopo intended this to be a view of Emmaus, though the donkey and unusual landscape features may have been meant to portray faraway lands; that aside, residential palaces with benches lining their walls are in evidence, with two men standing in conversation at the street corner, and one who may be a beggar approaching two other men seated on the bench.

Outside the Palazzo Medici, on the via Larga in Florence, the additional seating in the form of benches lining the outer wall of the palace was almost certainly provided for the many citizens waiting to be allowed entry to the building; it seems likely that benches served a similar function outside the residences of other powerful citizens (see figs 113–17).<sup>49</sup> In Siena, for instance, the massive new Palazzo Piccolomini, built for Pope Pius II's nephews and the brothers of Pope Pius III (completed around 1510), included a large bench along the side closest to the family's grand *all'antica* loggia (see fig. 76).<sup>50</sup> The combination is a telling one, as it makes a visual connection – lost, for the most part, in many surviving examples – between the palace and the more formal covered gathering space of the loggia. As is well known, the original arrangement of the Palazzo Medici in via Larga, Florence, included a loggia on the south corner (closest to the city centre), topped by a massive Medici escutcheon on the first storey (which is still in place).<sup>51</sup> The loggia was walled up in the sixteenth century, and Michelangelo's 'kneeling windows' were installed, but the benches that wrap around two sides of the palace should be understood as providing external waiting areas for those wishing to gain access to the loggia; the display of so much waiting space was, in itself, a way of advertising a patron's power to draw clients in large numbers – a visible projection of his influence.<sup>52</sup>

Unlike the Piccolomini loggia in Siena, or that of the Rucellai, also in Florence, the Medici loggia was not a free-standing building, but rather formed part of the palace itself.<sup>53</sup> It probably followed a form, prevalent in the city, of loggias placed on the corners of family palaces – as was the case, for example,



with the Loggia degli Alberti on the corner of borgo Santa Croce, and the loggia of the Palazzo Spini on piazza Santa Trinita.<sup>54</sup> The background of a well-known scene depicting this piazza, in Ghirlandaio's Sassetti chapel in the nearby Santa Trinita church, shows that the loggia had been closed up by the late fifteenth century, but its location is still clearly legible from different stonework that fills the two corner bays of the palace. Across the road from the Spini was the Gianfigliuzzi enclave, and here, too, we know that there was originally a loggia on the ground floor, close to the bridge; although no visual trace of it survives, the presence of a bench known as the Pancone de' Raugei by the Ponte a Santa Trinita and close to the Gianfigliuzzi houses reinforces the likelihood that the loggia was there as well.<sup>55</sup> Loggias such as these are known to have fulfilled formal functions in the celebration of family rites of passage, offering a means of showcasing gatherings on occasions such as betrothals, weddings and funerals. But we can assume that their more everyday use was as an informal meeting place where men gathered to chat or play games of chance on the benches provided.

The diarist Benedetto Dei listed seventeen private family loggias in Florence, while Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini explains that in Siena the right of a family to own a loggia denoted their noble status.<sup>56</sup> Certainly, loggias were a way that families extended their status and visual influence on the public stage of the city's streets. In Rome, where a policy of removing porticoes was actively pursued by Pope Sixtus IV and his successors as a way of expressing papal authority and taming that of the local nobility, family loggias remained a powerful signifier for the *romani cives*.<sup>57</sup> Famously, when the Massimo clan came to rebuild their palace facing the via Papalis, following damage inflicted on their properties during the Sack of Rome (1527), Pietro Massimo required that the architect Baldassarre Peruzzi should retain a loggia on its principal façade.<sup>58</sup> In cities like Florence, Siena and even Rome, loggias tended to be self-contained structures attached to particular buildings within family enclaves, but elsewhere in Italy they might form part of a more continuous arcade system of the kind prevalent in numerous urban centres, as has been shown for Bologna and other cities north of the Apennines in Chapters 1 and 4. The survival of these essential, identity-affirming features of elite residences can be traced to the classicising designs of Palladio and his imitators along the strada Maggiore (corso Palladio) in Vicenza, where numerous porticoes underpin the palaces of the principal families (fig. 144). Such was originally the intention for the Palazzo Thiene, and the same feature affords monumental definition to the Palazzo Chiericati at the street's eastern end, facing what was an urban port on the Bacchiglione river.<sup>59</sup>

An interesting variant of the family loggia is the *seggio*, an architectural feature that was widespread in Naples and the southern Italian Regno, which usually took the distinctive form of an open arcaded space, often filling a street-corner site and addressing a small square or widening in the street;<sup>60</sup> the space usually backed onto a closed room used for meetings and storage for archives. Recent scholarship has drawn attention to these shared architectural forms, indicating that as many as 120 such buildings are documented in Naples and its kingdom, of which fewer than half survive in some form to the present day.<sup>61</sup> While specific families were associated with these loggias, what is



145. The central *seggi* of Naples (left to right), Nido, Montagna and Capuana, detail from Alessandro Baratta, *Fidelissimae urbis neapolitanae cum omnibus viis accurata et nova delineatio aedita in lucem ab Alexandro Baratta*, 1629, etching, Collezione Intesa Sanpaolo, Gallerie d'Italia, Palazzo Zevallos Stigliano, Naples (manipulated by Fulvio Lenzo).

distinctive about the *seggi* is that they appear to have served as sites where groups of families gathered.<sup>62</sup> In Naples, where there were five noble *seggi* (and one for non-noble *popolo* families), they were distributed around the city so that families gathered at their local district *seggio*; in smaller towns, these district distinctions did not apply. When viewed on a seventeenth-century map, the three central *seggi* of Naples (Nido, Montagna and Capuana) can all be seen to command street-corner locations associated with quite contained neighbourhood regions (fig. 145).

As such, then, although the *seggio* was not, strictly speaking, a family loggia, it resembled the family loggias of northern Italy in serving as a semi-private yet visible site for socialising. As one anonymous Venetian visitor commented in 1444, noblemen in Naples spent all day in the *seggi*, 'from Mass in the morning until the time of breakfast, after breakfast until lunchtime, and after lunch until dinner'.<sup>63</sup> The Sedile di Dominova in Sorrento survives to this day in its original form: a centrally planned stone structure topped by a dome, with two open arcades, it fills a corner on what was historically the city's main street (fig. 146).<sup>64</sup> The late-fifteenth-century *sedile* was one of two meeting points – the other was the Seggio di Porta – for Sorrento's principal families and was clearly designed to create an impressive frame for their gatherings.<sup>65</sup> Interestingly, a fifteenth-century document reports that after the funerals of female members of any family associated with the *seggio*, all male relatives were required to relocate from the church to the loggia, where they would publicly receive condolences.<sup>66</sup> This small detail underlines the degree to which these multi-purpose, semi-public shared family loggias performed important functions in urban rituals and rites of passage, just as they facilitated the everyday transactions of male sociability in cities and towns throughout southern Italy.

### *The view from above: Windows, balconies and the street*

The *Istorieta amorosa fra Leonora de' Bardi e Ippolito Bondelmonti* is a novella, attributed to the polymath Leon Battista Alberti, which tells of two young lovers from rival families in Florence.<sup>67</sup> The two cross glances and fall in love at first sight while they



146. Sedile di Dominova, late 15th century, via San Cesareo, Sorrento.

are attending the festivities of San Giovanni (24 June), held on the public space between the cathedral and the baptistery.<sup>68</sup> Unable to meet again publicly, like Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers, they hatch a plan to elude the insurmountable hurdle of family opposition through a meeting arranged by a helpful abbess. On the feast day of the Birth of the Virgin (early in September) when many girls visited the nunnery at Monticelli, outside the city walls, Leonora is again able to leave her home, and meets Ippolito secretly there, where they pledge their love for each other as husband and wife. They fix a subsequent meeting:

you should know [Leonora explains to Ippolito] that I have a room of my own, which has a window facing towards the street. And since there is no other solution for our love, you will come on Friday night at the fifth hour with a rope ladder to the foot of my window, and you will attach the ladder to a cord you will find hanging from the window, and I will pull up the end of the ladder and attach it to the iron fitting of my window. You can then come safely up the ladder to my room, and stay here secretly for two or three days without anyone finding out.<sup>69</sup>

Predictably enough, things do not turn out according to plan, and Ippolito is spotted with his ladder in the vicinity of the Bardi house by a night watchman out on his patrol; not wishing to reveal his actual intentions, in order to protect Leonora's honour, he allows himself to be arrested as a common thief planning a night-time robbery. Waiting by her window, Leonora grows increasingly worried by her lover's late arrival, while he is marched off to the Bargello, to be tried the next day at first light. In the morning the bells of justice ring out, a sure sign that Ippolito has been condemned to death; he makes a final request, to be allowed to walk past the Bardi house on his way out to the gallows. Leonora is naturally filled with terror and grief:

And she frequently went to her window and all the while she could hear the trumpet, which is sounded every time someone is taken to the gallows, a sound that to her was a like a dagger straight to her heart. And so she went again to her window, and saw the banner of the *giustizia*, and as she saw it so her feelings were overwhelmed with great anguish and she fell back as if she were dead. She soon came round, and again went to the window, and there she saw Ippolito approaching all dressed in black, a noose around his neck and with two executioners holding him. He turned his eyes up to the window, and when he saw Leonora their eyes met.<sup>70</sup>

At this point all reserve – and the conventions that kept a high-born girl from leaving her house alone – are set aside; Leonora rushes down the stairs and out of the door into the street, where she throws herself upon the city guard leading the sombre procession, revealing their story in a desperate bid to save Ippolito. This is a story with a happy ending: the two appear before the city's highest officials and Leonora explains how family rivalry has prevented them from publicly declaring their marriage; in turn their fathers are summoned and peace is agreed between their families, sealed by the wedding celebrations.

The *Istoriella amorosa* lends itself to a careful analysis of the architectural and urban setting as well as the ritual and social context that moves the narrative along; aside from the clan-conflict trope of impossible love, much of the story revolves around how the two lovers negotiate spatial and social conventions that govern their gender roles.<sup>71</sup> Although the firm demarcation of pre-marital female space to the domestic sphere has been nuanced in recent scholarship, it was hard architectural surfaces that kept apart Ippolito, on the street, and Leonora, in the family home; feast days emerge as key occasions, when these firm boundaries might be circumvented.<sup>72</sup> Likewise, the night-time setting of the lovers' failed plan enables us to consider how city authorities sought to uphold the boundaries between public and private space through careful policing and control, threatened as they unquestionably were by nocturnal crime.<sup>73</sup> In turn, of course, the tolling bell of the palace of justice (the Bargello) rang out over the entire city, penetrating the walls of Leonora's home in such a way that she guessed Ippolito's fate well before he came into sight.<sup>74</sup> The spatial barrier imposed by the palace exterior – no impediment to the sound of the bells – is the primary obstacle that the lovers in this story have to overcome.

Alberti's story is set in Florence, but similar stories of lovers from rival clans abound in late medieval and early modern popular literature of this sort. Siena

was the setting for Masuccio Salernitano's story of Mariotto and Giannozza, for instance, while what is probably the direct source for Shakespeare's play, a story by the Vicentine nobleman Luigi da Porto, was set in Verona.<sup>75</sup> While Romeo and Juliet's romance revolves around a balcony scene, the more ubiquitous window is the architectural device around which so much of the narrative turns in Alberti's short story. Windows, indeed, emerge as essential to much vernacular prose narrative in the tradition of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, providing the necessary means for characters to circumvent a crucial design requirement of any house – to resist penetration by unwanted guests, be they lovers, suitors or, indeed, common thieves.<sup>76</sup>

But the window is more than a narrative device: it is an architectural element that structures the relationship between the residential domestic sphere and the public space of the street, and in so doing it also shapes the gendered role of actors on the city stage. Windows obviously provide essential amenity to the interior, bringing in light and ventilation, as Alberti observed (Book I, ch.12); they tended to be ordered symmetrically on palace façades, with ground-floor windows considerably smaller than those above to provide a cooler environment for the summer months, and raised off the ground to resist entry.<sup>77</sup> The potential risk of burglary posed by windows, even on higher floors, meant that they were often grated, as can be observed in numerous paintings, and in usage that survives to the present day. At the same time, windows were also a significant element in the decoration of palace exteriors, and might be used to proclaim the ownership of the building through the application of heraldic devices, symbols and even inscriptions to their stone frames.<sup>78</sup> However, it is the content of the frame – the filling of these grand stone openings with physical presence – that is most notable and has been largely overlooked in discussions of the palace type: to be charged with significance, these architectural features needed to be populated.

In paintings, as in the novellas, windows are pre-eminently associated with women; during the fifteenth century the window frame became a favoured pictorial device in female portraits, and much recent interpretation of these has tended to describe the sitters as the passive objects of a male gaze.<sup>79</sup> Such a view is, in part, predicated on the understanding of a relatively rigid division between the public space of the street and the private space of the home, and the transfer of this model to pictorial forms, where women framed in windows are put on display to be observed by men. As we have seen, an increasing body of scholarship has tended to erode this polarised contrast between public and private space, and has therefore somewhat problematised the designation of female and male spaces as being predominantly inside and outside the home respectively. While acknowledging the gendered nature of 'window-frame' portraits, Adrian Randolph has recently sought to adjust the interpretation of such paintings to suggest that they might be understood as 'performative thresholds through which women can be seen as agents'.<sup>80</sup> By placing themselves within the frames of those windows, women actively managed the process of mediation between the public and domestic sphere.

In discussing the symbolic significance of windows, it is easy to forget that they were actual apertures that pierced the walls of houses, and set the occupants on the inside in direct relation to urban life outside the house. The risks

posed by this site of encounter were not lost on the patriarchal Giannozzo, a protagonist of Leon Battista Alberti's dialogues in the *Libri della famiglia* (written 1433–41), who bossily tells his wife: 'You'd be well advised not to spend all day sitting lazily with your elbows on the windowsill, as some idling girls do, who hold their embroidery to hand as an excuse, without ever doing any of it.'<sup>81</sup> His comments chime with similar advice to women by various commentators, who warned women of the risks of being looked at from the street, and cautioned them against wasting time gazing out.<sup>82</sup> From as early as the painted scenes of Ambrogio Lorenzetti in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico, the window casement can be understood as a signifier of decorous behaviour, though it is equally important (and perhaps more realistic) to balance this view with its counterpart – that of the window as a privileged site from which to view the street. Elizabeth and Thomas Cohen have, for instance, demonstrated for sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Rome that windows, and predominantly the women who looked out from them, were key generators of neighbourhood policing and its vernacular counterpart, gossip.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, in referring to needlework, Giannozzo provides a clue to one of the main reasons why women of all social groups almost certainly did sit by windows; the embroidery created by elites and the widespread involvement among lower social groups in working yarn required women to get close to the light source that windows provided.<sup>84</sup> The incidence of window seats created in the wall space around window recesses suggests that both vernacular and elite residential buildings were designed to encourage such activities; furthermore, internal steps up to larger casements facilitated access to window openings, again underlining how these were used. While Giannozzo's comments imply his disapproval of women sitting at windows, because they might be seen from the street, the waxed cloth and slatted shutters that were the usual means of closing windows meant that women could be invisible to passers-by as they looked out from above.<sup>85</sup> Whether sewing or simply sitting, the users of windows enjoyed a vantage point over the street, the architecture itself providing an opportunity to view ordinary and exceptional events unfold outside the home.

Windows, of course, exist in all residential building types, but architectural examination alone does not yield much information about how they were occupied. Besides the portrait type mentioned above, Giovanni Mansueti's *Miracle of the Relic of the Holy Cross in Campo San Lio* provides valuable visual evidence of women at windows (fig. 147).<sup>86</sup> It could, indeed, be described as a compendium of the multiplicity of ways in which women might appear in windows. The occasion for their presence is by no means an everyday occurrence but, rather, a miraculous event that had taken place during a funeral procession for a member of the Confraternity of the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista outside the church of San Lio in Venice in 1474.<sup>87</sup> As the procession makes its way across the *campo*, filled with mostly male participants and bystanders, the artist has depicted the entire space of the piazza compressed, with the front of the parish church visible to the right. Houses and palaces of varying size and grandeur are tightly packed into the scene, with almost seventy windows facing into the small square, many of them adorned with tapestries and hangings to dignify the special event. From these many windows, it is for the most part women who observe the scene below.



In identifying female spectators as being raised above the proceedings taking place on the street, Mansueti's painting is by no means unique, and other examples where windows and balconies are occupied by women watching a variety of secular and religious rituals and festivities are discussed below. Nevertheless, the image of Campo San Lio gives a clear sense that, as the Cohens have so evocatively put it, 'if the neighbourhood was an amphitheatre, its bleachers [stands] were the doorways, and above all the upstairs windows.'<sup>88</sup> A few intrepid youths have climbed onto the rooftops to gain a better view, but the majority of the onlookers who are not on the *campo* are framed in windows of a variety of shapes and types. Facing the viewer in the background, numerous windows open to the square and frame one or more women; at least one looks out carrying a baby, while an older woman at an upper window (right of centre) appears to lean out in order to try to catch a pet monkey. On the left side of the image, Mansueti has rendered a sequence of façades using quite accentuated foreshortening; here we see numerous figures leaning out of their houses the better to watch the procession. More interestingly, given the oblique viewing angle, we can see how the shutters on some windows are hinged from above, as the women spectators push them outwards using an attached pole; it seems plausible that this arrangement would have concealed the viewer quite effectively from the street. Furthermore (again on the left side), we can see different arrangements of iron grilles, some set flush into the stone window frames, while others project outwards from the wall surface, so that the viewers' faces can just be seen peeping out.

While Mansueti's painting is certainly not representative of all architectural window types, it does give some idea of how animated this threshold between

147. Giovanni Mansueti, *Miracle of the Relic of the Holy Cross in Campo San Lio* (Venice), 1494, oil on canvas, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.





public and domestic spaces could be. More everyday relations conducted at the window can be identified in the background of Masolino's fresco in the Brancacci chapel, showing St Peter healing a cripple: here, in addition to laundry airing on windowsills and a number of suspended baskets (which are perhaps birdcages or storage for foodstuffs), we can see two top-floor neighbours in animated conversation.<sup>89</sup> Likewise, in Filippino Lippi's Nerli altarpiece in the family's chapel at Santo Spirito, also in Florence, the background reveals a touching family scene in which the patron, Tanai Nerli, takes his leave from his young daughter, while his wife or another female member of the family looks on, leaning out of the window above (fig. 148).<sup>90</sup> The inclusion of the scene was an opportunity to commemorate Tanai's important ambassadorial mission of 1494, but it is nonetheless significant that, in spite of the sort of injunctions cited above, in a painting destined for the family's commemorative chapel, women are shown both on the street outside the family home and at the window.

More elaborate and theatrical than windows, balconies performed many comparable functions, while admitting more light to the interior and allowing their users considerably greater access to and interaction with the façade of the home. Not unlike the family loggias discussed earlier, their adoption varied considerably from one region to another, and they were certainly most widely used in Venice, where large glazed balcony windows also served to draw light into the *portego*, a deep central room, which was rarely lit from any other source.<sup>91</sup> Visibility on and from the balcony was a key factor in their design, so they tended to be positioned symmetrically on the façade, at the level of the *piano nobile*, where they could provide a focus, accentuated by decorative stonework and family emblems. Alexander Cowan has drawn attention to balconies in Venice as a space most frequently occupied by women – much in the same way as we have seen for windows – commenting that their architectural form and relation to the street meant that 'every balcony was a personal stage'.<sup>92</sup> Such vantage points, raised up above the life of the street, offered privileged sites for observation, the circulation of gossip, and the formation or loss of reputation (*fama*) for both men and women from across the social spectrum.<sup>93</sup>

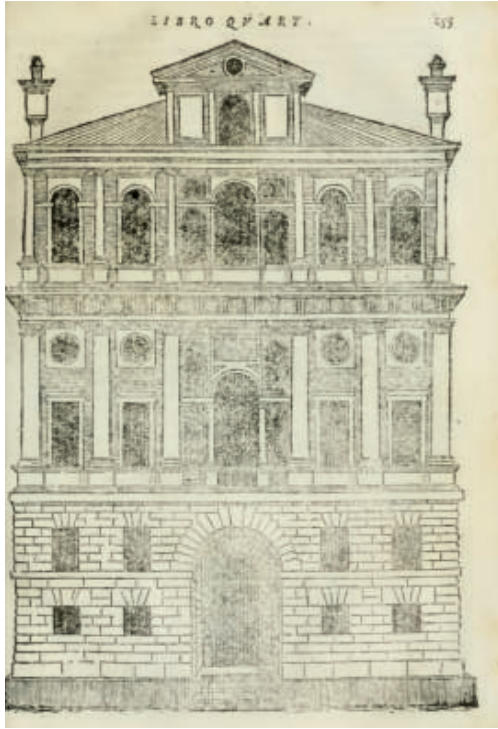
The architectural theorist Sebastiano Serlio knew Venice well and commented on the value of balconies as places to enjoy clean air and view the many spectacles that animated urban life along the city's waterways, while he also considered that they greatly increased the beauty of the façades themselves.<sup>94</sup> In turn, of course, the widespread use of balconies throughout the city and especially along the Grand Canal contributed to the collective process of civic participation in ceremonial events, as well-dressed spectators crowding the windows and balconies of grand palaces unquestionably added to the splendour of such events.<sup>95</sup> Serlio's remarks appear in the descriptive text accompanying a woodcut illustration of a palace façade design for Venice (signalled by the water lapping around the bottom of the building), in which he significantly employs the motif of the *serliana* (or Palladian) window, a three-bay type with a central arched opening flanked by two smaller bays, each topped by an architrave (fig. 149).<sup>96</sup> A plan of the balcony is also included on the page; it shows the *serliana* window flush to the façade wall, while the balcony rests on the projecting rusticated stonework that frames the central portal below. In light of Serlio's laudatory description of the balcony, his design came to enjoy connotations of celebration.

**FACING PAGE:**

148. Street scene in Florence, detail from Filippino Lippi, *Madonna and Child with Saints* (Nerli Altarpiece), 1494, oil on wood, Santo Spirito, Florence.



149. Palazzo del Banco di Santo Spirito, or Zecca Vecchia, Rome, c.1524.



150. Sebastiano Serlio, design for a palace on a canal, woodcut from Book IV of *Tutte le opere di architettura* (Venice, 1619), fol. 155, Getty Research Institute, Getty Center, Los Angeles.

The form was to have considerable success in Venice and the Veneto – particularly as a result of its adoption by Palladio – though it originated in Rome, where allusions to the rhythm of the apertures of the triumphal arch would have been even more apparent. Thus, for example, Raphael and his assistants employed it in a scene of the fresco cycle in the Vatican *stanze* for the balcony from which Pope Leo IV is shown blessing the nearby residential district (the Borgo) and miraculously extinguishing the fire that was raging there. Raised up on a rusticated base inscribed with his name, the pope stands framed by the arch, surrounded by cardinals and courtiers, his outstretched arm extending his blessing out of the building to the imploring citizens below, and the city beyond.

The balcony here performs an honorific function, so that the subject standing in the arched opening is framed by the architecture and becomes the central focus of the building as a whole. The fresco is a valuable reminder of the purpose of a number of comparable examples built in early-sixteenth-century Rome, such as the corner window facing St Peter's on the *palazzo* of Jacopo da Brescia (c.1515), or the grand blind *serliana* design of the Zecca (the papal mint; fig. 150).<sup>97</sup> These designs provided a permanent architectural response to the ephemeral displays created for papal processions through the city.<sup>98</sup> In turn, the celebratory form of both the window design and the way it addressed viewers on the street served as a visual synecdoche of the palace's owner–patron, whose identity could be further reinforced by the prominent display of family arms. The prow-like corner of the Palazzo della Cancelleria projects towards both the Campo dei Fiori and the via Peregrinorum, and is marked by the arms of both its owner, Raffaele Riario (also commemorated in the prominent

inscription), and his uncle Pope Julius II, while a balcony is placed to one side, overlooking this key ceremonial and commercial area (see fig. 80).<sup>99</sup> Here, it might be argued, the inscription and coats of arms proclaim the identity of the patron, while the balcony enables and implies their physical presence and control of the site.

The positioning of balconies, like that of coats of arms, tended to be arranged to ensure maximum visibility in relation to the surrounding city fabric. For example, the Palazzo Farnese has a centrally placed balcony–window, crowned by huge papal arms and framed with free-standing *verde antico* columns, which overlooks the homonymous piazza, creating a powerful visual axis through to the Campo dei Fiori and via Peregrinorum beyond.<sup>100</sup> In summer 1537 a window of the palace was used to stage the hanging and subsequent display of the corpse of the city’s standard-bearer (*banderaro*), ordered by Pope Paul III’s son, Pier Luigi Farnese.<sup>101</sup> This very public display was described by the Mantuan ambassador, who reported that it took place while Pier Luigi was dining in the same room; here, then, the window served as the interface between the interior life of the palace and the public life on the street, with the result that ‘soldiers and everyone were so very frightened that they were obedient and kept their heads down’.<sup>102</sup> In imitating strategies for public punishment more often employed at institutional sites of government, this incident offers an insight into the political meanings that could be derived from such raised private platforms owing to the attention they commanded from the public space of streets and squares.

The raised performative platform provided by *piano nobile* windows, balconies and loggias structured hierarchical and gendered relations between the street and the residents of houses throughout Italy. As we observe these decorated openings, often framed by classicising stonework, which would have been embellished on special occasions with ephemeral displays of tapestries and carpets, it is important to keep in mind that they were designed to be occupied. Balconies such as those on the Cancelleria (Rome), the Palazzo Prosperi-Sacratì on the new main street of Ferrara and the Palazzo Chiericati in Vicenza were all designed to be seen, but also to be seen from. This point is well illustrated in the *Tournament at Brescia*, a scene originally part of a fresco cycle in the Palazzo Calini in that city, painted by Floriano Ferramola around 1511 (fig. 151).<sup>103</sup> The scene depicts a tournament held on Brescia’s main square, perhaps on the occasion of a Calini marriage; a grand classical arch frames the piazza beyond, and lavishly dressed figures fill the foreground, men on the right and women on the left. High up above them on a balcony that runs over the archway, a group of men and women observe, while two others are neatly framed in a two-light window to one side.



151. Floriano Ferramola, *Tournament at Brescia*, c.1511, fresco, originally in Palazzo Calini, Brescia, transferred to canvas, now in Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Seen through the arch, the piazza is occupied by the wooden tilt that separates the two opponents in the joust, while viewers fill all available spaces with a raised vantage point. Closing off the piazza at the further end are the recently completed *loggetta* and clock-tower, with men perching precariously on the roof of the *loggetta*, while women observe from the projecting balconies of the tower. In the background, the fortified Broletto also doubles as a makeshift viewing platform, with spectators standing between the crenellations, while the windows of the building on the right side of the scene are occupied by female viewers. Although undoubtedly a grand set piece of *all'antica* urban design, the piazza Grande and the civic and private buildings that surround it are brought to life by social interactions: a grand family celebration, a jousting scene, men and women populating the architecture, which has been embellished by the temporary display of tapestries adorning the windowsills. While ostensibly the subject of the scene is a joust, it is nonetheless evident that the spectators are equally a focus of attention, and it is a function of the buildings to enhance their visibility.<sup>104</sup>

### *The porous boundaries between public and private space*

Much of the foregoing discussion has underlined the degree to which the residential *palazzo* was architecturally, socially and spatially imbricated with the street or public square that it addressed.<sup>105</sup> Emblazoned exterior walls of palaces were bearers of meaning, but did not uniquely signify familial identity or *all'antica* revival; rather, they formed a constantly porous boundary, conveying multiple meanings and functions in the give and take between the public space of streets, the wider public realm and the familial interior spaces of the home.<sup>106</sup> As has been shown, the window was loaded with symbolic meanings as a 'performative threshold' with gendered connotations associated with how women looked out from and were seen in these frames, raised up above the street level. As Daniel Jütte has argued, the front door of the home was equally inscribed with symbolic meanings: as the threshold between the domestic space of the home and the public space of the street, the 'front door of a pre-modern house was the stage on which the status of the dweller played out in both positive and negative ways'.<sup>107</sup>

Just as the term 'façade' derived from the Italian for face (*faccia*), providing a direct anthropomorphic linkage between the built form of the home and the carefully designed identity of its owner, so by the same analogy its main doorway (the mouth) was the principal opening, granting entry to the less easily accessed interior. The doorway was usually made on a giant scale and was marked architecturally by elaborate stonework frames, while the door itself was fashioned from high-quality wood, often embellished with metalwork bosses, with elaborate locks and bolts that could seal the building from inside. Doorways were regularly emblazoned with coats of arms, and sometimes with inscriptions, which clearly marked ownership and family ties. As such, the door was the fulcrum around which the identity formation of the Renaissance *palazzo* revolved. Consequently, it was precisely the palace door that might be subject to shaming rituals or night-time attacks, which sought to defame the

palace owner by defacing the door.<sup>108</sup> It is known, for instance, that the door of Palazzo Medici was spattered with blood while the palace was under construction, and palace doors and windows (as well as residences more widely) might be vandalised – and building materials stolen – during times of civic unrest.<sup>109</sup> Following the death of Pope Sixtus IV in 1484, Stefano Infessura reported on damage and the theft of the doors from the palace of the counts Girolami, who were allies of the pope.<sup>110</sup>

More visceral and violent were the reprisals against the body of Jacopo de' Pazzi, following the failed conspiracy against the Medici in April 1478, as reported by the diarist Luca Landucci.<sup>111</sup> Following his execution, Jacopo's body was disinterred, mocked and dismembered as it was dragged around the city by the hangman's rope still attached to his neck; when the crowd reached Palazzo Pazzi, 'they came to the main door of his house, where they attached the noose to the doorbell, and they hoisted him up saying: "knock on the door"'.<sup>112</sup> Pazzi's violated body was brought to the proud palace that had represented him and his family in the city; an incidental detail indicates that palaces might have bells mounted outside the main door to signal the presence of visitors, and here Jacopo needs to seek recognition by knocking at the door of his own home, which perhaps also suggests the degree to which he was no longer recognisable. In fact, just as Pazzi's physical body was subject to public violence to appease the attack on the Medici, so too was the palace itself; the Pazzi arms were removed from the façade, as well as from numerous other public locations, and their name was erased from public documents. A similar ritual was followed in 1543, when Giuliano Buonaccorsi, who had attempted to murder Duke Cosimo de' Medici, was executed and his lifeless body was dragged shamefully around the city by the noose until it came to his house, where the cadaver was made to knock on his own door, so that his sister would come to answer it.<sup>113</sup>

Beyond the door stood the palace interior, access to which was more heavily regulated and often mediated by quite elaborate ritual and ceremonial conventions.<sup>114</sup> Nonetheless, varying degrees of access to the space of ground-floor courtyards suggest that – at least at some times of the day – the palace was more open to the street than might at first be assumed. The benches that lined so many palace exteriors survive as a design element that clearly articulated spatial relations between the interior space, part of which at least had quite public functions, and the public sphere. The act of waiting to gain access to the palace on the part of potentially large numbers of people is a further indication of how porous boundaries were in the social practices associated with gaining access to residential palaces; benches on the outside of the building and waiting rooms or benches under covered interior loggias are widely recorded.<sup>115</sup> Architectural treatises offer a number of further suggestions about this porosity, especially with reference to the residences of professionals who practised from home – such as lawyers, bankers and merchants – and who therefore needed to receive people in ways appropriate to their walks of life. It has been suggested that various permutations of ground-floor or *mezzasala* offices – the latter half-way up the first flight of stairs, as the name suggests – might be used for meetings that would not have been appropriate for the far more exclusive *studiolo*, to which access was usually highly restricted.<sup>116</sup> That access to the home and its enclosure could be part of wider professional and networking needs is further

152. Antoine Lafréry, 'Palazzo Alberini' (later Palazzo Cicciporci), via de' Banchi, Rome, engraving from *Speculum Romanae magnificentiae* (Rome, 1574?), pl. 120, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome.



attested, for instance, by the specialised development by Genoese merchants in the sixteenth century of enclosed gardens attached to palaces, as a competitive display aimed at impressing and securing business agreements with outside clients.<sup>117</sup> This practice would seem to echo the suggestion in Andrea Palladio's treatise that lawyers would be well advised to have pleasant gardens, 'in which clients can spend time without becoming bored'.<sup>118</sup>

As we established in Chapter 4, it is along the ground-floor exterior of palaces that the greatest degree of porosity can often be identified, in the form of shops that occupied significant portions of a building's footprint, especially in those areas of the city where trade flourished. Thus, for example, Palazzo Caprini in Rome (discussed at the beginning of this chapter) was among the earliest palaces built along the new via Alessandrina, which formed the final approach to St Peter's and the Vatican complex; it was constructed for the Bishop of Viterbo, Adriano Caprini, to a design by Donato Bramante and completed around 1510.<sup>119</sup> The palace was lined with shops on the façades onto both the newly opened piazza Scossacavalli and the via Alessandrina, and the architect distinguished between the grander residential floor and the street level of the palace by employing a rusticated base and introducing the classical orders only on the *piano nobile*.<sup>120</sup> This highly innovative solution enabled its prelate patron to mark a distinction between his upper-floor residence and the ground-floor shops. Furthermore, as can be seen in a near-contemporary drawing, the ground floor was designed with a mezzanine, providing shop tenants with the necessary storage and residential spaces over the shop, while isolating these from the palace above (see fig. 137).<sup>121</sup>

In the decade or so that followed the construction of Palazzo Caprini, its model was widely imitated and interpreted in Rome by Raphael and his followers, most often in the streets of the Borgo and the Rione Ponte commercial and banking districts.<sup>122</sup> Scholars have noted the significance of the individual locations of these palaces to explain the presence of shops in their design, although none appears to have recognised the extent to which design



153. Giuseppe Vasi, 'Piazza di Sant'Eustachio', Rome, engraving from *Delle magnificenze di Roma antica e moderna*, vol. VI (Rome, 1761), pl. 113, Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome. Giulio Romano's Palazzo Cenci-Statimaccherani, with its ground-floor shops (centre left), faces the church of Sant'Eustachio across the square, and the *palazzetto* of Tizio Chermantio da Spoleto fills the left corner.

followed function, as sites imposed specific requirements on patrons.<sup>123</sup> Owners and developers were very much alive to the income-generating potential of shops in well-placed palaces, as the example of Cardinal Francesco Soderini's real-estate investments in the Borgo reveals.<sup>124</sup> Soderini's property in the Borgo filled a large *insula*, with both ground-floor shops and a number of apartments providing a steady rental income. Much the same can be said of Giulio Alberini's palace in via de' Banchi, near piazza di Ponte, designed by Raphael around 1515 soon after street widening was carried out in the area (1512; fig. 152).<sup>125</sup> Acquisition documents indicate that, for Alberini, a Roman nobleman active in property speculation inside and outside the city, the rental income from the *botteghe* was crucial to the financial success of the project, and it has even been suggested that construction of the entire ground floor was completed first, in order that the shops might start generating rent before the rest of the palace was finished.<sup>126</sup>

While this is not the place to survey all the palaces built in the city between the commencement of the Palazzo della Cancelleria (late 1480s) and the Sack of Rome (1527), it seems clear that, where a palace was adjacent (at the front or back) to a major route, shops were likely to appear in that façade (see fig. 79).<sup>127</sup> Moreover, even such seeming puzzles as the shops in Giulio Romano's Palazzo Stati-Maccherani, built on the minor square of Sant'Eustachio, can be explained by the fact that this was one of a number of intersections in the Campo Marzio district, which emerged as a site for markets and was densely packed with shops.<sup>128</sup> A later view by Giuseppe Vasi (fig. 153) gives some indication of the situation: the commercial vocation of the area is revealed by the ground-floor shops of the *palazzetto* of Tizio Chermantio da Spoleto, which also had a painted façade onto the neighbouring piazza.<sup>129</sup> Much the same can be said of the palaces along the via del Portico d'Ottavia and piazza Giudea, where late-fifteenth-century buildings such as the Palazzo Santa Croce and the house of Lorenzo Manilio (see fig. 112) were filled with shops that served the regular markets and other commercial activities of the fish-market area.<sup>130</sup>

While a general shift in elite housing design tended to exclude shops from the ground floors of palaces by the latter part of the sixteenth century, more pragmatic considerations prevailed well into the mid-1500s, as Palladio's comments regarding the Palazzo Thiene in Vicenza, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, suggest. Furthermore, even though newer buildings might not contain shops, the majority of existing housing stock – elite and otherwise – did, giving rise to the prevalence of mixed-use urban environments. Somewhat remarkably, when we explore these shops in any detail, it emerges that the key ground-floor fabric of magnificent residential palaces was regularly leased to third parties, and might even be sold off, or ceded as part of dowries or testamentary bequests. While the documentary evidence is difficult to assemble, it is evident that some citizens developed property portfolios numbering multiple *botteghe*, which might be located in numerous houses, palaces and institutions. Conversely, families would inevitably find themselves accommodating the *botteghe* of numerous artisans and retailers, and it is naturally tempting to speculate what ties between them – other than the payment of rent – may have developed.

A strong clientelistic model is known to have been prevalent in the magnate residential enclaves of a number of medieval Italian cities, where the *castellare* ('urban castle') operated very much as an 'ecosystem', around which family members, clients and dependants clustered.<sup>131</sup> In Siena buildings such as the Castellare degli Ugurgeri or Palazzo Tolomei were more than just homes for the scions of elite families: they served as physical and symbolic foci for entire kinship groups. In addition to family members, as the Ugurgeri example effectively illustrates, these fortified residential enclaves also afforded protection to an extended network of relatives and retainers. In the case of the Tolomei, 'testamentary fragmentation' had by 1318 allegedly divided the palace into 182 parts, while by the mid-fifteenth century it was 'taxed all in one piece', with the family distributed in various buildings in the immediate environs.<sup>132</sup> The palace was thus collectively owned by the Tolomei clan as a whole, and represented it in the city. While this may be a somewhat extreme case, variants of the kinship model of property was often the norm: families were associated with particular areas in the city and often with one or more landmark buildings, while living in properties that clustered around these main sites to create family enclaves.<sup>133</sup>

It is helpful to think of this clientelistic and distributed model of property ownership and the articulation of family identities when considering the management strategies employed for the administration of ground-floor commercial spaces that formed an integral part of a family palace. The *castellare* model of mutual protection can be understood as analogous with a system that became more widespread by the fifteenth century, in which overlapping professional interests were given physical and spatial expression at street level in the palace itself, articulated through the complex mosaic of ownership and tenancy of shops and ancillary non-residential properties. Interestingly, it has been shown that, as early as the fourteenth century in Siena, the same Ugurgeri family, whose fortified residential enclave still survives, were major property owners in their neighbourhood, and that in addition to housing they controlled extensive portions of the high-rental commercial property on the eastern side of the nearby piazza del Campo.<sup>134</sup> Like other magnate families with strong architectural identifying markers and local and international business interests





(like the Tolomei, Malavolti and Sansedoni), their influence in the city thus extended in a capillary way to touch everyday commercial life. It has been suggested that this involvement in local real estate had a monetised value in the high rents assured for this central area.<sup>135</sup> Furthermore, and perhaps even more significantly, it was also by such means that magnate families offered patronage and exerted influence on guilds and their members, controlling as they did the city's prime commercial properties and access to them by guild members.

Such factors emerge clearly from the well-documented example of the Palazzo Sansedoni, a fourteenth-century palace with a double façade, facing on one side towards the piazza del Campo and on the other towards the main street, the strada Romana (fig. 154). The original project drawing, as well as seventeenth-century drawings connected with the redevelopment of the area by the Chigi-Zondadari, testify to a design accommodating numerous shops on the three sides of the palace.<sup>136</sup> Tax returns from 1453 indicate a partial division of the palace among different members of the family, who also owned a number of the shops that wrapped around it on the strada Romana, chiasso dei Pollaiaoli and piazza del Campo; this is confirmed in a division document of 1489 recording an agreement between Bartolomeo and Pietro Sansedoni for the creation of two apartments (*abituri*) in the palace, each of which was in turn divided into two parts.<sup>137</sup> In 1453 Guccia di Nanni di Goro Sansedoni reported income from at least one linen shop (*pannilino*), while Tofo di Checco registered leases to a draper, a silk merchant and a linen merchant, among others.<sup>138</sup> What is rather more surprising is that a number of the *botteghe* were owned by individuals not related to the Sansedoni, indicating a practice of alienating shops from

154. Palazzo Sansedoni (left) and Palazzo Chigi-Zondadari on piazza del Campo, Siena.

lineage property holdings: in 1481 Francesca, widow of Francesco del Cotone, owned various shops under the palace, on both the Banchi di Sotto and the Campo sides.<sup>139</sup> All the shops were regularly let, and, perhaps in view of the high rents commanded by commercial property in the area, the trades exercised from beneath the Palazzo Sansedoni were orientated towards luxury retail, thus coinciding quite effectively with the increasingly prescriptive zoning legislation for the area. Location, in this case, would seem to have ensured a level of decorum for the activities exercised below the Sansedoni family residence.

The concentration of cloth-related trades around the Campo is again documented in the tax return of Meo di Bindoccio, who worked as a *ligriftiere* (a cloth merchant who sold cloth by the length – that is, in relatively small quantities) on the Campo, where he also lived.<sup>140</sup> He owned three and a half other shops on the Campo, of which his sons Giovanni and Cristoforo had taken over one, and another was let to his competitors in the same trade.<sup>141</sup> Immediately behind the Campo, on the central node of the croce del Travaglio, it was above all banks and goldsmiths who seem to have clustered, as the remarkable case of Pietro di Bartolo Montanini suggests. Pietro lived in a house with eleven rent-producing shops beneath it, four of which were let out as banks and four to goldsmiths, as well as one to a furrier.<sup>142</sup> The neighbouring palace of the Tricerchi was also purpose built to accommodate shops, although it has not been possible to identify the tenants, who nevertheless paid high rents, suggesting luxury activities that could support the overheads.

Cases such as these indicate a rationale for patterns of letting: elite owners opted to lease high-rent ground-floor property to professions that would not compromise the residence through such nuisances as noise, smell or dirt. Instances such as that of Meo di Bindoccio (the *ligriftiere*) seem to indicate a patronage network within a specific profession, and indeed the cloth merchants' guild headquarters was immediately adjacent to the Palazzo Sansedoni. The fact that the Sansedoni also had links with the silk mercers' guild is attested by a sixteenth-century inscription locating that guild's headquarters on an extant site spanning the chiasso dei Pollaiuoli between Palazzo Sansedoni and the eighteenth-century Palazzo Chigi-Zondadari; there were also long-standing links between the Ugurgeri and Sansedoni and the guild headquarters of the shoemakers in chiasso Buio.<sup>143</sup> Indeed, the Sansedoni co-owned property in this guild precinct with the Ugurgeri, as was re-attested in 1491, when reconstruction of the site to facilitate its commercial use saw the Sansedoni forced to include the Ugurgeri coat of arms in the redeveloped site.<sup>144</sup> To establish firm links between property-owning families and the guilds and shopkeeping guild members who might be their tenants requires detailed further research of notarial and rental accounts, though it certainly seems plausible to propose such connections, articulated around the architectural fabric of their palaces.

Ties of family and patronage bound together neighbourhoods in similar ways in other cities, as has been shown for Genoa, Florence and Rome.<sup>145</sup> Flexible and expansive urban castles or enclaves enabled multiple family members to cluster in readily identifiable areas, which acquired greater visibility with the emergence of the typology of the family palace from the fifteenth century and into the sixteenth.<sup>146</sup> In Rome, what have been described as 'archipelagos of properties' emerged, while both subjective decision-making and the legislative

framework of rental agreements enabled landholding families to control who lived in their neighbourhoods, creating networks of allegiances at urban scale.<sup>147</sup> This certainly appears to have been the case in Rome, where, for instance, in the first half of the fifteenth century, Gentile Orsini's properties adjacent to the Campo dei Fiori combined a baronial residence with multiple income-generating properties, many of them shops facing towards this prime commercial area.<sup>148</sup> While retaining the distinct character of a family enclave – in part also shaped by the fact that the site occupied the ancient Theatre of Pompey – the complex property included numerous shops created from what had formerly been a slaughterhouse, as well as a self-contained unit let as a cardinal's palace. Although a number of architectural improvements were made to the vast property block in the centuries that followed, the family continued to be associated with it, while deriving income from rental well into the seventeenth century.<sup>149</sup>

In such patterns, it is possible to identify relationships of interdependence between property owners and the network of tenants who might gather around them. While it is all too easy to assume the unified ownership of these monumental residences, and the palace as a monolith, the reality was, in fact, much more complex. Citizens could develop property portfolios numbering multiple *botteghe* that might be located in various houses, palaces and institutions, while the ground floors of their homes were frequently divided up into shops rented out for income to a range of trades and professions. We might describe the sort of connections that developed around the Palazzo Sansedoni or the Orsini property at Campo dei Fiori as giving rise to 'clientage clustering', whereby ties of common interest contributed to assembling particular trades around a palace's multiple façades. Here, then, we can see the *castellare* model of mutual protection, supplanted by a system in which overlapping professional interests had a physical and spatial expression at street level in the palace itself.<sup>150</sup> In this way, family palaces extended their reach well beyond the bounds of their stern façades to influence wider swathes of urban public space and the buildings around them.<sup>151</sup>

### *'First life, then spaces, then buildings': A palace on a street*

The opening section of Part II examined the fresco representation of the Palazzo Pontano in Perugia, and considered the ways in which the family residence acted as a focal point in the neighbourhood. The fresco captures a discrete urban area, and our discussion of this served to illustrate how Kevin Lynch's categories of urban imageability might usefully apply to an analysis of urban spaces in the past; the subsequent chapters have moved from the wide-frame view of paths and edges, via the nodal sites at street corners, to conclude with an exploration of one example of architectural typologies, which assumed a monumental quality in the streetscape. As has been suggested, even at the scale of single buildings, architecture should be interpreted within a social context, and the building typology of the *palazzo* is best understood through the social interactions that it mediated.

This final section considers one example in the light of the observation made by the contemporary urban designer Jan Gehl: 'First life, then spaces,

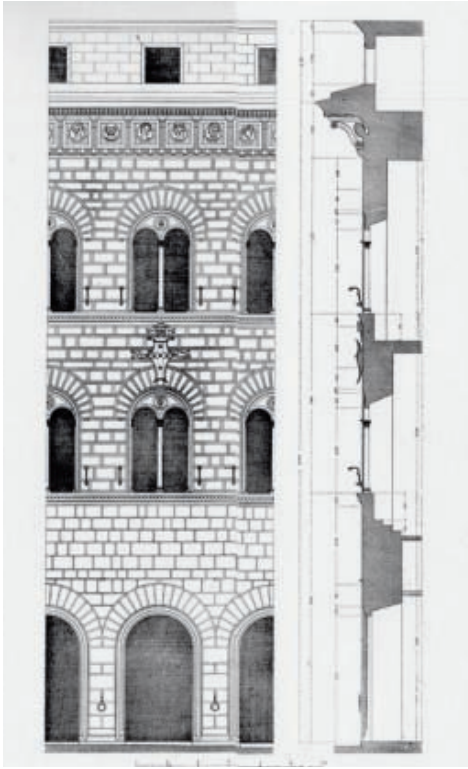
then buildings – the other way around never works.<sup>152</sup> Gehl challenged the hierarchies imposed by the architectural profession that privilege built form over environmental and social context, and in a similar way it is worthwhile to move beyond an approach to architectural history that focuses on the formal qualities of individual buildings to seek a wider understanding of how those forms are shaped by the spaces they occupy and the life around them. As this chapter has suggested, multiple features that constitute the design of the Renaissance *palazzo* are inscribed with both general and specific meanings: some of these features may be contingent on very localised conditions, while others apply to all exemplars. While this chapter has focused on the *palazzo* as a typology, which was given monumental definition during the period under review, it is of course equally true that such an approach might be applied to all building typologies, from churches to town halls, from hospitals to fortifications.

So, then, taking the example of the Palazzo Spannocchi in Siena, we can consider the residential arrangements of one elite family, and review how the choices adopted for that building were uniquely conditioned by the space it occupied and the life that played out around it (see fig. 77). The palace was built during the 1470s for the prominent locally born banker Ambrogio Spannocchi, and the project was designed and overseen by the Florentine architect Giuliano da Maiano.<sup>153</sup> Spannocchi had returned to Siena following a long and successful career in Rome, Naples and Valencia – where he had served as banker to popes and kings – and set out to establish a residence on a well-placed and prominent city-centre site, not far from where his relatives lived. In this respect the palace is unusual in having been built *ex novo* on a site that did not previously belong to his family; it was secured at some considerable cost following a complex campaign of real-estate investments, which created a site extending along the city's main street, the *strada Romana*.

By January 1476 the palace was largely complete and another Siennese banker, Piero Turamini, wrote about it to the Florentine Benedetto Dei:

Ambrogio Spannocchi has built a notable palace with a marvellous façade on the *strada Romana*, next to the Palazzo Salimbeni. It has been designed by a Florentine, and work on it is still under way. It is considered a beautiful thing and is said to have cost him more than 15,000 florins.<sup>154</sup>

This short account highlights a number of key factors in the design of the building – first among them the façade on the *strada Romana*, but also the great cost of the project and the decision to hire a Florentine architect. The palace may have been a stone's throw from some of Ambrogio's relatives in the nearby district of San Donato, but its location was undoubtedly driven more by a desire for visibility along the grandest residential and commercial street in the city than by proximity to family members. The site was in part secured by targeting the properties of the discredited Salimbeni family, a long-established Siennese clan whose leading role in an unsuccessful coup of 1403 had led to a significant decline in their fortunes, and laid them open to the full-scale hostile acquisition campaign mounted by Spannocchi.<sup>155</sup> Indeed, it would seem that his desire to secure the site was so strong that he may have received support from the city authorities in concluding a forced sale by the Salimbeni; the jurist



**LEFT**

155. Drawing of the elevation and section through the façade of Giuliano da Maiano’s Palazzo Spannocchi, 1470s, strada Romana (Banchi di Sopra), Siena, from C. von Stegmann and H. von Geymüller, *The Architecture of the Renaissance in Tuscany* (New York, 1924).

**ABOVE**

156. Heads of the Roman emperors, and Ambrogio Spannocchi (second from left) on the cornice of Palazzo Spannocchi, Banchi di Sopra, Siena.

Mariano Sozzini recorded the transaction in his *consilia*, noting that it set a precedent to support patrons of new palaces by facilitating the compulsory purchase of suitable sites, much as was made possible in Rome by new legislation brought in from 1480.<sup>156</sup> In fact, the construction of the new palace satisfied the needs of both the private patron to secure a prominent central site, and the city authorities, who were actively pursuing a policy of urban improvement of the buildings lining the strada Romana.<sup>157</sup>

So, then, the palace site was prestigious, and securing it was a further expression of the patron’s power, while the choice of a Florentine architect – Giuliano da Maiano – can be understood as articulating Spannocchi’s cosmopolitan career, especially given the fact that Giuliano had worked extensively in Naples.<sup>158</sup> Although Florentine, this palace style – which adopted such features as channelled ashlar façade stonework, round-arched two-light windows, classicising details for the cornice and symmetrical design centred on a courtyard – had, by the 1470s, become widely adopted by wealthy patrons across Italy, promoted in part by the professional mobility of architects like Giuliano.<sup>159</sup> Ambrogio’s credentials as papal banker were referenced by use of the arms of Pius II Piccolomini over the main doorway, while his own Spannocchi escutcheons were emblazoned on the highly visible corners (where ribbons survive), and the family device of ears of corn appear in roundels within the window designs (fig. 155). High above the street an extraordinary figurative cornice displays the portrait heads of the Roman emperors surrounding the centrally placed bust of Ambrogio Spannocchi himself (fig. 156).<sup>160</sup> The building’s exterior thus

157. Pazzini-Carli e Figli, 'Palazzo Spannocchi', 1755, engraving, private collection. The Palazzo Spannocchi (right), the Rocca Salimbeni (centre, set back) and Palazzo Tantucci (left) face onto strada Romana.



pronounces clearly to a viewer on the street the owner's Roman credentials and professional connections, while the decorative cornice favours classicising taste over humility.<sup>161</sup>

In August 1475 Cardinal Giacomo Ammannati Piccolomini wrote to his friend Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga, describing the 'Ambrosianae domus' as being 'wide, large and magnificent [...] Its outer appearance is that of a royal palace; the interior is richly appointed and so spacious that it is in no way different from a royal palace.'<sup>162</sup> Ammannati was clearly very impressed by the palace and its location; indeed, his personal experience of the building directly influenced his appreciation of it, as he had been a guest there as a spectator for a horse-race (the *palio*) that passed directly below the *piano nobile* windows, along the strada Romana. An eighteenth-century engraving provides a good impression of the palace and the animated street running along its façade, albeit the frenzied pace of the *palio* run along the main street (*alla lunga*, as opposed to around the Campo) is here replaced by sedate carriages and pedestrians (fig. 157).<sup>163</sup> Nevertheless, the palace's commanding presence on the street is evident, and the façade is populated with people leaning from the windows, conversing on the raised balcony to the left of the building and seated on the bench by the main door.<sup>164</sup> By this time, the four shops that flanked the main entrance had been closed up, but originally these provided income to the owners and reaffirmed visually how their fortunes were grounded in trade and banking.<sup>165</sup>

Ammannati's comments regarding the richly appointed domestic interior again conform with the lavish residential arrangements that were increasingly common for wealthy urban residents, and recent research has reassembled a number of works that were originally produced for the palace.<sup>166</sup> That among these was a series of panels depicting the moralising stories of the Magnanimity of Alexander and of Griselda, as well as, perhaps, cycles of famous men and women, suggests that this group of artworks should be connected to the double wedding of Ambrogio's sons, Giulio and Antonio, in January 1494.<sup>167</sup> This event is reported in chronicles as having been especially lavish, a display that was evidently prepared not only for local onlookers, but also for the guests who

accompanied the wedding party from Rome to escort Giulio's bride, Giovanna Mellini, and for guests who included such dignitaries as the Duke of Saxony and Iacopo Appiano, Lord of Piombino, as well as the Siennese elite.<sup>168</sup> Parading into the city from the southern gate (Porta San Marco), in the company of a number of Roman patricians and twelve knights with golden spurs, Giovanna first made a two-day rest in a patrician house to prepare for the celebrations, before proceeding to the central *croce del Travaglio*, where she met her sister-in-law to be, Alessandra di Neri Placidi, before the two brides travelled the last stretch of the route to the Palazzo Spannocchi.<sup>169</sup> A magnificent triumphal arch 'such as those made by the ancient Romans' had been erected by the palace entrance, adorned with four Roman heroes proudly displaying the arms of the couples. The wedding ceremony and a sumptuous reception followed in the palace, which had been decked out in silks and tapestries; silverware to the value of 60,000 *scudi* was on display at a banquet where hare, pheasant, peacock and other delicacies were served.

Although evidently not set in a cold winter cityscape, it is a grand ceremony along these lines that seems to be evoked in a *spalliera* panel, *The Magnanimity of Alexander*, originally from the Spannocchi palace, and probably commissioned on the occasion of the wedding (fig. 158).<sup>170</sup> Clearly visible above the entrance to the festive tent displaying Alexander's spoils of war are the crossed Spannocchi–Piccolomini arms, while the servants' livery also clearly references the colours of the family arms in their bright-hued hose.<sup>171</sup> Furthermore, the scene evokes the splendid wedding ceremony through the prepared table, the stepped *credenza* ('sideboard') on which are displayed valuable plates, and the chests inside the tent, adorned with costly vessels and other table furnishings, reminiscent of the silverware described in the accounts. Remarkably, a number of ceramic plates with crossed Spannocchi–Piccolomini arms survive in museum collections, and attest to the sort of tableware that might have been used by the household on such occasions.<sup>172</sup> A number of the same motifs – including the wedding banquet and the Spannocchi livery – reappear in the contemporary three-panel series *The Story of the Patient Griselda* by the so-called Master of the Story of Griselda (now in the National Gallery, London).<sup>173</sup>

Clearly, the double wedding of 17 January 1494 was an important day in the life of the Spannocchi and their palace, as indeed was the *palio* viewed by Cardinal Ammannati from one of the palace windows twenty years earlier. Occasions such as these heightened the visual spectacle of such monumental residential architecture, although it is equally important to note that its very presence was a constant reminder of the status and wealth of the individuals who built it. The use of imported stone, a non-Siennese architect and the cornice frieze consciously evocative of classical Rome all pointed to the cosmopolitan connections of the banking family. As the comments above have suggested, the display of the family's prestige was a primary function of the palace, though features such as the ground-floor shops were a relatively prosaic reminder of the fact that their fortunes were built on commerce. Above all, the *strada Romana* location ensured that all the effort and resources expended on the palace would be seen by the largest possible audience of visitors and travellers along that street on a daily basis.

This evident focus on visibility is reinforced in one last feature of the Palazzo Spannocchi – the space that opens up on its northern side (today piazza



158. Workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio, *The Magnanimity of Alexander the Great*, 1492–3, tempera on panel, painted for the Spannocchi family of Siena, Longleat House, Wiltshire.

Salimbeni), filling the corner between the palace and the Rocca Salimbeni (see fig. 157). While the present-day appearance of the piazza is the result of nineteenth-century remodelling, its origins can be traced back to a series of purchases made by Ambrogio Spannocchi, following the completion of the palace.<sup>174</sup> The plan, cut short by his death in 1478, was to create an open piazza along the north side of the palace, and set back from the main street, through purchase of the site and the clearing of existing buildings. Despite complications, again the Spannocchi found support for their project from the public authorities, and in April 1480 Ambrogio's sons were granted 'the perpetual use of the piazza, or loggia, and garden which had once belonged to the Salimbeni, located next to the aforementioned public street [strada Romana] and the Salimbeni palace [...] on which they may erect vaults and columns'.<sup>175</sup> In this way the Spannocchi created a private piazza, made up predominantly of private land but opening onto the public space of the street, which accentuated the visibility of the palace and created a setting for family events.<sup>176</sup>

It is not clear whether the 'columns and vaults' recorded in the document were erected, though we do know that in 1540 additional work was undertaken to further define the space by creating a walled garden; it is this more enclosed arrangement that is shown in the eighteenth-century view of the area.<sup>177</sup> It is tempting to see the final panel of the story of Griselda, in which an open arcaded loggia frames a banquet scene, as evoking the sort of public display that might have been accommodated on the Spannocchi piazza, to create a resonance between the story and actual events. It was not uncommon for the lavish ceremonies associated with family rites of passage to inform directly, or by allusion, the decoration of domestic furnishings, such as *cassoni* ('marriage chests') and *spalliera* panels ('bench backs').<sup>178</sup> The piazza – an open space adjacent to the palace – amplified the visual impact of the family residence, and created a setting on a grand scale for ephemeral events of family significance. The fact that the communicative power of individual buildings could be magnified through such choreographed dialogue with planned urban spaces is the subject of the final part of this book.



# Beyond the Street

## *Urban Public Space as Socially Mediated*

On 23 May 1498, the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola and his companions Fra Domenico Buonvicini and Silvestro Maruffi were brought to the central square of Florence, the piazza della Signoria, where the three men were tried, hanged and burned at the stake; their ashes were subsequently thrown into the Arno to ensure that no relics survived.<sup>1</sup> Savonarola, a firebrand preacher who inspired the new ‘popular’ republican government that followed the expulsion of Piero de’ Medici from Florence in 1494, was acutely aware of the power of words and images in the communication of his ideas, overseeing publication of his sermons, which circulated widely.<sup>2</sup> It is thus, perhaps, apt that his immolation was widely reported in a series of late-fifteenth-century images – variously unattributed or connected to Francesco Rosselli and Filippo Dolciati – which portray the use of the public space on that day in spectacular detail.

One image preserved in the friars’ convent of San Marco, almost certainly composed by an artist that witnessed the events of 23 May, shows various steps in the arrest, public trial, judgment and burning of the three friars, and is prominently inscribed with the date of the event (fig. 159).<sup>3</sup> Here the piazza is a protagonist in a very public spectacle of punishment – in all the ways Foucault associated with medieval performative justice<sup>4</sup> – though there are good grounds for not accepting this as a normative image. The depiction, perhaps by Filippo Dolciati, is completed with a divine *mandorla* (top left), in which the friars are shown being transported to heaven, marking the painting as having been commissioned within a network of Savonarolan sympathisers, probably for private devotion. Thus, while this multi-scene narrative of events plays out in the city’s public space, following the conventions of the *ex voto*, it had quite a different distribution trajectory, circulating within a closed group of followers as opposed to being displayed publicly at a devotional site or shrine.

The small panel is far from unique in recording the events: a family of thirteen surviving paintings has been identified as depicting the immolation, some of them derived from a common source.<sup>5</sup> Among these, a group of larger paintings (c.90 × 120 cm) adopt a wide-frame view on the events, in which the pyre occupies the middle ground, with the entire piazza, as well as major landmarks of Florence, clearly delineated. The likely prototype, attributed to Francesco Rosselli, is preserved in the convent of San Marco (fig. 160), while other known



versions were held by the Dominican convents at Florence, Prato and Perugia and in the private collections of some of the city's leading families.<sup>6</sup> The prominent scroll in the Rosselli panel is thought to have borne the inscription shown in a number of later versions: 'Thus do the just die and saints are taken from the earth', which clearly marks this as a visual record associated with pro-Savonarolan factions.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, as studies of Savonarolan iconography have shown, the impact of the visual representation of the execution scene was further amplified by the widespread circulation of at least two early editions of an account of the trial, printed in Venice in 1498, whose frontispiece showed the three friars suffering the flames at the stake.<sup>8</sup>

What is perhaps most remarkable about these images is that they survive in so many versions and copies; it is very unusual for a single event to be recorded in so many variants in the early modern period. It is perhaps helpful to consider them as a distinct form of mediatisation, as the numerous versions of the scene – and the critical message they represented – distributed an alternative version of history, probably to be shared among groups of Savonarolan sympathisers.<sup>9</sup> Also unquestionably important is the fact that the public space of Florence's main square is clearly identified and recognisable. In both the tight-frame and wider views, the piazza della Signoria stands out with its distinctive paving of bricks in a stone grid pattern, while the site of authority and government dominates the action – the Palazzo della Signoria, with its outdoor *ringhiera* ('raised dais') running along the front of the main façade, occupied by the city and church officials seated in judgment over the friars. In the wide-angled view the piazza occupies the majority of the composition, but monuments such as the civic Loggia dei Signori (now dei Lanzi) on the right and the huge cathedral dome on the left further reinforce the spatial co-ordinates of the event, while a sense that the city in its entirety is pictured derives from the open views to the Casentino hills in the distance. These are events played out at the heart of the city, in an arena symbolic of civic participation; it is thus that the viewers of these paintings understood and shared them.

This unusual group of images serves to highlight a process of image production and circulation that needs further analysis. Here, it is helpful to look to the recent work of Nicholas Mirzoeff on visual activism and the discussion of images in social media that connect identifiable places with self-constituted groups to create or provoke change.<sup>10</sup> He points to the tight relationship between an event and its depiction in an image shared through social media and the individuals connected to that event in real time in that physical space and the remote locations where its representation is engaged with or consumed. Mirzoeff's comments relate to new, digitally enabled social-media practices, but the analytic framework he develops, in which image (pixel) and action are related in a productive loop that connects place-based actions with their distribution and adoption, can be extended to our understanding of certain types of pre-modern image.<sup>11</sup> In this instance, we might say that the Savonarolan images and their distribution – in printed as well as painted form, so perhaps making them available to a non-elite mass market – serve as a pre-modern example of social-media activism. In this sense the event was harnessed by visual media, so that a recognisable site and specific events were recorded for sharing among a restricted group of government opponents. The Savonarolan images are

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159. Filippo Dolciati (attrib.), *Execution of Girolamo Savonarola*, 1498, tempera on wood, San Marco, Florence.

160. Francesco Rosselli (attrib.), *Savonarola being Burnt at the Stake, Piazza della Signoria*, c.1498, tempera on wood, San Marco, Florence.

quite exceptional, in that they challenge the prevailing social-media practices inherent in image production during the period: portraying contestation, they subvert norms by codifying an alternative version of events, meaningful to a specific viewing community. The located image has the power to reconnect the remote to the real, in order to enable and empower socially mediated participation and spectatorship. These depictions of the immolation of Savonarola and his followers on the recognisable piazza of Florence can thus be understood as a form of opposition, a means of renegotiating the events and their memorialisation.

Throughout this book an argument has been made that street life in Renaissance Italy was shaped by structures of authority and government, and re-mediated through the actions of ordinary people in public space. While there is an important story to be told about the large-scale interventions that transformed urban infrastructure throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by the creation of new streets and the regularisation of shared façades projecting onto them, it is equally important to consider the urban process and social practices that were inscribed on those spaces, sometimes in opposition to the authorities that constructed them.

In many respects, studies of the emergence of the piazza have followed a similar narrative. Squares emerged during the Renaissance period as perhaps the grandest example of set-piece urban design; public spaces, bounded by significant monumental buildings and accessed by primary streets, served as effective settings for ceremonial rituals of triumph and rule.<sup>12</sup> As with the study of new streets, scholarly attention to the piazza has tended to gravitate towards detailed case examples of *ex novo* projects associated with rulers and ruling groups.<sup>13</sup> These architecturally ordered public spaces could articulate the imposition of centralised authority on the urban fabric and citizenry through carefully designed geometries of converging streets.<sup>14</sup> Less frequently, the creation of open spaces could result from the agency of private patrons intent on giving greater visibility to their residences.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, as I have suggested throughout Part II of this book, the multi-faceted social function of nodal sites in the city, where people interact through semi-structured encounters and informal meetings, challenges ideas of sharply differentiated public and private space. Instead, I have shown how meanings were encoded on and around significant urban sites.<sup>16</sup> In this respect, we can consider the more defined set-piece piazza as part of a continuum with the public spaces of the street.<sup>17</sup>

Streets, the distributed networks that criss-cross the city, funnelling movement in and out of urban centres and defining neighbourhoods and residential enclaves, have been the focus of this study. At various points the discussion has drawn on contemporary visual evidence in which these public spaces were depicted. As we have seen, this evidence often concerns the localised hubs of community and neighbourhood, such as the spaces around street shrines, bakeries, apothecaries, confraternities and local parish churches, expressed as intersections that operated as mini-piazas – nodes in the urban network. By viewing these images collectively and comparatively, it is possible to consider the degree to which they codified the socially mediated nature of spaces and practices. Recognisable urban areas became part of the vocabulary of quite a widespread type of religious image, through which collective devotional attachments

were communicated to larger audiences by artworks that preserved the meaning and associations accrued to them at specific moments. Insofar as the majority of such images were created by narrowly determined groups (families, confraternities, neighbourhood communities) but were made available to larger groups of viewers (in churches), such practices resemble the communicative dynamics of socially mediated practices, generated outside centralised authority structures and consumed widely outside the group that created them.<sup>18</sup> While less complex than the Savonarolan images of contestation discussed above, such images nevertheless visually encode practices and events of localised significance.

For example, Cosimo Rosselli's fresco from Sant'Ambrogio in Florence (see fig. 134) holds up a mirror for locals and visitors to a site of local importance (a chapel) that locates an event (a miracle) in the very physical spaces in which the viewers stood. It serves thus to record and re-inscribe the sacrality of the site for all to see and experience, constantly remaking it local and familiar to its viewers. Such visual representation of events and spaces reorientates their meaning to those of one group, and communicates them more widely, through visual media, to another – the wider audience who may not know the location. To interpret the meaning of these images, therefore, it is necessary to consider the agency of people and place, understanding both to be fundamental components or actors in a composition. By factoring in the 'period eye' of contemporary viewers in the real spaces of the Renaissance city, we can begin to recover a sense of the meanings constructed *in* urban space, and recorded and communicated *through* images.

By highlighting the role of the street, I have proposed that we move away from a focus on the centrally planned spaces famously conjured by the panel of the 'ideal city' (see fig. 4) – an *all'antica* pastiche of the revived classical past – devoid of any human life. Such idealised visions are a manifestation of the principles of Renaissance urban-design theory,<sup>19</sup> which represented the city as a series of grand symmetrical alignments focused on piazzas, and expressed the power of the city-building patrons to whom that theory was dedicated. The more inclusive understanding of visual and material culture set out in this book allows us to consider the street – the built form and the social practices enacted there – as constituting significant evidence of the mediatization of public space in the pre-modern city. In so doing, we can recover the ways in which the city's streets, piazzas and open spaces were fashioned by elites to impose authority and meaning, could be deployed by the citizens to challenge and subvert those intentions, and yet remained the key ecosystem of everyday urban living.

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Val di Pozzo, August 2019

# Notes

Here and throughout, translations from Italian are author's own, unless otherwise indicated.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Panofsky, 1944; Panofsky, 1972. Curran, 2014, provides a review of the extensive scholarship around this influential thesis.
2. Baxandall, 1972, p. 1.
3. The exhibition that informed the redisplay of the Medieval and Renaissance galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum was exemplary; see Ajmar-Wollheim and Dennis, 2006.
4. Gehl, 1987, p. 23.
5. *Ibid.*; Gehl, 2010.
6. Extensive media coverage of many of these and other examples is collected by Gehl Architects at <https://gehlpeople.com/work/cases/>.
7. This cycle has received much attention; see Castelnovo, 1995; Starn, 1994; see also Nevola, 2007, pp. 5–28, with earlier bibliography.
8. Skinner, 1988; Skinner 1999.
9. A key point of Nevola, 2007, ch. 1; see also Kostof, 1982. For the legislative underpinning of the regime see Elsheikh, 2002.
10. The three panels in question remain at the centre of an attribution debate; for a recent discussion, see Marchi and Valazzi, 2012.
11. This section follows Nevola, 2013a, revised for Italian coverage.
12. Harris, 2015, an approach exemplified in the survey Anderson, 2013.
13. Favro, 1999–2000.
14. 'The Street', in Kostof, 1992, pp. 189–244.
15. Rykwert, 1978, p. 15.
16. Çelik, Favro and Ingersoll, 1994b.
17. Laitinen and Cohen, 2008b.
18. For this more nuanced approach, see also, for example, Cohen and Cohen, 2001–2.
19. For an overview, see Muir, 1997.
20. Muir, 1981; Trexler, 1980.
21. See essays in Fagiolo, 1997a; Ingersoll, 1985, pp. 171–223.
22. For significant examples from Germany of ritual and conflict, see Arlinghaus, 2010; Zika, 1988.
23. Ginzburg, 1987; Nussdorfer, 1987.
24. Gorse, 1997.
25. For instance, Clarke and Nevola, 2013b, pp. 47–55, and essays.
26. De Certeau, 1984; Lefebvre, 1991.
27. Cosgrove, 2004; Weigel, 2009, uses the term 'topographical turn'.
28. Trexler, 1985, p. 4.
29. Laitinen and Cohen, 2008a, p. 197.
30. Jerram, 2011.
31. 'Spaces', in Cohen and Cohen, 2001, pp. 147–62; see also Bell, 2013.
32. Blumin, 2008; see also Dubbini, 2002.
33. Most recently, Calaresu, 2013; Calaresu and van den Heuvel, 2016.
34. Ballon and Friedman, 2007; Miller, 2003
35. Friedman, 2001.
36. Favro, 1999–2000, pp. 364–73.
37. Connors, 1989; Nussdorfer, 1997; Tafuri, 1992.
38. Tafuri, 1984b.
39. *Ibid.*; see also Foscarei and Tafuri, 1983.
40. Arnade, Howell and Simons, 2002.
41. Calabi, 2004; Welch, 2005.
42. Cavallo and Gentilcore, 2008b; Shaw and Welch. 2011. The more specialist print shop has also been discussed in these terms.
43. A recent article on Italy is Rosenthal, 2015b. Scholarship on northern Europe is much more extensive; see Brennan, 2011; Kümin, 2007; Kümin and Tlustý, 2002.
44. Discussed in Chapter 3, with particular reference to the work of Diane Ghirardo, Nicholas Terpstra and Tessa Storey.
45. Foucault, 1977.
46. Terpstra, 2008a.
47. For example, Hunt, 2014.
48. Davis, 1994.
49. Rospocher, 2012; Wilson and Yachnin, 2010.
50. De Vivo, 2007.
51. Habermas, 1999.
52. Rospocher and Salzberg, 2012b; Salzberg, 2014; for a discussion of *bandi* posted in Rome, see San Juan, 2001.
53. For example, see de Vivo, 2007; Dooley, 2010.
54. Various scholars have extended backwards the Habermasian chronology of the public sphere; see Symes, 2010; Vanhaelen and Ward, 2013.
55. Brown and Davis, 1998; literature review in Nevola and Rosenthal, 2011.
56. Cohen, 2008, p. 294.
57. On prostitutes, see Chapter 3; for elites, see some examples in Chapter 6. See also Calaresu and van den Heuvel, 2016; Rinne, 2001–2; Terpstra, 2010; Tomas, 2006; Welch, 2005.
58. Cowan and Steward, 2006.
59. Schafer, 1994; see also Garrioch, 2003; Strohm, 1985.
60. Smith, 1999, pp. 55–6.
61. The key work here is Corbin, 1994. See also Atkinson, 2016b; Knighton and Mazuela-Anguita, 2018.
62. Corbin, 1986.
63. For instance, Biow, 2006; Henderson, 2010.
64. For instance, Hunt, 2014; Jenner, 2000; Long, 2018, pp. 43–62.
65. De Certeau, 1984, pp. 92–3.
66. See Jacobs, 1961, pp. 29ff.; discussed further in Chapters 3 and 5.
67. Lynch, 1960, pp. 9–13, on 'imageability'; pp. 46ff. on elements of city form.
68. Lefebvre, 1991, p. 27.
69. *Ibid.*, pp. 38–9, for the key passage that articulates the distinction between the imposed order of ruling elites ('representation of space') and the 'representational space' of everyday lived experience.

## PART ONE

1. Salernitano, 1940, pp. 166–7.
2. Brand and Pertile, 1996, pp. 153–4.

3. Salernitano, 1940, p. 169.
4. Martines, 1994; for the wider context of reading such stories as historical sources, see Martines, 2001, pp. 199–231.
5. From an extensive literature, see Grendler, 1999.
6. For a discussion of the ritual function of such imagery, see Camelliti, 2010; Davies, 2007. Discussed further in Chapter 5.
7. For Francia, see the discussion of earthquake rituals in Chapter 2; see also Negro and Roio, 1998, pp. 81, 157–8; Nevola, 2014, pp. 105–7; Williamson, 1907, pp. 88–90. For Reni's high altarpiece, see Pepper, 1991. The political significance of the urban scene in the background of Ercole de' Roberti's twin portrait of Giovanni II and Ginevra Bentivoglio (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.) has been noted in Clarke, 1999, pp. 403–5.
8. For a discussion of how such imagery elaborated the pictorial convention of the Madonna of Mercy, see Marshall, 1994, pp. 506ff.; see also Nevola, 2015.
9. Examples and details of paintings that capture elements of daily life in the early modern city are discussed in Chapter 5. For the wider context of street scenes, see Jordan Gschwend and Lowe, 2015, pp. 21–2; see also Blumin, 2008, p. 19; Dubbini, 2002.
10. See further discussion in Chapter 4; see also Ballon and Friedman, 2007.
11. Ghizzoni, 2003; Ghizzoni, 2013; see also Ceccarelli and Aksamija, 2011.
12. Ghizzoni, 2013.
13. De Certeau, 1984, p. 92.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
15. It is significant that de Certeau specifically identified the 'celestial eye' with medieval and Renaissance painters (*ibid.*, p. 92), and speculated that optical knowledge (p. 94) created the city as concept from the sixteenth century.
16. *Ibid.*, 'Spatial Stories', ch. 9, pp. 115, 117.
5. Kostof, 1992, pp. 245ff.
6. Alberti, 1991, p. 106 (Book IV, ch. 5). The treatise was first presented to Pope Nicholas V in 1450, and subsequently went through various drafts before appearing in its first printed edition in 1486 (fourteen years after Alberti's death).
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 261–2 (Book VIII, ch. 6).
8. Kostof, 1991, pp. 43–52; 'no city [...] can be said to be unplanned' (p. 52).
9. On the 'ideal city', see, for example, Sciolla, 1975; see also Calabi, 2001, pp. 115–27, for the parallels between the idealised plan of Sforzinda and Milan.
10. Çelik, Favro and Ingersoll, 1994a, p. 5.
11. For an introduction to how cities were described by outsiders, see the collected essays in Nevola, Bardati and Renzulli, 2012.
12. Piccolomini, 1984, p. 412 (II.43).
13. Ady, 1913, p. 169; cited in Burns, 1981, p. 28, though he attributes this opinion to the pope as opposed to the reluctant cardinals. See also Piccolomini, 1984, p. 428 (III.2).
14. ASS, Concistoro, 1995, fol. 56 (Carteggio, 25 September 1459). These comments were intended to warn the Siense of the need to prepare their city for the pope's return, to ensure that it would compare well with Mantua. For an extensive discussion of the papal sojourn in Siena, see Nevola, 2006b. For discussion of the expenditure involved in hosting the council, see Chambers, 2003.
15. As reported by Carlo Brugnolo (30 December 1460); quoted from Burns, 1981, p. 28; Burns, 1998, p. 163 n. 180.
16. Burns, 1998, pp. 142–4.
17. Calzona, 1991, pp. 3–38.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9 (referring to a letter of 1 April 1461 from Bartolomeo Bonatto); see also Chapter 4.
19. Calzona, 1991, pp. 14–18, for the paving campaign 1460–61; and p. 18, for a letter (dated 30 May 1461, doc. 87) from Zohanfilippo da Concorezzo, owner of the richly decorated shop on the corner of piazza delle Erbe and piazza Mantegna. Expenses were subsidised by frontagers, as Zohanfilippo accepted these liabilities in the same letter.
20. For the proposal that the church may have been built as a vote of thanks for the avoidance of any outbreaks of plague, see Burns, 1998, p. 145.
21. Calzona, 1991, p. 19 and n. 76, 35. For the *asse gonzaghesco*, see also Carpeggiani, 1994, pp. 182–3.
22. Ferlisi, 2002, p. 297; from ASMn, Archivio Gonzaga, busta 2395 (Antonio d'Arezzo to Ludovico II, 11 August 1461).
23. For courtiers' patronage, see Ferlisi, 2002.
24. Calzona, 2003, p. 578.
25. A valuable guide to inscriptions on buildings, which have been largely overlooked in the scholarly literature, is Signorini, 2010, p. 93. This inscription reads: 'Super fundo a di(vo) L(odovico) Prin(cipe) Op(timo) dono dato [...] haec fecit fundamenta.'
26. For Arrivabene, see Signorini, 2010, pp. 46–7 (entry 21); on the palace, about which very little is known, see Chambers, 1984, esp. pp. 415–16.
27. Signorini, 2010, p. 57. The inscription reads: 'Invictissimo Francisco Gonzaga IIII altero Camillo imperante restituta [...] on behalf of the humanist Battista Fiera.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19, map; see further discussion in Chapter 5.
29. Burns, 1981, p. 33, as reported by Francesco Contarini, 1588, cited in Alberi, 1841, p. 367.
30. Alberti, 1991, p. 257 (Book V, ch. 5).
31. Discussed further in Nevola, 2007, pp. 91–113.
32. Donati, 2013.
33. ASF, Mediceo Principato, 503, fol. 185 (Agnolo Niccolini to Duke Cosimo I de' Medici, 19 January 1563/4).
34. ASF, Mediceo Principato, 1871, fol. 84 (Agnolo Niccolini to Duke Cosimo I de' Medici, 9 August 1565).
35. ASF, Mediceo Principato, 219, fol. 267 (Duke Cosimo I de' Medici [in Pietrasanta] to Agnolo Niccolini, 3 February 1563/4).
36. Zdekauer, 1897, dist. III, rubric 47. For a selection of documents on the piazza del Campo, see Nevola, 2009b, pp. 261–4. For a more extended account of the *longue durée* civic policies for urban improvement, see Nevola, 2020.
37. Balestracci and Piccinni, 1977, pp. 41ff., quoting the first statute collection, ASS, Viarii, I, r. cxxii,

## CHAPTER ONE

1. Filarete, 1972, pp. 165–7 (Book VI).
2. Welch, 1995, pp. 120ff.
3. Beltramini, 2001.
4. Filarete, 1972, pp. 165–7 (Book VI); Pierotti, 1995, p. 122.



- fol. 23. For further discussion of the work of the office, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 13–18.
38. Balestracci and Piccinni, 1977, p. 45, focuses on the improvement of the streets, citing ASS, Consiglio Generale, 160, fol. 37 (22 December 1357); see also Ciampoli and Szabó, 1992.
  39. Balestracci and Piccinni, 1977, p. 48, citing ASS, Consiglio Generale, 143, fol. 32 (23 October 1349). On citizens' obligation to contribute to the enactment of public policy, see Bortolotti, 1983, pp. 43–6.
  40. For the renewed powers and duties of the *viarii*, see ASS, Statuto di Siena, 47, fol. 140 (23 September 1415); ASS, Statuto di Siena, 2, fol. 286r–v (17 February 1443/4); ASS, Consiglio Generale, 231, fol. 268 (9 March 1466/7).
  41. Nevola, 2007, pp. 51–3; see also Turrini, 1997, pp. 43–81. ASS, Biccherna, 1060, fol. 2r–v (18 April 1444) for the enabling legislation; the volume records over 200 derelict buildings identified in the period 1448–1500.
  42. Nevola, 2007, p. 51; Turrini, 1997, pp. 43–81.
  43. Numerous processions and visits to Siena are discussed in Nevola, 2007; Provedi, 1791, remains a valuable source.
  44. For extended discussion of the work of the *ornato*, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 91–145; see also Pertierra, 1995. Hub, 2012, pp. 71–2, following Braunfels, 1951, pp. 40, 96–7, proposes precedents for such activity managed through the tax office of the Biccherna.
  45. ASS, Concistoro, 2125, fol. 39 (18 December 1465); for the office's enabling legislation, see ASS, Statuto di Siena, 40, fol. 137 (11 October 1458); Nevola, 2007, pp. 98–100.
  46. For the demolition of overhangs, see ASS, Consiglio Generale (e.g. Deliberazioni, 231, fol. 100 (116), 26 March 1466).
  47. For a detailed treatment, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 91–145.
  48. For a table based only on documented cases in ASS, Concistoro, 2125, see Nevola, 2007, p. 209. Numerous other cases can be traced from the Consiglio Generale and other records.
  49. For additional evidence and examples, see Nevola, 2006a.
  50. Bocchi, 1993b; Corrain, 2013.
  51. Corrain, 2013, p. 374.
  52. Tuttle, 2011, pp. 22, 217–18, followed by Corrain, 2013, p. 375; see also Tamborrino, 1997, p. 425, with some differences of opinion from Tuttle's chronology.
  53. Tuttle, 2011, p. 22, for the paving of the piazza, overseen by the papal legate Baldassare Cossa, whom Tuttle describes as taking a 'conciliatory' stance in relation to Bologna's local government institutions.
  54. *Ibid.*, p. 20, for Leonardo Malaspina's use of ten iron gates (*rastelli*), erected at all openings to the piazza Maggiore, to create a Visconti citadel (22 June 1403). On chains and gates used to control movement in the city see Chapter 3.
  55. *Ibid.*, p. 217, for frontagers' contribution, and p. 23 for discussion of piazza Maggiore as a prototype for the use of porticoes to regularise the piazza; the loggia was later redeveloped as part of Vignola's Loggia dei Banchi project (from 1565). See also Lotz, 1977; Schofield, 1992–3.
  56. Clarke, 1999, pp. 406–7; Tuttle, 2011, pp. 23–5.
  57. Clarke, 1999, p. 404, citing the chronicler Cherubino Ghirardacci.
  58. For an interpretation of the palace that plays down its seigneurial ambitions, see Clarke, 1999, pp. 402–3. For discussion of the Palazzo Strazzaroli at Porta Ravennana as a built tribute to the Bentivoglio palace, see Tamborrino, 1997, pp. 421–5.
  59. Clarke, 1999, p. 405; Tamborrino, 1997, p. 424.
  60. As reported by Ghirardacci in 1492; Tuttle, 2011, p. 25. For the inscription on the portico describing Bentivoglio as 'Senatus Bononiensis Princeps', see also Clarke, 1999, pp. 401, 406.
  61. Clarke, 1999, p. 401.
  62. Tamborrino, 1997, p. 424.
  63. Tuttle, 2011, pp. 31–4.
  64. For imperial honours awarded by Emperor Maximilian, see Tuttle, 2011, pp. 26, 32.
  65. *Ibid.* Almost all traces of this intervention were lost with the widening of via Ugo Bassi in 1925–30, although it can be seen in early maps, such as that in the Sala Bologna (Biblioteca Comunale Archiginasio, Bologna, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, Raccolta piante e vedute della città di Bologna, Cartella 2, no. 18) or Mitelli, 1692.
  66. Tuttle, 2011, pp. 26, 32, citing an unnamed chronicler.
  67. Clarke, 1999, pp. 402–3 for the familial significance of the palace area, and pp. 409–11; for dynastic ambitions of later projects around piazza Maggiore, see also Tuttle, 2011, pp. 27–4.
  68. Corrain, 2013, p. 375, cites Pietro Lamo, *Graticola di Bologna: gli edifici e le opere d'arte della città nel 1560*. ed. G. Roversi (Bologna: Atesa, 1977), p. 40, describing the re-modelling of the strada San Donato in Bologna near the Bentivoglio palace; Corrain, 2013, pp. 376 ff., gives many examples of visitors' accounts of porticoes.
  69. Alberti, 1991, p. 263. See further discussion in Chapter 4.
  70. For Pietro Summonte's 1524 account, quoted from Nicolini, 1925, see Hersey, 1969, pp. 94–5.
  71. The first full treatment of the Addizione is Zevi, 1997, whose principal thesis has been widely challenged – for example, in Folin, 1997; Tuohy, 1996.
  72. For earlier evidence of plans to extend the city, see Folin, 1997, p. 373; Tuohy, 1996, p. 124, describes Venetian occupation of these buildings in 1483 during the war with Ferrara.
  73. For a detailed treatment of the overall building campaign and a gazetteer of the numerous new buildings, see Tuohy, 1996, pp. 124–41, and gazetteer.
  74. No clear explanation has been put forward for the 1490 date on some versions of the print, which appears to contradict the chronology of the Addizione; the Biblioteca Estense dates the print to 1499, which matches more closely the standing architecture.
  75. Folin, 1997, pp. 364–7; Tuohy, 1996, pp. 53–62.
  76. For the chronicler Ugo Caleffini's comments regarding the smell created by butchers and livestock, see Tuohy, 1996, p. 61; see also Folin, 1997, p. 365.
  77. The loggia was built in 1492–3, see Folin, 1997, p. 366. For further discussion of shops on the piazza, see Chapter 4.

78. As emerges clearly from the examples above; for multiple examples, see also the essays collected in Calabi, 1997.
79. Tuohy, 1996, pp. 129–33; Palazzo dei Diamanti was built for Sigismondo d'Este, an illegitimate son of one of the duke's many brothers. The street was 16 metres wide, and included pavements on both sides; Adams and Nussdorfer, 1994, p. 216.
80. The distinction between participants in the project is made in Folin, 1997, p. 375–6; Tuohy, 1996, pp. 132–3.
81. Discussed further in Chapter 6.
82. Kehl, 1998, p. 251. For jousts and other activities, see Folin, 1997, pp. 374–5; for detailed construction phases of the piazza, see Tuohy, 1996, pp. 132–4, 339–41.
83. For work on the column (1498–9), see Tuohy, 1996, pp. 340–41; for identification of the 1598 map view, see Folin, 1997, p. 376. The column that can be seen today was erected in the 17th century, and was topped with a sculpture of the poet Ariosto in 1833.
84. Burckhardt, 1937, p. 27; Heydenreich, 1996, p. 120.
85. Adams and Nussdorfer, 1994, p. 220. Parallels can be drawn with the renewal of Milan, discussed in Chapter 3.
86. On the relation between city plan and the authority of rulers, see Adams, 1993, pp. 129–30.
87. Such concerns are further explored in Chapter 3, which considers the function of city streets in the exercise of government authority and control, though the example of Ferrara shows that concerns with splendour and decorum were rarely divorced from the more practical concerns with trade and defence.
88. For a summary, see Frommel, 1986; Tafuri, 1992, reveals the complexity of this process.
89. Bull of 29 March 1425, Lanciani, 1975, vol. 1, pp. 11ff.; translation as quoted in Partridge, 1996, p. 19.
90. Ait, 1991; Re, 1920; Verdi, 1997; the first archival volume, ASR, Presidenza di Strade, 1, is lost and hence Re's account and documentary appendix are fundamental for the early history of the institution.
91. Re, 1920, pp. 32–6, 46–9.
92. For the changing city of Rome, see most recently McCahill, 2013; Partner, 1990.
93. On these and other streets in the ceremonial life of Rome, see Fagiolo, 1997a, with numerous essays, including Fagiolo, 1997b; on the ritual and processional uses of streets, see Ingersoll, 1985.
94. The issues of commerce, streets and palaces are considered in Chapter 4. Modigliani, 1998; Vaquero Piñero, 1999; Vaquero Piñero, 2007.
95. Bisticci, 1970, p. 2; these comments apply to the period before Martin V, but particularly to Eugenius IV Condulmer's troubled pontificate, during which he was absent from Rome for long periods of time.
96. The main accounts of this process are Burroughs, 1990; Magnuson, 1958; Tafuri, 1992, pp. 33–50; Westfall, 1974.
97. Fiore, 2005b; Frommel, 1986, p. 42; Tafuri, 1992, pp. 49–50, 62–7. Manetti's account suggests a hierarchical arrangement of the streets, with the central one wider and intended for more elite residences.
98. Rubinstein, 1968, p. 227 and n. 37 (documents in ASR, Camerale 1: Fabbriche, 1503, fol. 71v (6 April 1462)). For the stair, see also Piccolomini, 1984, p. 1541.
99. From an extensive bibliography, see Adams, 1998; Mack, 1987.
100. Frommel, 1998a, pp. 385–90.
101. Benzi, 1990; various essays in Benzi, 2000, including Vaquero Piñero, 2000; Frommel, 1986, p. 48.
102. Tafuri, 1992, p. 107 and n. 66, suggested that the original plans may have made the church the focus of the new street, the via Sistina, which cut from the Canale di Ponte to piazza Nicosia (Porto di Ripa Grande), a project that was completed only in the 16th century. For use of a version of this route in papal processions, see Nevola, 2008.
103. Howe, 2005.
104. Tafuri, 1992, p. 107; see also Tafuri, 1984b, p. 82.
105. The Latin original is transcribed in Forcella, 1879, p. 54.
106. Clarke, 2003, pp. 227–32; Weiss, 1969.
107. This is a narrative thread running through Tafuri, 1984b, and Frommel, 1986. This chapter does not attempt a survey of all of Rome's new streets, but a number are discussed elsewhere in this book. Some of the significant examples are: Sixtus IV, via Sistina and Lungaretta; Alexander VI, via Alessandrina; Julius II, via Giulia; Leo X, via Leonina (from 1513, Ripetta) and plans for piazza Navona; Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, via Baullari (planned 1515; executed 1535 by Farnese as Pope Paul III).
108. A detailed analysis and documents are provided in Petrucci, 1997; p. 35 refers to the decision made in the Papal Consistory (26 November 1498). See also Ingersoll, 1985, pp. 146–8; Howe, 1992.
109. Petrucci, 1997, pp. 35–6.
110. Palazzo Soderini was complete by 1493 (see Lowe, 1991), while in 1496 Adriano Castellesi mentioned the 'Via Alexandrina' in a request for building materials (Petrucci, 1997, p. 35).
111. For documents pertaining to improvements to the street before 1498, see appendix to Petrucci, 1997, pp. 73–6.
112. *Ibid.*, p. 40. *Etsi universis*, the papal bull of 1500, renewed many of the measures for palace patrons introduced by Sixtus IV; the street is further described in Fauno, 1548, p. 155.
113. Bruschi, 1969, pp. 1040–46; Bruschi, 1989; Tafuri, 1984a; see also Petrucci, 1997, pp. 41–2.
114. The military functions of street design are more closely examined in Chapter 3.
115. For the future-proofing of street development projects, see Chapter 4.
116. The authoritative account is Salerno, Spezzaferro and Tafuri, 1973; see also Butters and Pagliara, 2009.
117. Tafuri, 1973, p. 67 (quotation from Egidius), and p. 56 (for the inscription affixed by the *maestri di strada* Domenico Massimo and Girolamo Pichi); for references to Livy in the inscription, see also Temple, 2011, pp. 34–5.
118. This adjustment in the topographies of power in Rome is central to Salerno, Spezzaferro and Tafuri, 1973; for via Giulia as 'asse urbano all'avanguardia', see Tafuri, 1973, p. 77.

119. Butters and Pagliara, 2009; Temple, 2011, ch. 3. For the wider conflicts of Julius with the *Romani cives*, see Burroughs, 1990; Cafà, 2010, pp. 442–3.
120. Cafà, 2010, p. 442; Spezzaferro, 1973, pp. 61–2; Tafuri, 1973, pp. 71–3; Tafuri, 1984b.
121. Detailed account in Tafuri, 1973, including pl. V (a valuable coloured chronological survey of the street, revealing how little of the architecture pre-dates 1527); and in catalogue entries forming Part II of Salerno, Spezzaferro and Tafuri, 1973.
122. Altieri, 1873, p. 17; also cited in Spezzaferro, 1973, p. 59. For Altieri, see Kolsky, 1987.
123. The specific context for Altieri's comments was the refashioning of the street layout around via delle Botteghe Oscure, close to the Capitoline; see Spezzaferro, 1973, p. 59.
124. These examples and others are discussed in Chapter 4.
125. For additional examples of the zoning of butchers see Chapter 4; for prostitutes, see Chapter 3.
126. For clearance of 'beccherie' under Francesco Sforza to create 'un largo bello da vedere', see Patetta, 1997, p. 61 (18 April 1448).
127. 1472, aimed at clearing the coperto dei Figini, as well as ordinances of 1457, 1466, 1471, 1490 and 1497; 30 July 1480, to remove overhanging structures described as 'riati et foppe'; and 15 May 1493, concerning 'lobie e baltresche'; *ibid.*, p. 63.
128. Chambers, 1976.
129. *Ibid.*, pp. 28 ff., 47–9, docs 9–12.
130. *Ibid.*, p. 48, doc. 11 (2 September 1462).
131. For the planning ideals that underpinned the project, see Nevola, 2009a.
132. Adams, 1985, pp. 103–5.
133. Nevola, 2007, pp. 97–8; on the zoning of such trades, see also Chapter 4.
134. For a detailed account, see Nevola, 2011a.
135. *Ibid.*, p. 431; Sigismondo Tizio, 'Historiae Senenses', BCS, Ms. B.3.12, fol. 584 (29 October 1513); also reported by Pecci, 1755, vol. 2, p. 27.
136. Shaw, 2006, points out that the phrase 'la terra se levarà' was commonly used to refer to public uprisings. The earth may in part have been used to fill Siena's cathedral crypt, recently removed to reveal frescoes and architecture; see Guerrini, 2003. For via del Capitano, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 178–84.
137. Folin, 1997, p. 374.
138. Tuohy, 1996, pp. 339–41.
139. Folin, 1997, p. 376; Tuohy, 1996, p. 141, describes the extension of Ferrara as 'autocratic'.
140. Probing the tensions inherent in the dynamics of urban-scale patronage is fundamental to Tafuri's work, including Tafuri, 1992.
141. From a vast field, key works remain Mitchell, 1979; Mitchell, 1986; Wisch and Scott Munshower, 1990; more recently, Watanabe-O'Kelly and Simon, 2000. For a specific consideration of ritual in relation to the fashioning of urban public space, see Ingersoll, 1985; for a wider discussion of urban rituals, see Muir, 1997.
142. Piccolomini, 1984, p. 1595 ff.; see also Ady, 1913, p. 257.
143. Piccolomini, 1984, pp. 1600–02.
144. Prodi, 1982, pp. 922ff.; Tafuri, 1984b, p. 56; additional details in Nevola, 2008.
145. For a detailed description, see Piccolomini, 1984, pp. 1494–557 (Book VIII, chs 1–2); discussed in Antoniutti, 2006; Rubinstein, 1968. Documents in Müntz, 1878–82, vol. 1, pp. 285–97.
146. Piccolomini, 1984, p. 1536.
147. For a detailed account, see *ibid.*, pp. 1534–41.
148. *Ibid.*, p. 1541; Rubinstein, 1968, p. 227 and n. 37, for documents regarding the piazza, ASR, Camerale 1: Fabbriche, 1503, fol. 71v (6 April 1462).
149. Piccolomini, 1984, p. 1536.
150. First quotation, *ibid.*, p. 1540; for Agostino Dati, see Nevola, 2008, pp. 185–6. Appendix document (ASS, Concistoro, 2003, fol. 37 (14 April 1462)).
151. Piccolomini, 1984, p. 1556.
152. *Ibid.*, p. 1597.
153. For more detailed discussion and a map, see Nevola, 2008, pp. 179–82; Valtieri, 1980, citing documents 27–8 from ASR, Camerale 1: Tesoreria Segreta (Entrata Uscita), 1288, fols 104–7 (1461–2); see also Pacciani, 1985, pp. 79–80.
154. For a detailed account of the procession and the stages along the route, see Piccolomini, 1984, pp. 1597ff.; see also Nevola, 2008, pp. 179–82; Valtieri, 1980. For a contemporary account by chronicler Nicola della Tuccia, see della Tuccia 1872, pp. 84–7.
155. Piccolomini, 1984, p. 1596; the street was lined with plants and its surface covered in flowers; see also della Tuccia, 1872, p. 86.
156. Della Tuccia, 1872, pp. 86–7; Piccolomini, 1984, p. 1608.
157. Della Tuccia, 1872, p. 87; Piccolomini, 1984, p. 1610.
158. Della Tuccia, 1872, p. 87, reports that the plague outbreak had claimed 2,000 lives by Christmas.
159. Chironi, 2009, p. 41.
160. Adams, 1985; detailed accounts are preserved in the ASR, Tesoreria Vaticana, partially transcribed in Mack, 1987, pp. 180–89. ASR, Camerale 1: Tesoreria Segreta (Entrata Uscita), 1288.
161. Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book III, 18: 'meo nomen de nomine fingo'. For a more developed discussion of the literary classical allusions of the Pienza project, see Nevola, 2005a.
162. Clarke, 2003, p. 1; Mack, 1987, p. 167.
163. For an account of the buildings of Pienza, see Piccolomini, 1984, pp. 1745–71; for details of the cardinals involved as patrons, see *ibid.*, p. 1770. Chironi, 2009, p. 43, has argued that the elevation of Pienza to a city and diocese, and the involvement of the cardinals are to be understood in the wider political context of Pius' relations with Siena.
164. Piccolomini, 1984, p. 1770.
165. *Ibid.*, pp. 1770–77. For the intentional intertextual echo of these actions with Virgil's description of races to commemorate the anniversary of the death of Anchises (*Aeneid*, Book V), see van Heck, 1991.
166. Piccolomini, 1984, pp. 1772–3.
167. *Ibid.*, p. 1776.

## CHAPTER TWO

1. Manetti, 1887, p. 43, Eng. trans. and commentary in Martines, 1994, pp. 171–212, 213–41.
2. For Grasso's return home and the reference to the bells, see Manetti, 1887, p. 39.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 43 (my trans.). A further stage of the trick, involving Donatello and Brunelleschi, was played out in the cathedral; it amounts to a variation on the same theme of identity theft.
4. For male sociability, see, for instance, Weissman, 1982; Rosenthal, 2010.
5. For bells in Florence, see Atkinson, 2016b.
6. See, for example, Martines, 1994, pp. 213–41, with the central analysis that ‘place and identity went together’ (p. 234); Ruggiero, 2006, with a focus on *virtù*; Tafuri, 1992, pp. 1–3, 21–3. See also Groebner, 2007, pp. 18–22.
7. See Chapter 6. On lineage and property in Tuscany, see English, 1984; Lansing, 1991. For a detailed example from Rome, see Ajello Mahler, 2012.
8. Friedman, 1992.
9. They are discussed in detail in Chapter 1.
10. Rykwert, 1978, p. 15.
11. Cosgrove, 2004; Shortell and Brown, 2016, p. 5. For foundational work, see de Certeau, 1984, pp. 91–109; Lefebvre, 1991.
12. Atkinson, 2019; de Vivo, 2016; Eckstein, 2016.
13. Following the influential observations of Benjamin, 1997, and Benjamin, 1999; de Vivo, 2016, pp. 140–41.
14. Atkinson, 2011.
15. Poggiali, 1815, vol. 1, p. 215 (novella II).
16. *Ibid.*
17. For the wider context of the story in relation to Siena’s trade and pilgrimage, see Nevola, 2007; on food hawkers, see Tulliani, 2007; for the seasonal traffic of pilgrims, see Piccinni, 2003.
18. For provocative discussion of this subject, see Jütte, 2014.
19. Zanchettin, 2005b.
20. Fortini Brown, 1990, p. 140.
21. Malara, 1996, pp. 29–73; for discussion of the marble transported from the Alps for the construction of the cathedral, see Welch, 1995, pp. 78–81. For images recording the now largely lost network of canals, see Buccellati and Grandi, 1987; Finazzo Flory, 2007.
22. For disputes in the 1390s regarding marble-supply problems for the cathedral, see Welch, 1995, p. 79; for Filippo Maria Visconti’s expansion of the network and preference for travel by water, see Malara, 1996, pp. 61–3.
23. Pesci, Ugolini and Venturi, 2005, pp. 157–79; Tuohy, 1996, pp. 154–60 (focusing on the elaborate barges (*bucintori*) prepared for the dukes).
24. Piccolomini, 1984, vol. 1, pp. 411–13; see also Pesci, Ugolini and Venturi, 2005, p. 158.
25. Pesci, Ugolini and Venturi, 2005, pp. 157–9.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 161; the 1667 Madonna may well simply have replaced an earlier image.
27. Complete statutes from the 15th century are published in Palermo, 1979, pp. 269ff.
28. Zanchettin, 2005a, pp. 131–2; see also Marder, 1980, pp. 29–31. For the concentration of prostitution in the area around the Mausoleum of Augustus, see Chapter 3.
29. Palermo, 1979, 1463 statutes, rubric XI, p. 294 (noting that access to and from Ripetta was signalled by the third ring of the bell of the church of Santa Maria in Torre), rubric XXVIII, p. 299.
30. Zanchettin, 2005a, p. 130 n. 25.
31. Crime and taverns are discussed further in Chapter 4; see Salzberg, 2019.
32. Friedman, 1992, pp. 72ff., though the legislation was regularly ignored and properly enforced only by the 15th century (see also Chapter 1). The Latin root for *strada* (‘street’) is *sternere*, ‘to pave’.
33. From a vast literature, key texts that outline an experiential approach to street life are Benjamin, 1999; de Certeau, 1984, pp. 91–109; Gehl, 1987; Merleau-Ponty, 2002; Pallasmaa, 2005.
34. Numerous such accounts survive; for a selection in English, see Dean, 2000, pp. 5–62. For how literary accounts were informed by the city experienced through the act of walking, see Atkinson, 2016a.
35. On foreign travellers, see Nevola, Bardati and Renzulli, 2012; for chorographic accounts, see Atkinson, 2016a, pp. 193–206, in relation to accounts by Petrarch and Flavio Biondo.
36. De Vivo, 2016, pp. 119–21 (with map of the itinerary, fig. 1).
37. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 123.
38. See, for instance, Fortini Brown, 2004; see also Savoy, 2012.
39. De Vivo, 2016, p. 124; Lowe, 2013, pp. 430–33; Romano, 1994, pp. 368–9.
40. Romano, 1994, p. 360; for discussion of the favoured status of black gondoliers, see Lowe, 2013.
41. Romano, 1994, p. 362.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 363.
43. Galleria dell’Accademia, Venice.
44. This is, of course, a central factor in Venice’s architectural history. It is not discussed further here, but see Howard, 2002, pp. 43–54; the point is developed extensively in Savoy, 2012.
45. De Vivo, 2016, p. 124, with reference to Sanudo’s account; Zanelli, 1997.
46. See, for example, Crouzet-Pavan, 1992, pp. 265–89; Howard, 2002, pp. 48–9.
47. Malara, 1996, p. 70 (quoting Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Codex Atlanticus, B, fol. 37v).
48. Bowd, 2010, p. 90.
49. Klapisch-Zuber, 1995, p. 12 n. 5; see also Bellosi and Haines, 1999, p. 83. The panel was sold at Christie’s, London, 6 July 2017, lot 13.
50. Bowd, 2010, p. 90; the legend is also referred to by Dante in *Purgatorio*, canto X, 73–93.
51. Hunt, 2014, pp. 177–81; see also Lotz, 1973.
52. Hunt, 2014, pp. 180–81.
53. On prostitutes using carriages, see Storey, 2008.
54. Lotz, 1973; the classic example of architecture responding to the demands of carriage traffic is the reordering by Pietro da Cortona of the small piazza in front of Santa Maria della Pace to provide a one-way system for carriages to move through the space.
55. Hunt, 2014, pp. 182ff.
56. For evidence of the considerable carting costs (often outweighing the purchase cost) of stone for the cathedral of Siena, see AOMS, 917 (1059), 1481–95, ‘Spese per la cavatura e trasporto di pietra’, and other volumes in the series; see also Aronow, 1985.
57. Jacobs, 2013, pp. 33–4.
58. *Ibid.*, pp. 33–5, 135–7; Rowland, 2001, pp. 151–2; Silver and Rowland, 2019.

59. Sacchetti, 1970, pp. 32–3 (novella XII).
60. Bernardino da Siena, 1989, vol. 2, pp. 1040–41.
61. On pathways and movement in Venice, see Fortini Brown, 1990, pp. 136–87; Howard, 1993–4.
62. Urban and architectural historians have mined this story extensively; see, recently, Atkinson, 2016a, pp. 188–93.
63. Classic studies remain Kent, 1971; Kent and Kent, 1982.
64. The various sites are discussed in more detail in Part II.
65. Cohn, 1980, pp. 124ff.
66. Calabi, 2001, pp. 46–65; Cohn, 1980; de Vivo, 2016, p. 122.
67. See Chapter 4; see also Calabi, 1997; Calabi, 2004; Welch, 2005.
68. Cavallo, 2006; Spilner, 1987.
69. Catoni and Piccinni, 1984; Jamison, 2016. The major change in practice is that while self-assessment declarations formed the basis of the *catasto* or *lira* in the 15th century, by the following century the data were collected by officials.
70. The classic analysis of the 1427 Florentine *catasto* is Herlihy and Klapisch Zuber, 1985. A language-based approach to similar sources, which explores their significance for geography and space, is outlined in Smail, 2000.
71. Eckstein, 2016; Eckstein, 2018.
72. Dean, 2000, pp. 11–16.
73. ASS, Lira, 185, fol. 301.
74. Niall Atkinson proposes to create a map of the 1427 *catasto*, based on the internal evidence of the *portate*. For an early instance (1525) of systematic door-to-door surveys along a fixed route, see Eckstein, 2018, n. 84.
75. ASF, 325, Decima Granducale, 3780–84 (volume 3784 refers only to shops). For an overview of the innovative and ongoing digital reconstruction of the survey using GIS, see Terpstra and Rose, 2013, online at <http://decima-map.net/> (accessed 14 June 2016).
76. Eckstein, 2016, pp. 12ff. More broadly on Florentine plague censuses, see Cipolla, 1976; Cipolla 1986.
77. Eckstein, 2016, pp. 18–19.
78. A recent flourishing of scholarly interest in spatial and digital approaches to mapping urban space has been spearheaded by examples drawn from Florence; for a collection of essays that sets out this approach, see Terpstra and Rose, 2016.
79. For an example of how notarial documents might be used to reconstruct a property block, see de Courcey-Bayley, 1998.
80. For further discussion of these offices, see Chapter 1.
81. Friedman, 2012.
82. *Ibid.*, p. 283.
83. *Ibid.*, pp. 290ff.; Friedman observes that only very few streets on Leonardo Bufalini's 1560 map are named.
84. For five elements of 'urban imageability', see Lynch, 1960, pp. 46–90; the subject is discussed further at the beginning of Chapter 4.
85. See, for example, Ballon and Friedman, 2007.
86. The distinction is one of Lefebvre's key concepts, and he adduces evidence of the transformation from 16th-century Florence; Lefebvre, 1991, pp. 38–9, 80, 128ff.
87. Baxandall, 1972; for a useful discussion of the book and its impact, see Hills, 2011; for correction to its male-merchant bias, see Randolph, 2004.
88. For further assessment of Baxandall's method, see Rubin, 2007.
89. Favro, 1999–2000; see also the essays in Clarke and Nevola, 2013a.
90. Lynch, 1960.
91. Zardini, 2005.
92. Lefebvre, 1991; see also de Certeau, 1984; Weigel, 2009, esp. p. 190. For the 'spatial turn' in history, see Cosgrove, 2004.
93. For an example of how experience and localised rituals shaped perceptions of Florence, see Clarke and Nevola, 2013a; Crum and Paoletti, 2006; Laitinen and Cohen, 2008b.
94. For an application of this process to the *ringhiera* of the Palazzo della Signoria, see Milner, 2006.
95. Cosgrove, 2004, pp. 57–8.
96. Trexler, 1985, p. 4.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
98. This key aspect is highlighted in Kostof, 1992, pp. 189–243, esp. 194–208.
99. Friedman, 1992, pp. 70–73; Kostof, 1992, p. 191.
100. The accommodation between public and private interests is a central theme of Nevola, 2007; for a broad discussion of the public/private debate, see Laitinen and Cohen, 2008a; see also Cohen and Cohen, 2001–2.
101. For instance see Zdekauer, 1888 (III.10); see Bruzelius, 2014, pp. 107–35.
102. Bruzelius, 2014, pp. 124–33.
103. *Ibid.*, pp. 129–31.
104. Discussed in Chapter 3.
105. From an extensive literature, see Fortini Brown, 1988; Lillie, 2014.
106. Muir, 1997, pp. 52–80.
107. Milner, 2000; Milner, 2006; Trachtenberg, 1997, pp. 87–147.
108. Johnson, 2000; Milner, 2006, pp. 99ff.
109. Friedman, 1988.
110. Nevola, 2007, pp. 106ff., 140–42.
111. ASS, Concistoro, 2125, fol. 93 (June 1468); see also Nevola, 2007, pp. 140–42.
112. For the *piazzetta* columns, see Fortini Brown, 1997, pp. 18–19.
113. See, for instance, Strocchia, 2006, p. 59; for earlier examples of the use of the *parlamento* (by the Ciompi among others), see Milner, 2000, pp. 64ff.
114. For examples of contestation and protest functioning as a trigger to destabilise established regimes, see Milner, 2006, pp. 95–9.
115. For multiple examples of 'Palle!' as a political cry, see Landucci, 1985; for documents relating to the 1378 grain riot, see Cohn, 2004, pp. 124–5.
116. Cohn, 2004.
117. *Ibid.*, pp. 132 (citing the chronicle of Donato di Neri), 360 (from the account of Conforto da Costozza).
118. Condivi, 1998, p. 29; see also von Moos, 1978.
119. Rospoche, 2015.
120. Both types of location are discussed further in Chapter 4.
121. Smell has received little scholarly attention, but see Wheeler, 2006; see also Biow, 2006. For 19th-century literature regarding hygiene and sewerage, see Corbin, 1986.
122. On such permeable boundaries, see Cohen and Cohen, 2001–2, pp. 61–84.
123. Lindemann, 1999, pp. 161ff.; Park, 1992, pp. 85–6.
124. Alberti, 1991, p. 113 (Book IV, ch. 7).
125. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
126. For general considerations, see Greci, 1990.
127. Quoted in Biow, 2006, p. 83.
128. Mucciarelli, 2000, pp. 36–40;

- see also Park, 1992, pp. 85–6; Thordike, 1928. See also, on night work for waste removal in cities (though examples are rather later), Ekirch, 2005, pp. 165–6.
129. Boccaccio, *Decameron*, Book II, ch. 5; discussed in Atkinson, 2016a, pp. 181–2.
130. For records of the health commissioners and Cornelio Sizzini's summary of the conditions of the streets, see Wheeler, 2006, pp. 36–7.
131. In relation to the stepped design of his latrine, see Martini, 1967, vol. 2, p. 336; for comparison, see Corbin, 1986.
132. Martini, 1967, vol. 2, pp. 336–7.
133. Jenner, 2004, pp. 284–6. Inglis, 2006, pp. 109–11, suggests that pre-modern sensibilities were not affected by bad smells, although this seems a reductive view, intended to explain the concerns of modernity. See also Cavallo and Storey, 2013, pp. 70–112.
134. For the classic study of these surveys, see Cipolla, 1976; Cipolla, 1986; see also Eckstein, 2016; Henderson, 2010.
135. For butchers, see Costantini, 2016.
136. For a view of public health impacting on urban design and aesthetics, see Geltner, 2012.
137. For butchers in Siena, see Costantini, 2016; Nevola, 2007, pp. 97–8; for Venice, see Wheeler, 2006, pp. 29–30, 37.
138. For additional details and sources, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 97–8.
139. *Ibid.*, citing ASS, Statuto di Siena, 25, fol. 330 (21 March 1460).
140. *Ibid.*
141. Wheeler, 2006, p. 29 (citing Vasari's account of the life of Jacopo Sansovino). For the redevelopment by Sansovino, which provided new premises for these trades, see Howard, 1975, pp. 11–14; Howard, 2002, pp. 172–3; see also Fenlon, 2008, pp. 111–17; Morresi, 1999, pp. 191–213.
142. Wheeler, 2006, p. 30.
143. In addition to human waste, animals moving through the city – either for transport or on their way to market – also produced waste. For the problems of horse dung in 19th-century cities, see Inglis, 2006; Jenner, 2003.
144. Calvi, 1989, pp. 155 ff.; Wheeler, 2006, pp. 31, 34–6.
145. Welch, 2011; Wheeler, 2009.
146. The most detailed study of sound in the city is Atkinson, 2016b; see also Dennis, 2008–9, pp. 9, 13–15; for more specific discussion of the *scampanata* rituals in Florence, see Colleran, 2009.
147. For the production of meaning through motion in space, see Lefebvre, 1991, p. 171.
148. The most complete published account is Figliuolo, 1989. For an online database and maps, see E. Guidoboni *et al.*, *Catalogo dei forti terremoti in Italia (461 a.C.–1997)*, 2018, online at <http://storing.ingv.it/cfti/cfti5/>, with a detailed entry on 1456, at <http://storing.ingv.it/cfti/cfti5/quake.php?428111T#> (accessed 9 August 2017).
149. Figliuolo, 1989; vol. 2 includes documents as an appendix.
150. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 9–12 (the letter was widely copied and appears in various collections); all subsequent quotations attributed to Bindo come from the same source.
151. For a careful analysis of bells in Florence, see Atkinson, 2016b, pp. 69 ff., in which the pattern of bell-ringing is described as a sonic regime.
152. For a discussion of the wider context of responses to disaster in early modern Italy see Nevola, 2015, with earlier bibliography.
153. Figliuolo, 1989, vol. 2, pp. 17–19. Manetti also compiled a treatise, in 1457, as a result of what he observed in Naples: Manetti, 1983.
154. Figliuolo, 1989, vol. 1, p. 158.
155. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 23.
156. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 155–6.
157. See, for example, Guidoboni, 1989; Guidoboni and Comastri, 2005, with earlier bibliography; and Guidoboni *et al.*, *Catalogo dei forti terremoti in Italia*, online at <http://storing.ingv.it/cfti/cfti5/>.
158. Figliuolo, 1989, vol. 1, pp. 172–4.
159. *Ibid.*, p. 174, refers to Borselli, 1922, p. 93: 'Meretrices ad concubitum nullum admittebant.'
160. For a table drawn from information collected in Guidoboni and Comastri, 2005, see Nevola 2015, p. 66.
161. Niccoli, 1987, pp. 185–216, comments on the relationship between prophecy, floods and the socio-political construction of disasters; see also the more general comments in Cohen and Cohen, 2001, pp. 25–42. The practice of holding public processions for these purposes is considered in Muir, 1997, pp. 232–9.
162. Figliuolo, 1989, vol. 1, p. 159; Guidoboni and Comastri, 2005.
163. Nevola, 2014, p. 100; Nevola, 2015, pp. 59–61.
164. Syson *et al.*, 2007, pp. 88–91, with earlier bibliography.
165. Allegretti, 1733, col. 772.
166. Negro and Roio, 1998, pp. 81, 157–58; Williamson, 1907, pp. 88–90.
167. Guidoboni *et al.*, *Catalogo dei forti terremoti in Italia*, online at <http://storing.ingv.it/cfti/cfti5/>, record 188. See also Boschi and Guidoboni, 2003, pp. 55–83; Clarke, 1999, pp. 409–11.
168. Negro and Roio, 1998, p. 158: V.M.D./ TERREMOTU. CUNCTA. DIRRUENTE. / DICT. ET. COS./ URBE. SERVATA. / DEIPARAE. VIRGINIS. IMAGINEM. / POSUERUNT.
169. Boschi and Guidoboni, 2003, pp. 60–61; my thanks to Emanuela Guidoboni for generously bringing this image to my attention, the dating of which remains problematic.
170. For people moving out of houses into temporary structures, see *ibid.*, pp. 81–2.
171. *Ibid.*, pp. 55–60; of three documents revealing institutional responses, one established a series of processions, and the other two called for restoration work to damaged buildings (one specifically relating to churches).
172. Bury, 1998, p. 86. For a more extensive discussion of these image types, see Nevola, 2015.
173. Guidoboni and Comastri, 2005, p. 620.
174. For a discussion of the growing place of embodiment in art history, see Freedberg, 2009; also helpful is Crowther, 2001.

### CHAPTER THREE

1. Connell and Constable, 1998, p. 90, doc. 3 (Entrata, uscita, debitori, creditori e ricordanze, Berkeley, University of California, Bancroft Library, Ms. 54, fol. cxxx recto).
2. The definitive account of the Rinaldeschi case is Connell and Constable, 1998; see also Connell

- and Constable, 2005; Sebregondi and Parks, 2011, p. 255. For a discussion of the panel and the church, see Holmes, 2013, pp. 99–103.
3. Connell and Constable, 1998, p. 62.
  4. For the Fico, and tavern culture more broadly, see Rosenthal, 2015b.
  5. The definitive work is Murray, 2000.
  6. Connell and Constable, 1998.
  7. For the *otto di guardia*, see Terpstra, 2008b.
  8. Terpstra, 2015a.
  9. For defenestration and the public performance of justice (and the recording of such events through painted images – *pittura infamanti*), see Edgerton, 1985, pp. 91–124, which deals only with Florence; see also Freedberg, 1989, pp. 246–63; Terry-Fritsch, 2015.
  10. Connell and Constable, 1998.
  11. *Ibid.*, pp. 77–80; for a similar argument for the prosecution of sodomy, see Roche, 1996.
  12. Connell and Constable, 1998, pp. 80–88; Holmes, 2013, pp. 99, 164.
  13. Connell and Constable, 1998, p. 53.
  14. *Ibid.*, p. 90, doc. 3.
  15. Trachtenberg, 1997.
  16. On ‘panopticism’ and surveillance, see Foucault, 1977, pp. 195–228; Foucault, 2007, pp. 1–28.
  17. From a sizeable bibliography on fortification, see Adams and Pepper, 1986; Pepper, 2000.
  18. Pollak, 2010.
  19. This is a key argument of Pollak, 2010.
  20. Gardner, 1987; Tracy, 2000.
  21. Pollak, 2010, pp. 178ff.
  22. For ‘new military urbanism’, which connects historical precedents in such a way as to describe a ‘digital medieval’, see Graham, 2010, pp. 142–5.
  23. On identity and mobility, see Groebner, 2007, pp. 171–221.
  24. From a vast bibliography on these frescoes, see Starn, 1994, p. 70 (and for the juxtaposed Timor, see p. 42).
  25. For example, Gardner, 1987; Israëls, 2008; Robin, 1985.
  26. For a sample, see Davies and Hemsoll, 2004, pp. 241–70.
  27. Kostof, 1992.
  28. For the origins of the ‘military street’, see Pollak, 2010, pp. 180–81.
  29. Infessura, 1890, p. 79.
  30. Re, 1920, p. 32, citing Infessura, 1890, pp. 79–80.
  31. For instances in 1472 and 1474, in which a total of nearly 5,000 florins were siphoned off from the university budget to pay for building projects, see Blondin, 2005, p. 9; see also Spezzaferro, 1973, p. 39.
  32. Ait, 1991, p. 885.
  33. Spezzaferro, 1973; Tafuri, 1984b.
  34. For Ponte Sisto, see Blondin, 2005, pp. 14–20; Schraven, 2011. For Ponte Sant’Angelo, see Ait, 1991, pp. 883, 885; for work on the bridge following the 1450 stampede that led to the death of hundreds of pilgrims, see Burroughs, 1982; Davies, 2016.
  35. Ait, 1991, p. 885, citing Gherardi da Volterra, 1904, p. 92.
  36. See also Modigliani, 1998, pp. 207–8. The area was associated with the performance of papal justice, as discussed in the last section of this chapter; see also Ingersoll, 1994; Rebecchini, 2013, pp. 165–9.
  37. For the stampede and discussion of improvements, see Burroughs, 1982, pp. 97–8.
  38. Ingersoll, 1994, p. 179, discusses subsequent phases of fortification of Castel Sant’Angelo under Nicholas V and Alexander VI, which preceded its definitive organisation with elaborate bastions.
  39. On the significance of the site, see Burroughs, 1982. For a Foucauldian interpretation of the *tridente*, see Ingersoll, 1994; Pollak, 2010, pp. 182–4; Rebecchini, 2013, pp. 165–9.
  40. Cafà, 2010, pp. 440–42.
  41. For the political negotiations around the Capitoline, articulated through the display of sculpture, see Burroughs, 1990.
  42. Statutes to enforce the demolition of overhangs in Siena, Pisa and Florence are discussed in Balestracci and Piccinni 1977, pp. 92–3; see also Friedman, 1992.
  43. Nevola, 2007, pp. 91–113.
  44. *Ibid.*, and table 4, p. 209; the full dataset covers the period 1431–80, but almost all the records relate to 1460–80.
  45. For a case-by-case analysis of *ornato* interventions, see Pertici, 1995; see also Nevola, 2007, 91–113.
  46. Lees, Slater and Wyly, 2013; Tonkiss, 2013; explored further in Chapter 4. See also Hills, 2010.
  47. For Pius’ interference and advice to the Siennese government, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 59ff.
  48. For Viterbo, see Nevola, 2008, with earlier bibliography; Pacciani, 1985, pp. 79–80; Valtieri, 1980, pp. 27–8.
  49. Müntz, 1878–82, vol. 1, p. 300; Valtieri, 1980, pp. 27–8. Relevant documents record a series of twenty-four payments, 15–21 June 1462, ASR, Camerale 1: Tesoreria Segreta (Entrata, uscita), 1288, fols 104–6; the first entry, on fol. 104r, makes clear that these were charitable gifts commanded by the pope in reparation for damage done to people’s property.
  50. Piccolomini, 1984, pp. 1594–5 (Book VIII, ch. 8).
  51. *Ibid.*, pp. 1600–02. For an interpretation of Pius’ Corpus Christi procession as an expression of papal sovereignty, see Prodi, 1982, pp. 922ff.; Tafuri, 1984b, p. 56. Discussed further in Chapter 1.
  52. On Leo’s entry, see Ciseri, 1990, which discusses the via Maggio route, and cites Masi, 1906, for the removal of roof and jetty overhangs; see also Nevola, 2011b, pp. 163–4.
  53. Nevola, 2011b, pp. 163–4; see also Saalman, 1990, p. 79. For the initial symbolic accenting of this route, see Shearman, 1975. For the ‘propagandistic’ value of the axis from piazza San Felice to Santa Trinita, and the placement of columns there dedicated to peace and justice, see Spini, 1976.
  54. Discussed further in Chapter 4.
  55. Welch, 1995, p. 38, citing Santoro, 1969; for humanist praise of street improvement and bridge-building commissioned by Sixtus IV, see Blondin, 2005.
  56. For frontager rules on street maintenance in Siena, see Nevola, 2007, p. 17; on ancient Roman precedents, see Robinson, 1992.
  57. Santoro, 1969, p. 257. Francesco Sforza’s legislation of 1459 had introduced brick paving, which had become rapidly worn; for regulations to replace this with stone, see Martinis, 2008, p. 41 n. 30; see also Patetta, 1997.
  58. Martinis, 2008, pp. 40–41, 104, and Appendix 7.
  59. For other examples where civic

- or parish projects might be represented as ducal through conspicuous display of Sforza arms, see Welch, 1995, ch. 2; for the plague church of San Cristoforo sul Naviglio, see *ibid.*, pp. 32–3.
60. *Ibid.*, pp. 175, 178; for the general practice adopted for the fortification of subject towns, paid from taxes, see *ibid.*, pp. 173–5.
  61. *Ibid.*, p. 38; Martinis, 2008, p. 15; Soldi Rondinini, 1983. A rule was introduced on 4 April 1492 to clear all overhangs and structures (including window shutters) that invaded public space, and this was renewed after Milan fell to the French; Santoro, 1969, pp. 257–8.
  62. Welch, 1995, p. 176.
  63. Rubinstein, 1993.
  64. Iannucci, 2001, pp. 83–4 and n. 22; Arduini *et al.*, 1970, pp. 62–3.
  65. Pasini, 2001, pp. 62–3.
  66. *Ibid.*; see also Petrini, 1980.
  67. Gobbi and Sica, 1982, p. 57; see also Pasini, 2001, with references to contemporary chronicles of Rimini by Tobia Borghi and Baldo Branchi.
  68. For a discussion of Sigismondo's use of the castle in iconography of rule, see Woods-Marsden, 1989, pp. 131–3, 135; D'Elia, 2016, pp. 33–8.
  69. Rubinstein, 1993.
  70. The key work is Tafuri, 1973; see also Tafuri, 1992.
  71. For some examples of the activating power of ritual on the built form of streets, see Çelik, Favro and Ingersoll, 1994a.
  72. Discussed above; see also Ciseri, 1990, pp. 44–54.
  73. The underpinning philosophical key for hegemonic theories of surveillance is Foucault, 1977, which in turn relies on Bentham, 1995.
  74. For example, Minton, 2009; Graham, 2010.
  75. For the 'digital medieval', see Graham, 2010, p. 145, citing Holston and Appadurai, 1999, p. 13.
  76. On CCTV, see, for example, Lyon, 2001.
  77. Jacobs, 1961, pp. 29ff.
  78. Foucault, 1977, pp. 3–7, 195–228 (quotation, p. 214).
  79. *Ibid.*; Foucault, 2007, pp. 1–28.
  80. On the use of crime for social history, and particularly for the sort of micro-histories of how space was used, see Muir and Ruggiero, 1994; Cohen, 2004.
  81. ASS, Concistoro, 2163 (Suppliche di carcerati), 1463–80.
  82. ASS, Concistoro, 2163, fols 182–3, 1473. In Arezzo, night-time gambling carried penalties ten times those levied in the day: ASA, Antico Comune – Statuti e capitolarioni: 16, 1503, 3.xl, fol. 111.
  83. For night-time and violence, see Ekirch, 2005, pp. 61–90; Koslowski, 2011.
  84. This paragraph is based on the account in ASS, Concistoro, 2163, fol. 152, Annunciation 1468.
  85. For the shops in this central part of Siena, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 124–8; for the barber on the Campo, see p. 92.
  86. For the use of light in policing, see Koslowski, 2011, p. 133. On the policing work of the *podestà*, see Dean, 2007, p. 11–13; Ikins Stern, 1994, pp. 74–86; Zorzi, 1994.
  87. ASS, Concistoro, 2163, fol. 132.
  88. *Ibid.*, fol. 135.
  89. *Ibid.*, fols 153, 179, (relating to amnesties in 1478 and 1482).
  90. *Ibid.*, fol. 213. A similar theft from a vegetable garden was pardoned at Christmas 1463; *ibid.*, fol. 83v.
  91. *Ibid.*, fol. 179.
  92. *Ibid.* The other members of the gang were also caught, jailed and pardoned; fols 182–3.
  93. *Ibid.*, fol. 153v.
  94. *Ibid.*
  95. *Ibid.*, fol. 140v.
  96. *Ibid.*, fol. 152v; 1468.
  97. ASS, Concistoro, 2157, fol. 37, with additional information from fols. 38, 57, 62. The case is discussed in greater detail in Nevola, 2013b, pp. 85–9.
  98. For brief comments on accusations, see Dean, 2007, pp. 17–20; see also Zorzi, 1994, pp. 44–8. Denunciation (and its correlate, defamation) as a process is explored in its Venetian context in de Vivo, 2007, pp. 86–114; see also Horodowich, 2005. Little attention is given to the physical process of depositing denunciations and its spatial implications. For a broader picture of the construction of reputation (*fama*) in public space, see Fenster and Smail, 2003a, and essays therein, esp. those by Chris Wickham and Thomas Kuehn.
  99. De Vivo, 2007, ch. 3: 'City'.
  100. *Ibid.*, pp. 86–114; Horodowich, 2005; for gossip in Venice, see Cowan, 2011. For balconies and other privileged sites for the spreading of gossip, see Chapter 6.
  101. The term is taken from Zygmunt Bauman, who uses it to describe conditions operating in contemporary society, by which individuals opt in through adoption of such technologically enabled tools as smartphones with GPS; Bauman and Lyon, 2013.
  102. Terry-Fritsch, 2013.
  103. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
  104. Zorzi, 1983, p. 54. In Venice it appears that denunciations had to be signed and witnessed by two people; Horodowich, 2005; for little boxes as more informal precursors of the *botche*, see also Rospocher, 2015, p. 194.
  105. Rospocher, 2015, p. 194.
  106. ASS, Regolatori, 254, 1455–90, and Ufficiali di custodia: Deliberazioni, 29, 1535–6, gather denunciations for the entrance to the Palazzo del Podestà; for further documentary references to boxes in the cathedral and city hall in 1498, see Jackson, 2010, p. 457.
  107. For an initial discussion of the public and participatory nature of disciplinary power, see Nevola, 2013b, pp. 101–5, which closely aligns with the conclusions reached independently in Terry-Fritsch, 2013, pp. 169–72.
  108. For an assumption of the anonymous nature of the accusation process, see Dean, 2007, p. 18 (which does not cover the physical process of depositing accusations); that the system was abused is documented through vandalism (to boxes in churches in Prato, Arezzo, Pisa and Empoli), as well as cases of false accusations; Terry-Fritsch, 2013, pp. 172–3.
  109. ASS, Ufficiali di sanità, 1; Tre segreti sopra le vesti, 1–3.
  110. ASS, Regolatori, 254, 1455–90; the accusations are skewed to fiscal impropriety, as the *regolatori* were officials who primarily oversaw city expenditure and accounts.
  111. *Ibid.*, fol. 258, 31 November 1477; for other instances, see fol. 262r–v, 24 October 1482, fol. 290v, 10 February 1488.
  112. *Ibid.*, fol. 253r, 20 April 1478; on sumptuary laws in Siena, see



- Jackson, 2010.
113. Milner, 2013.
114. For examples of regular pronouncements regarding behaviour in public spaces, see Milner, 2013, pp. 145–7, doc. 11, 5 November 1482.
115. Milner, 2013, p. 120.
116. *Ibid.*, pp. 123–4.
117. *Ibid.*, pp. 126–8.
118. *Ibid.*, p. 144, doc. 8.
119. These *denunzie* were by no means unique expressions of the horizontal practice of surveillance at this period; for example, the discussion of the *catasto* tax returns (Kent and Kent, 1982, pp. 24–74, esp. 48–66 on ‘the atmosphere of the neighbourhood’, exploring the effects on taxation of neighbourhood relationships) and participation in local government or lay religious confraternities in 15th-century Florence (Eckstein, 1995) underlines the degree to which enforcement was partly assured by the extent to which everyone knew their neighbours’ affairs. For the practice of horizontal surveillance, as applied to reputation, see also Wickham, 2003, p. 26.
120. Ghirardo, 2001; Mazzi, 1991; Storey, 2008, pp. 17–18; Terpstra, 2015b. For a broader discussion of the scholarship in relation to spatial approaches, see Nevola, 2013a, p. 1337.
121. Canosa and Colonnello, 1989. For Florence, see Brackett, 1993; Mazzi, 1991; Rocke, 1996.
122. Rexroth, 2007, pp. 189–217, 266–303. As is shown in Rocke, 1996, the *ufficiali della notte* were overwhelmingly concerned with policing sodomy, though in terms of spatial dynamics their surveillance of urban space was similar to that of other agencies.
123. ASA, Antico Comune – Ufficiali dell’onoranza: 1, 1564–93.
124. ASA, Antico Comune – Statuti e capitolazioni: 16, 1503, 3.liv, fol. 114. Similar legislation was repeated in 1580; ASA, Antico Comune – Statuti e capitolazioni: 31; Statutorum Aretii 1580, 1.lxv, fol. 74.
125. *Ibid.*
126. Ghirardo, 2001, p. 405 (for Ferrara); Mazzi, 1991, p. 293 (for Florence).
127. ASA, Antico Comune – Ufficiali dell’onoranza: 1, 1564–93, fol. 20v (22 September 1565), fol. 62r (17 May 1571).
128. *Ibid.*
129. *Ibid.*, fol. 77v (8 August 1577), specifies the precise section of borgo a Piano (today via Piana), as delimited by the intersections of neighbouring streets.
130. *Ibid.*, fol. 56v (14 November 1570), fol. 61r (14 May 1571), fol. 77v (8 August 1577) for reiteration of the law that required a ribbon of at least one *braccio* in length to be displayed on the head or breast.
131. *Ibid.*, stated in various instances, including fol. 61r (14 May 1571).
132. *Ibid.*, fol. 41r (21 January 1566) though fol. 41v documents a renewed accusation (6 May 1567).
133. *Ibid.*, fol. 2 (25 October 1564).
134. *Ibid.*, fol. 3 (28 November 1564).
135. *Ibid.*
136. *Ibid.*
137. Rosenthal, 2015b, pp. 17–19; Terpstra, 2015b, pp. 75–6.
138. Terpstra, 2010, pp. 17–20; Terpstra, 2015b, p. 76.
139. Nevola, 2007, p. 125; for the location of capital punishment and Porta Giustizia, see Loseries, 2008, p. 425.
140. Nevola, 2007, pp. 116–28; documents in Ceppari, 1994.
141. Nevola, 2007, p. 125; ASS, Consiglio Generale, 230, fols 68–9. In 1506 funding was provided to restore the brothel, as prostitutes were no longer using it, with a consequent loss of earnings to the city: ASS, Balia, 253, fol. 232 (15 September 1506); funds were to be raised from a tax levied on builders, and licence fees of 30 *soldi* were renewed for prostitutes.
142. For the planned brothel, proposed by the official in charge of tax revenue (*bollette*), Giacomo Prisciani, but never built, see Ghirardo, 2001, pp. 412–18; the three existing brothels were in Sesto San Romano behind the cathedral, in contrada Santa Croce, and near contrada San Biagio.
143. Ghirardo, 2001, pp. 415–17 (quotation, p. 415); the area apparently retained this use well into the 20th century.
144. Gorse, 1997, p. 307; Stevens Crawshaw, 2016.
145. Stevens Crawshaw, 2016, pp. 165–71 (though the proximity of the new brothel to the old one is not signalled).
146. For legislation and two examples of infringement, see *ibid.*, p. 171.
147. Cohen, 1998; Storey, 2008, pp. 67–94.
148. Storey, 2008, pp. 73–81, with map.
149. *Ibid.*, pp. 88–94, and table 1.
150. Terpstra, 2015b, p. 76.
151. Terpstra, 2015b, pp. 76–8; the argument is expanded and developed, using compelling evidence from GIS-based mapping, in Terpstra, 2016.
152. Terpstra, 2016, pp. 116–19, with map, p. 112.
153. *Ibid.*, p. 118, shows that half of the 207 prosecutions between May 1560 and September 1562 were for noise-related offences; see also Storey, 2008, ch. 4, where almost 33 per cent of cases prosecuted by the *birri* in 1594–1606 were noise-related (table 3).
154. See, for instance, from an extensive bibliography, Calabi, Galeazzo and Massaro, 2017; Siegmund, 2006; Stow, 2007.
155. Discussed further in Chapter 5.
156. For instance, Cohen, 1998.
157. Lefebvre, 1991.
158. Foucault, 1977.
159. For this example, see Rospocher, 2015, pp. 185ff. For Bentivoglio and architecture, see Chapter 1; Clarke, 1999, pp. 405ff.
160. Rospocher, 2015, pp. 173ff; resistance is documented in von Moos, 1978.
161. Rospocher, 2015, p. 185, citing the account of Giovan Francesco Negro.
162. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
163. *Ibid.*, following Fileno della Tuata’s contemporary account.
164. For the performative qualities of rituals of justice in Renaissance Italy, see Falvey, 2008.
165. Ingersoll, 1985, pp. 419–48; Rebecchini, 2013.
166. Ingersoll, 1994, pp. 183–6.
167. Ingersoll, 1994; Rebecchini, 2013, pp. 165–8.
168. Statistics indicate an almost fourfold rise in executions at the site between the period 1499–1550 (average 17 per year) and the period 1550–1600 (average of 20–35 per year), peaking in 1585 and 1586 during the reign of Sixtus V (almost a hundred per year); Ingersoll, 1994,

- pp. 183–6; see also Ingersoll, 1985, pp. 408–48; Edgerton, 1979.
169. Ingersoll, 1985, p. 426, quoting an *avviso* of 1571 that describes the piazza di Ponte as ‘the stage’.
  170. Terpstra, 2008a; Terpstra, 2015a, pp. 8ff.
  171. Terpstra, 2015a, p. 13.
  172. Lefebvre, 1991.

## PART TWO

1. Santi, 1989, pp. 126–8, and illustrations 106a–q; see also Scarpellini, 1981 (there is some variation in the surname: Pontano and Pontani); cf. Jordan Gschwend and Lowe, 2015, p. 21.
  2. Teza, 2014, proposes that the fresco cycle was commissioned by Guglielmo for the room that housed his law school, described in documents as the *Iustitiae Sacellum*.
  3. Another scene may depict the Pontano’s rural estates in Cerreto di Spoleto.
  4. Cohen, 2008; Welch, 2005.
  5. Siepi, 1822, vol. 2, p. 474; the palace was demolished in 1836 for the widening of *viale Indipendenza*.
  6. For the five elements of ‘urban imageability’, see Lynch, 1960, pp. 46–90.
  7. On the influence of Kevin Lynch on urban-design theory, see Hospers, 2010.
  8. Lynch, 1990 (‘Notes on city satisfaction (1953)’, pp. 135–53). For Lynch’s approach in relation to historical cities, see Favro, 1999–2000; revisited in Clarke and Nevola, 2013b.
  9. For the suggestion that the street scene was a new genre developed from the mid-17th century, see Blumin, 2008, pp. 19ff.; see also Dubbini, 2002.
  10. Jordan Gschwend and Lowe, 2015, pp. 19–22. Discussed further in Chapter 5.
5. See Onians, 1988, pp. 282–6, which develops comments of Panofsky, 1955, p. 234.
  6. This interpretation was first proposed in relation to built interventions by urban elites in Siena, in Nevola, 1999, p. 63.
  7. Serlio, 1618–19, fol. 47v, referring to Girolamo Genga’s work for Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino.
  8. *Ibid.*, fol. 46v.
  9. *Ibid.* He prefers the device of hiding lights behind the windows, to make buildings appear inhabited.
  10. On porticoes and the range of form these took in Bologna from the 12th century onwards, see Bocchi, 1990.
  11. For the ‘urban process’, see Çelik, Favro and Ingersoll, 1994a; Kostof, 1992, p. 280.
  12. These (intentionally) general comments can be supported from scholarship on the Renaissance city, including Anderson, 2013, pp. 141–75; Benevolo, 1993, ch. 3; Friedrichs, 1995, ch. 1; Lilley, 2002, ch. 5.
  13. For a recent survey, see Romano, 2015, pp. 71–108.
  14. Cavallo, 2006.
  15. Burns, 1981, pp. 28–9, 39–43; Cantatore, 2003. This north–south axis is described in Carpeggiani, 1994, pp. 182–3, as an ‘asse gonzaghesco’.
  16. Forster, 1994, pp. 166–72; see also Carpeggiani, 1994, pp. 182–3 and n. 30.
  17. Forster, 1994, pp. 169–71, proposed Alberti as having oversight of the project, though this is not supported by documents.
  18. Burns, 1981, p. 29; Cantatore, 2003, pp. 447–52; Forster, 1994, pp. 168–9.
  19. Forster, 1994, pp. 172–3, notes the political implications of Gonzaga patronage controlling civic time; see also Signorini, 2011. The clock tower is attributed to the court architect Luca Fancelli (built 1471–2).
  20. A long tradition links the overall project to the ideas of Leon Battista Alberti, though it is not proven that his letter to the marquis of 27 February 1460 (Chambers and Martineau, 1981, pp. 126–7 (Howard Burns)), set out a blueprint for this area, as first suggested by Burns, 1981, p. 29.
  21. The inscription on the architrave reads: (ZO) HANBONIFORT DA CONGHOREZO AFAT FAR QUESTA OPERA DELANO 1455 – IOHANESBONIFORT DE CONCORESIO HOC OPUS FIERI FECIT SUB ANNO DOMINI 1455; see Forster, 1994, p. 162 and n. 1.
  22. Alberti’s letter suggests plans to remodel the 11th-century rotunda of San Lorenzo, which were never carried out.
  23. Chambers and Martineau, 1981, pp. 126–7 (Howard Burns). Construction was delayed by the resistance of the abbot of the Benedictine community that officiated the church.
  24. Burns, 1998, pp. 149–56, with earlier bibliography.
  25. For these boundary markers, see Bottoni, 1840, p. 15; Gionta, 1844, p. 71; Pisani, n.d., pp. 8–9.
  26. Vischi, 2009. For the decree in favour of Viano de Vianis, supporting the building project, ASMn, Decreti, 24, fol. 87r (12 September 1492), see also Ferlisi, 2006, p. 74 and n. 7.
  27. L’Occaso, 2009, notes that the practice was concentrated in the half-century following 1460.
  28. Burns, 1981, p. 127.
  29. For the stone markers that document Gonzaga influence on Mantua’s expansion, see Chapters 1 and 5.
  30. Forster, 1994, pp. 162–6, provides an extended polemic against the formal analysis of the Renaissance piazza as governed by principles of order and symmetry, severed from a contextualized understanding of such spaces.
  31. Forster, 1994, p. 164, singles out Pienza, Vigevano, piazza San Marco (Venice) and the reordering of the Capitoline (Rome) as the archetypal transformative interventions, and notes that Lotz, 1977, remains a reference point in the limited scholarship on the piazza.
  32. See Chapter 1, p. 36, for an extended quotation, taken from Calzona, 2003, p. 578.
  33. Severi, 1982, p. 234; Tuohy, 1996, pp. 63–5; see also Folin, 1997, pp. 359–66.
  34. Severi, 1982, p. 234, notes that the *strazzaroli* shops were documented from 1322 and cites the contemporary ‘Diario ferrarese’, 1473 (*Diario*

- ferrarese*, 1928). Tuohy, 1996, p. 63, notes that the balcony was used as a viewing platform for the wedding of Eleonora (1473) and the funeral of Niccolò d'Este (1476).
35. Tuohy, 1996, pp. 88–9; they were destroyed by fire in 1532 and not replaced.
  36. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
  37. From a growing literature, see Calabi, 1997; Calabi, 2004; Welch, 2005; and bibliography in notes that follow.
  38. Friedman, 1992, pp. 82–6.
  39. The power of the street to focus movement is discussed in Rykwert, 1978, p. 15; see also essays in Çelik, Favro and Ingersoll, 1994b; Kostof, 1992, pp. 189–213. On the semantic distinction of a hierarchy denoted by the variants of *strada*, *via* and *chiasso*, see Balestracci and Piccinni, 1977, pp. 41–3; for equivalents in Florence, see Spilner, 1987, ch. 4.
  40. Sestan, 1968. For a more general consideration of urban morphology as determinant and indicator of urban types, see Kostof, 1991. For the via Francigena as determinant factor in San Gimignano's economic expansion, see Fiumi, 1961, pp. 28–33, 149–152.
  41. Fiumi, 1961, pp. 152–3.
  42. *Ibid.* p. 28. A useful summary of pilgrim routes to Rome can be found in Belli Barsali, 1985.
  43. Nevola, 2007, pp. 91–145, esp. 95–8, 124–8; Nevola, 2020.
  44. Nevola, 2007, p. 124; see also Hansen, 1992.
  45. Hansen, 1992, citing ASS, Consiglio Generale, 199, fol. 71v (28 December 1399).
  46. Nevola, 2007, pp. 91–145.
  47. Discussed further in Chapter 6.
  48. ASS, Conserterria Piccolomini, 17, fol. 87ff. (28 January 1507); see also Nevola, 2011b.
  49. Nevola, 2007, p. 128; Nevola, 2011b, pp. 154–6.
  50. ASS, Concistoro, 2125, fol. 39 (18 December 1465).
  51. Nevola, 2007, pp. 101–6.
  52. *Ibid.*, pp. 116–18, with earlier bibliography.
  53. For further details on named examples, see *ibid.*
  54. For resistance to zoning policies directed at butchers, see Chapter 1; Costantini, 2016.
  55. Lees, Slater and Wylie, 2013.
  56. For examples, see Nevola, 2016.
  57. On these and other streets in the ceremonial life of Rome, see Fagiolo, 1997a; on the ritual and processional uses of the streets, see Ingersoll, 1985; Temple, 2011, pp. 34–93.
  58. Cafà, 2010; Ingersoll, 1985, pp. 171–92; Temple, 2011, pp. 56 ff.
  59. Temple, 2011, pp. 40–42, with reference to Biondo Flavio, *Roma triumphans* (1459), Book X, describing the route with reference to contemporary landmarks: the Pons Neronianus, Santi Celso e Giuliano, San Lorenzo in Damaso, Campo dei Fiori, Sant'Angelo in Pescheria, San Giorgio in Velabro, the Capitol.
  60. Modigliani, 1998; further studies of rental patterns and income in Rome are Vaquero Piñeiro, 1999; Vaquero Piñeiro, 2007.
  61. For a minute survey of shops around Campo dei Fiori, illustrated with maps, detailing 148 shops in the immediate vicinity, see Modigliani, 1998, pp. 145–209, 211–59.
  62. *Ibid.*, p. 163, citing Alberini, 1997, p. 487.
  63. Temple, 2011, p. 56 and n. 50, citing Aurelio Brandolini, 'De laudibus ac rebus gestis Sixti IV', Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Vat. Lat. 5008.
  64. Modigliani, 1998, pp. 200–5, with documents; see also Friedman, 2012.
  65. Pietro Paolo Francisci was known as 'della Zecca' as he was manager of the city mint during the pontificate of Paul II Barbo (1464–71); Giovannoni, 1931.
  66. For the reparations, and also for the prolonged debate over income from the shops, see Schiavo, 1964, pp. 75–6; see also Frommel, 1998a, pp. 411–16; Modigliani, 1998, p. 198.
  67. For a discussion of shops along the via Peregrinorum, see Modigliani, 1998, pp. 176–209, and map XIX.
  68. On ceremonial balconies as privileged sites along processional routes, see Tamburini, 1997, pp. 185–90; Frommel, 1998a, pp. 413–14, highlights the projecting balcony and corner tower element at the Cancelleria.
  69. For further discussion of palace design and streets, see Chapter 6; brief comments on the determinant influence on palace design of urban placement, see Conforti, 2008, p. 133; Nevola, 2011b; Welch, 2005, pp. 134–5.
  70. Nevola, 2011b, pp. 160ff., discusses a sample, drawn from Frommel, 1973, in which a full 50 per cent of the palaces contained shops.
  71. For via Alessandrina see Chapter 1; Howe, 1992; Petrucci, 1997; for a detailed study of the Borgo and via Alessandrina, see d'Amelio, 2008.
  72. For the flourishing trade around St Peter's, see Modigliani, 1998, pp. 259–84; Pecchiai, 1951.
  73. Nevola, 2011b, pp. 163–8, challenges a prevalent view that the palace type in Florence abandoned shops from the mid-15th century; for a broad selection of comparative examples, see Batilotti, Belli and Belluzzi, 2011; Calabi, 2008.
  74. The current archbishop's palace in Florence dates to the late 16th century, but the original bishop's palace also contained shops; Dameron, 1991, pp. 154–7; Miller, 2000, p. 105. There were as many as fifty shops in the Palazzo Arcivescovile in the 15th century; Belli, 2008, p. 84; Welch, 2005, pp. 127–30.
  75. Sansi, 1869, p. 198.
  76. Welch, 2005, pp. 127–9.
  77. For San Martino, see Nevola, 2007, p. 74; for Naples, see Calaresu, 2016, p. 120.
  78. Incisa della Rocchetta and Connors, 1981, pp. 203–4, doc. 139; my thanks to Joe Connors for drawing my attention to this document.
  79. *Ibid.*, pp. 203–4.
  80. The building does not adopt a uniform solution, though a number of original shop openings can be identified along via del Governo Vecchio and via della Chiesa Nuova.
  81. Bocchi, 1990; Bocchi, 1993b; Calabi, 2004, pp. 103–12; Calabi and Morachiello, 1987.
  82. Lotz, 1977; Schofield, 1992–3.
  83. Lotz, 1977, pp. 80–81; Julius II is depicted in the sculpture dominating the piazza from an elaborate niche above the monumental side entrance to the church of San Francesco, while Paul III is shown on the Palazzo dei Capitani del Popolo.
  84. Zaggia, 1999; Zaggia, 2016; for Carpi, see Svalduz, 2001.

85. As noted above, Forster, 1994, pp. 162–6, makes the important point that architectural interventions are all too often viewed only as acts of princely patronage, divorced from any practical considerations.
86. Filarete, 1972, contains more than 200 instances; in many cases, the word refers to arcades inside buildings, including courtyards and churches.
87. Filarete, 1972, Book VIII.
88. *Ibid.*, Book X.
89. Vitruvius, 1960, p. 182 (Book VI.5).
90. Alberti, 1988, p. 152 (Book V, ch. 18); comments in Welch, 2005, p. 125.
91. Martini, 1967, vol. 2, pp. 364–5 (Book III).
92. Eaton, 2002; Lang, 1952.
93. Henderson, 2006, *passim*; Welch, 1995, pp. 145–66.
94. Mussini, 2004.
95. Ackerman and Rosenfeld, 1989.
96. Bedon, 2009; Benelli, 2004.
97. For the early papal presence, see Radke, 1996. For interventions on the piazza del Plebiscito, see Bentivoglio, 2017.
98. Butters and Pagliara, 2009; Temple, 2011, pp. 94ff. For Naples, see Mangone, 2011.
99. Bule and Nolan, 2003; Nieri and Pacini, 2013.
100. For the palace's functions and what it replaced, see Nieri and Pacini, 2013, pp. 9–23.
101. Hemsoll, 1988, pp. 167–8, considers the rival, though complementary, ambitions of the Venetians, and the local civic pride and image, and how these were resolved.
102. From an extensive literature, see Meneghin, 1974; Muzzarelli, 2001; Puglisi and Barcham, 2008.
103. Katz, 2008, pp. 8–10; Rubin, 1999.
104. Catoni, 2012; Nevola, 2007, p. 108; Pulin, 1985, pp. 34–40.
105. For an overview of the growth strategies (and previous scholarship), see Bruzelius, 2014, pp. 89–118.
106. *Ibid.*, pp. 46–51, 89–91, with a discussion of the tendency towards 'gigantism in convent architecture' (p. 46).
107. *Ibid.*, pp. 89–118, 124–31.
108. Henderson, 2006, pp. 7–25, 148–57.
109. *Ibid.*, pp. 70–81.
110. *Ibid.*, pp. 73–8; Goldthwaite and Rearick, 1977; Welch, 1995, pp. 145–66.
111. Calaresu and van den Heuvel, 2016; Terpstra, 2010; Tomas, 2006; Welch, 2005.
112. Romano, 2015, pp. 89–94.
113. Belli, 2008, provides an overview. For the animated nature of the marketplace, see (most recently) Atkinson, 2016b, pp. 26–38.
114. Calabi, 2004, pp. 103–12; Calabi and Morachiello, 1987; Howard, 2002, pp. 152–4. The renewal of the Rialto pre-dated the fire: work on the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi dated back to the 1480s, and on the Fondaco dei Tedeschi began in 1505.
115. Battilotti, Belli and Belluzzi, 2011, pp. 73–88, 93–6 (Amedeo Belluzzi); Conforti, 1993; Flanigan, 2008.
116. For an overview of some of these offices, see Romano, 2015, pp. 43–70, esp. 52–3, 66–70; a comparative study is Friedman, 1998.
117. Romano, 2015, pp. 76–82.
118. Beltramini and Burns, 2008, pp. 80–89 (Guido Beltramini), with earlier bibliography; see also Burns, 1975, pp. 21–2, 24–5.
119. Rossi, 1887, pp. 5–7; Silvestrelli, 2008, pp. 277–8.
120. Silvestrelli, 2008, notes the *tiratoio* ('fuller's shed') of the local wool industry; Rossi, 1887, pp. 5–7, notes that the piazza was paved and became a site of public executions, and that a papal bull of Nicholas V (13 May 1453) awarded the hospital rights to redevelop the site (p. 28). Full documentation survives for the building campaign: ASP, OSMM, Fabbriche diverse, vols 3, 8. For further discussion of the underpinnings for the wool *tiratoi*, see Fioriti, 1992.
121. Rossi, 1887, pp. 28–9, with discussion of Lombard masons who executed projects; for detailed construction accounts, see ASP, OSMM, Fabbriche diverse, vols 3 and 8 *passim*.
122. Rossi, 1887, pp. 47–52, includes contract for the *palazzo*, which was to be built in stone.
123. *Ibid.*, p. 30 (5 December 1476).
124. For Sixtus IV (13 January 1478), see Rossi, 1887, p. 31; for Perugino's tenancy, 1501–13, documented in ASP, OSMM, Entrate e uscite di denari e generi diversi, 47 (1501–2), fol. 23v, see Silvestrelli, 2008, p. 279.
125. Rossi, 1887, p. 32; Silvestrelli, 2008, with documents.
126. AFLA, Contabilità, 1206 (1456), 1320 (1557–74), list properties; for an overview of architectural development, see Antoniella, 1985, pp. xxxii–xxxvii.
127. Lasansky, 2004, pp. 109–10.
128. Conforti, 1993, pp. 243–55; Mercantini, 1980; Satkowski, 1993.
129. AFLA, Contabilità, 1321 (1574–96), listed by shop numbers. The city's old butchers' shops were also relocated as a result of the project.
130. For the remodelling of the piazza in the Fascist era, see Lasansky, 2004, pp. 109–13, 129–38.
131. Nevola, 2007, pp. 97–8.
132. Fiore, 1998b; see also Belluzzi, 1989, pp. 333–5.
133. See the opening sections of Chapter 6; see also Ackerman and Rosenfeld, 1989.
134. Instances are discussed in Chapter 1; for similar legislation in Sforza dominions issued in 1493, see Calabi, 2001, p. 5.
135. Further discussion in Chapter 6; see also Friedman, 1992.
136. For Venice, see Howard, 2002, pp. 100ff.; for Siena, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 75–145; for Florence, see Marino and Paolini, 2014.
137. Burns, 1995; for a discussion of 'retrosynthesis', see Trachtenberg, 2010, pp. 386–411. For perhaps the most detailed example of *longue durée* urbanism, see Salerno, Spezzaferro and Tafuri, 1973.
138. For Ercole's Addizione Erculea, see Chapter 1. For the obligation felt by patron–courtiers, no more eloquent example can be provided than that expressed in the correspondence of Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga with his father, with reference to the onerous construction expenditure expected of him by Pope Pius II; Chambers, 1976.
139. Nevola, 2007, pp. 178–84.
140. *Ibid.*, pp. 178–9, with archival references.
141. *Ibid.*, pp. 163–4, with documents (and earlier scholarship).
142. Calabi, 2001, p. 36; see also Adorni, 1982, pp. 39–43. For Perugia, see Algeri, 1975, pp. 195–6, and other essays in the same collection.
143. Gorse, 1997.

144. *Ibid.*, p. 326. For a detailed discussion of the brothel, see also Chapter 3; see also Stevens Crawshaw, 2016.
145. Rubens, 1622/1968.
146. Gorse, 1997, pp. 313–17; for a detailed critical discussion of the complex *rolli* system of hospitality duties, see Altavista, 2013, which challenges the interpretation of Poleggi, 1998.
147. For new streets laid out in the 13th and 14th centuries, see Friedman, 2009; Spilner, 1987.
148. Cipolla, 1976; Eckstein, 2016; Spilner, 1987, ch. 4, and esp. ch. 5 (on neighbourhoods).
149. For general comments, see Bruzelius, 2014, pp. 111–18.
150. Spilner, 1987, pp. 301–5, 307–9, 309–13; see also Orgera, 1976.
151. Spilner, 1987, pp. 275–301; so successful a process was this that they reinvested profits into further purchase and development.
152. *Ibid.*, pp. 325–8.
153. Jamison, 2016, though without mention of the medieval development of these properties.
154. *Ibid.*, pp. 78–9, notes that Eckstein, 1995, p. 33, records the same landlords; Spilner, 1987, pp. 301–5 (with map).
155. For San Jacopo, see Jamison, 2016, pp. 78–80; for a listing of the top twenty institutional landlords, see *ibid.*, p. 74, table 4.7.
156. *Ibid.*, pp. 76–7.
157. Henderson, 2006, pp. 61–3; Jamison, 2016, p. 74, table 4.7.
158. Diana, 2003, pp. 443–9; Diana, 2005.
159. Spilner, 1987, pp. 250–56. For popular housing, see Cataldi, 1987; Giovannoni, 1931; Zevi, 1997.
160. For rental rates, see Jamison, 2016, pp. 68–70.
161. *Ibid.*, pp. 78–80 and n. 38.
162. Henderson, 2006, pp. 18–20, notes a number of these, but associates them with the site of the hospital foundations themselves, as opposed to their land holdings.
163. For Rome, see McDougall, 2013–14; for San Giovanni dei Fiorentini, see Salerno, Spezzaferro and Tafuri, 1973, pp. 260–69. For Siena, see ASS, Ospedale Santa Maria della Scala, 1332 (1455–1578), listing of rental properties; ASS, Ospedale Santa Maria della Scala, 110 (1452–1711), for sales of properties bequeathed but not required.
164. For the mendicant orders' role in urbanisation, see Bruzelius, 2014, pp. 111–18.
165. These comments on Venice largely rely on Trincanato, 1965; for a general discussion and a catalogue of examples, see Trincanato, 1948, pp. 65–8. For a brief introduction to this charity, see d'Andrea, 2013; Pullan, 1971.
166. Trincanato, 1948, pp. 298–9 (will dated 8 November 1502). These *provveditori* had oversight of the urban districts of Dorsoduro, Santa Croce and San Polo. Pullan, 1971, pp. 182–3, notes that Dorsoduro was the poorest district in the city.
167. For the mariners' block, see Trincanato, 1948, pp. 158–69; for the San Marco development (the will is dated 25 Oct 1515, though the block was perhaps built only in the 17th century), see *ibid.*, pp. 65, 305–6; for calle del Paradiso, see Fortini Brown, 2004, pp. 200–03.
168. Garbellotti, 2007, pp. 126–8; Sneider, 2007.
169. ASS, Ospedale Santa Maria della Scala, 1332 (1455–1578), the tenants of rental properties.
170. ASS, Ospedale Santa Maria della Scala, 110 (1452–1711).
171. Benvenuto and di Cioccio, 1986; Zanchettin, 2005a; Zanchettin, 2005b.
172. Benvenuto and di Cioccio, 1986; Zanchettin, 2005a, pp. 147–51.
173. Zanchettin, 2005b, figs 21, 22.
174. See Chapter 3 for discussion of the *luoghi*; see also Storey, 2008, pp. 73–81; Zanchettin, 2005a, pp. 147–8. Architects probably reserved houses on the site as a means of deriving a greater share of the profits from the development.
175. Lynch, 1960, p. 95.
176. *Ibid.*; the 'edge' is not defined by the buildings that line the street, but rather as other physical objects (walls, rivers, railway tracks) that act as linear boundaries, though pp. 83–5 also discuss the essential interrelation between elements.
177. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
178. Alberti, 1966, p. 40.
179. *Ibid.*; see also Camelliti, 2010; Kaftal, 1952; Lucia Nuti (ed.), *Atlante storico iconografico delle città toscane*, online at <http://asict.arte.unipi.it/index.html/> (accessed 7 November 2018).
180. Friedman, 2001, which discusses the relation between the lost original and the copy from the 1510s preserved in the 'Catena' view (p. 72).
181. For the dome, see *ibid.*, pp. 62–3. For a broader discussion of Rosselli's compositional technique in relation to his (lost) view of Rome, see Maier, 2015, pp. 31–47.
182. Friedman, 2001, pp. 66–7.
183. Architectural surveys initiated the process of accurate mapping, as in Florence with the urbanisation projects around the via Laura; Elam, 1994; Tafuri, 1992, pp. 90–114.
184. Else, 2009, pp. 168–70.
185. As Elise, 2009, makes clear, the addition of the Cosimo I equestrian monument appears in the second printing of the map, in 1594, by Girolamo Franceschi; Cole, 2011, pp. 244–82.
186. A recurring theme in Fiorani, 2005; and in the more military–political Pollak, 2010.
187. Else, 2009; Frangenberg, 1994.
188. Rose, 2016, pp. 16–19.
189. On surveying techniques, see Maier, 2015, pp. 51–60, 79–99, with earlier bibliography.
190. From a vast literature, see Ballon and Friedman, 2007; de Seta, 2011; Fiorani, 2007. For a recent bibliographic survey, see Nevola, 2018.
191. For a selection of sources, see Frugoni, 1991; Kaftal, 1952; Vauchez, 1995; Vauchez, 1997.
192. Kaftal, 1952, p. 196 (Bernardine), p. 439 (Geminianus), p. 478 (Herculanus) and so on; for recent treatment, see Camelliti, 2010, pp. 97–121; <http://asict.arte.unipi.it/index.html/> (accessed 10 November 2018).
193. Lavin, 1994, p. 676.
194. Ricci, 1993; Sinistri, 1992. For the diffusion of early views of Rome, see Maier, 2015, pp. 33–5.
195. Maier, 2015, pp. 31–45, which relies on an anonymous copy of the map now in the Museo della Città, Mantua, as Rosselli's original print is also lost.
196. For Barbari, see Howard, 1997; Howard, 2014, p. 31; Romanelli *et al.*, 1999; Schulz, 1978.

197. Howard, 2014, pp. 31–4; Schulz, 1978, pp. 437–9, with gridded plan to show distortion.
198. Hopkins, 2014, p. 83.
199. For the 1611 view by Odoardo Fialetti and its precursors, see Howard and McBurney, 2014a.
200. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
201. Ballon and Friedman, 2007, p. 685, note that ‘the exact configuration of streets remains approximate’; the same point is explored in greater detail in Maier, 2015, pp. 94–5, 104–5.
202. Maier, 2015, pp. 94–5, 104–5, notes that this was, of course, to become the standard approach to city maps, so that modern viewers more readily recognise the achievement.
203. *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80, 108–17, observes (p. 115) that Bufalini’s map was superseded only by Giovanni Battista Nolli’s map of 1748.
204. Floriano del Buono, *Ritratto ovvero profilo della città di Bologna* (Bologna, 1636), cited in Maier, 2015, p. 114.
205. For the Sala Bologna, see discussion in Introduction to Part I, with bibliography; for the surveyor Scipione Dattili called in to prepare the survey, see Fiorani, 2007, pp. 811–12.
7. ASF, Decima Granducale, 3784 (1561), fol. 59r–v for the *tintori* along the street.
8. Jacobs, 1961, pp. 178–86.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
10. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, catalogue entry, online at [www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/SK-A-3104](http://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/SK-A-3104) (accessed April 2018): Wind, 1977; see, more recently, Rodríguez, Borobia Guerrero and Dal Co, 2011, pp. 178, 185, cat. no. 32.
11. Borobia Guerrero rejects the Rijksmuseum’s identification of the scene as being from a series of the Seven Works of Mercy and simply sees this as a Florentine street scene; Rodríguez, Borobia Guerrero and Dal Co, 2011, p. 178.
12. Landucci, 1985 (online edition); see also Landucci, 1927, p. 49. For this area, see Preyer, 2015.
13. Landucci, 1927, pp. 27 (plague), 68 (Charles VIII), 179 (Valentino).
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 56, 243.
15. For a partial completion date of 16 June 1504, see *ibid.*, p. 214; discussed further in Chapter 6.
16. ASF, Decima Granducale, 3784 (1561), and <https://decima-map.net/> (accessed 11 November 2018). See, more generally, comments in Cavallo and Gentilcore, 2008a, p. 2; Cavallo and Gentilcore, 2008b.
17. For an extensive analysis, see Shaw and Welch, 2011, pp. 31–2, 38–9.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 81–9, with a suggestion (p. 89) that Tommaso may have been a Savonarolan sympathiser.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 38–9.
21. Sliwka, 2015, pp. 14–15.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 17ff., and, for discussion of his friendships, pp. 27ff.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
24. Taverns are still very little studied for Italy, though interesting new research explores them from a spatial perspective: Rosenthal, 2015b; Salzberg, forthcoming.
25. For a fascinating account, rich with examples, see de Vivo, 2008.
26. See the important work of de Vivo, 2007, incl. pp. 93–8.
27. For a discussion of the presence of piazzas around mendicant churches, see Bruzelius, 2014, pp. 124–33.
28. Pasini, 1970, pp. 64–6; the inscription itself appears to have been lost or perhaps stolen at some point after 1979, as reported in Petrazzi, 2002.
29. Opinions vary on the transcription (and hence also the translation); reported first in Clementini, 1617–27, vol. 1: *Trattato dei magistrati*, p. 28.
30. Pasini, 1970, pp. 64–6; Clementini, 1617–27, vol. 1, p. 28.
31. Weiss, 1969, pp. 145–66.
32. Petrucci, 1993, p. 2.
33. For Roman inscriptions as a model for architects, see Fiore, 2005b.
34. Clarke, 1996; Hope, 1992.
35. For the Ponte Sisto, see discussion and bibliography in Chapters 1 and 3. For the Loggia Piccolomini, see Jenkins, 1997; Nevola, 2007, pp. 74–6.
36. Clarke, 2003, pp. 22–5, 227–32.
37. Discussed further in Chapter 6. A parallel can be drawn with the ‘decorated shed’ described by Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour, 1972, p. 87.
38. Gehl, 1987, pp. 65–7, 163–5.
39. Petrucci, 1993.
40. Petrucci, 1982; Cohen and Cohen, 2001, pp. 94–5, have termed this ‘house scorning’.
41. Cohen and Cohen, 2001, pp. 94–5; Jütte, 2015.
42. Rospoher and Salzberg, 2012a; Salzberg, 2014. For a discussion of *bandi* posted in Rome, see San Juan, 2001, pp. 26ff.
43. Salzberg, 2014, pp. 54–61.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
45. For news and print, see *ibid.*, pp. 62–3.
46. *Ibid.*; de Vivo, 2007, ch. 4.
47. For the late-15th-century poetry of Pomponio Leto’s academy, see Curran and Raymond, 2014, pp. 182–3; for the proximity of Pasquino to Cardinal Carafa’s residence, see *ibid.*, p. 188.
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 188–94; San Juan, 2001, pp. 1–8.
49. Curran and Raymond, 2014, p. 188.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
51. San Juan, 2001, p. 8.
52. Curran and Raymond, 2014, pp. 180–81.
53. Rospoher, 2015, p. 156 and *passim*; for a valuable and comparable analysis of the *bandi* that focuses on the 17th century, see San Juan, 2001, pp. 23–56; for the ‘Gobbo’ di Rialto in Venice, see de Vivo, 2007, pp. 136–42.
54. De Vivo, 2007, pp. 136–41, notes

- that before the ‘Gobbo’ was produced in 1541 such subversive utterances were posted at other locations.
55. Discussed further in Chapter 3.
  56. For a map with a key, identifying fifty-seven sites, see Milner, 2013, pp. 136–8.
  57. *Ibid.*, pp. 112–3, 136–8 (map and key), 139–40 (appendix, listing locations).
  58. Salzberg, 2014, p. 63; at San Marco the *pietra* was on the *piazzetta*, while at Rialto it was on the campo San Giacometto, next to the ‘Gobbo’.
  59. De Vivo, 2007, pp. 128–31.
  60. Meserve, 2017. On *bandi*, see San Juan, 2001, pp. 37–45; for a more theorised discussion, see Jütte, 2015, pp. 183–9.
  61. Weiss, 1965, pp. 179ff.
  62. Rospocher, 2015, p. 117.
  63. *Ibid.*, pp. 138–9; Jütte, 2015, pp. 189–93.
  64. For the oral processes of communication of centralised law-giving, see Chapter 3; see also Terry-Fritsch, 2013. For orality and text, see Degl’Innocenti, Richardson and Sbordoni, 2016. More specifically related to political discourse is Rospocher and Salzberg, 2012a.
  65. Petrucci, 1986, p. 107, describes them thus in relation to 17th-century examples from Rome. The term ‘stone laws’ is used by the DECIMA research group; see, for instance, Rombough, 2019.
  66. For plaques against ball games in Florence, see Wood, 2017, pp. 377–9.
  67. See Chapter 3; see also Storey, 2008; Terpstra, 2015b.
  68. Petrucci, 1982; Petrucci, 1986, p. 117.
  69. Terpstra, 2016; for crime analysis of early modern London, see <https://www.locatinglondon.org/> (accessed 15 April 2019).
  70. Terpstra, 2015b; Terpstra, 2016; Wood, 2017, pp. 376–8.
  71. Bucciante, 1995; Reardon, 2001, pp. 10, 129.
  72. For a partial catalogue, with no spatial analysis, see Signorini, 2010, pp. 46–7 (entry 21) for Arrivabene.
  73. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
  74. *Ibid.*, p. 57 (entry 30).
  75. For urban expansion, see Chapters 1 and 4.
  76. See Rosenthal, 2015a.
  77. Savelli, 2008, pp. 59–100.
  78. For game culture in Florence, see Wood, 2017; Heywood, 1904, remains a fundamental reference for comparative reading of civic festivals and rituals.
  79. Davis, 1994; see also Judde de Larivière, 2018.
  80. Numerous scholars have discussed this example, documented through the unusual diary of Francesco Amadi (Civico Museo Correr, Venice, Ms. Gradenigo 56, pp. 1–7, 37); Crouzet-Pavan, 1992, vol. 1, pp. 617–68; Grubb, 2000, pp. 130–31; Morse, 2006, pp. 345–6.
  81. Crouzet-Pavan, 1992, vol. 1, p. 620.
  82. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 624, citing figures from miracle accounts published in printed chronicles.
  83. For the complex history of the late-15th-century *memorie* compiled by Angelo Amadi, see *ibid.*
  84. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 632–7; Grubb, 2000, pp. 130–31; Morse, 2006, p. 346.
  85. For Amadi patronage, see Crouzet-Pavan, 1992, vol. 1, p. 634.
  86. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 632.
  87. Chechia, 1742, p. 4, cited in Crouzet-Pavan, 1992, vol. 1, p. 630.
  88. Chechia, 1742, pp. 4–5.
  89. Niero, 1972, pp. 229–90; p. 247 cites legislation by Doge Domenico Michiel (1128) without supporting documentation.
  90. *Ibid.*, p. 248, citing Fabri, 1483. For similar observations for Florence, see Spencer Chatfield, 1974, pp. 38–40, which reports that Pietro Leopoldo de’ Medici’s plans of 1783 for street lighting were opposed on the grounds that tabernacles did the job already, with specific reference to seventy-eight large tabernacles; see also Bargellini, 1971, pp. 18–19.
  91. Niero, 1972, p. 248.
  92. For the best analysis of street shrines, see Muir, 1987; see also Muir and Weissman, 1989.
  93. Romano, 1994, pp. 369–70.
  94. Niero, 1972, pp. 264–75 (406 images of the Virgin, 397 of angels), without chronological distinction; Muir, 1987, p. 28.
  95. Muir, 1987, p. 28.
  96. Fortini Brown, 2004, pp. 200–03.
  97. *Ibid.*, pp. 13–15.
  98. Holmes, 2013, ch. 3.
  99. *Ibid.*, pp. 64–5 (map), 61–103.
  100. For Orsanmichele, see *ibid.*, pp. 69–74.
  101. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
  102. *Ibid.*, p. 84. A similar miracle formed the origin narrative of the *Madonna dell’Arco* near Naples, discussed in Jacobs, 2013, pp. 50–52.
  103. Davies, 1992; Davies, 1993; Davies, 1995.
  104. Mussolin, 2010, pp. 50–56; Nevola, 2007, pp. 138–9.
  105. Garnett and Rosser, 2013, p. 226. For capital punishment rituals, see Chapter 3.
  106. *Ibid.*, p. 112 (figure relates to the 19th century).
  107. Garnett and Rosser, 2013, p. 282 n. 12, citing evidence from an 1853 catalogue, reported in Cardelli, 1990, pp. 176–90. For Florence, see Strocchia, 2006, p. 74.
  108. Del Migliore, 1684, p. 391.
  109. Benjamin, 1997, p. 170, echoed in Garnett and Rosser, 2013, pp. 168, 289 n. 27.
  110. For sacred presence in urban space, see Muir and Weissman, 1989, p. 95; Trexler, 1972.
  111. Cited in Bargellini, 1971, p. 6.
  112. Muir, 1987, p. 28.
  113. Garnett and Rosser, 2013, pp. 115–16, and p. 168 for specifically appointed caretakers funded by a Genoese noblewoman, Virginia Bracelli Centurione, during the mid-17th century.
  114. For city gates, see Gardner, 1987; Israëls, 2008. For lesser images such as the *gabelotto del Dazio* in Siena, see also Bargagli Petrucci, 1903, p. 109.
  115. Ekserdjian, 1997, pp. 142–4; as a result of changes to the city defences, the fresco was later enclosed in an oratory, and in the 19th century was moved to the museum.
  116. Gardner, 1987, pp. 208ff.
  117. Paolini, 2004, p. 60.
  118. Vasari, 1966–, vol. 5, p. 386.
  119. Fattorini, 2010.
  120. For the loggia by Guerrino da Sansepolcro, see *ibid.*, p. 159.
  121. Bargellini, 1971, fig. V; Milner, 2013.
  122. Ermini and Sestini, 2009, pp. 165–8; Petrucci, 1998, p. 124 n. 17.
  123. Burke, 2007, pp. 87–9; Rosenthal, 2006, pp. 165–8.
  124. Rosenthal, 2015a.
  125. Paolozzi Strozzi, 1991, suggests the stonework is late 15th century.

126. The coat of arms that provides the source for the tabernacle's unusual name as 'Monti d'Oro' was rendered 'Monteloro'; *ibid.* For discussion of a confraternity of Santissima Annunziata at Monteloro and Santa Maria Assunta a Monteloro connected to the site from 1320, see Henderson, 1994, pp. 108–11.
127. *L'Illustratore fiorentino*, 1835, vol. 1, p. 105 (with references to Biblioteca Riccardiana, Florence, Ms. Riccardiano 2427).
128. For the ban on taverns, see ASF, Provvisioni, 180, fols 21v–23v (May 1488); for the Fiasco d'Oro listing, see ASF, Decima Granducale, 3784 (1561), fol. 103v.
129. The extant inscription (dated 22 October 1667) on the corner of via Alfani and via dei Pilastrì records the 1461 ban on prostitutes.
130. For example, ASF, Ufficiali dell'onestà, 1, fol. 22r (8 April 1511); see also Chapter 3.
131. For the baker, see ASF, Decima Granducale, 3784 (1561), fol. 104; for Monteloro as a *potenza* boundary, see Rosenthal, 2015a, pp. 18–20.
132. Paolozzi Strozzi, 1991, citing ASF, Capitoli delle compagnie sopresse, 811, fols 1–2 (1471 rights), fols 11–12 (1578 maintenance).
133. For *madonnare* who looked after street shrines, see Garnett and Rosser, 2013, pp. 114–15. For jewels and other accessories that adorned holy images, see *ibid.*, pp. 124–8.
134. Connell and Constable, 1998, p. 79, note the rise c.1500 of the prosecution of sodomy as documented by Rocke, 1996, p. 224. For examples of blasphemy punished by fines or jail sentences, see Chapter 2.
135. Garnett and Rosser, 2013, p. 64.
136. For legends, see Bandini Piccolomini, 1895, pp. 45–60; see also Alessi, 2008; Falassi, 2008, p. 124. One version of the story recounted here suggests that the devotional sculpture was in the care of a former prostitute (the area saw a concentration of taverns and prostitutes), who had given up her profession to tend the image.
137. For a thorough study, which also highlights the anti-Semitism of the case, see Katz, 2000, on which these brief comments rely.
138. *Ibid.*, p. 475 and nn. 1–5.
139. *Ibid.*, p. 483 and n. 37. Another painting was commissioned, showing Daniele and his family in a submissive position beneath the Virgin's throne (now in the church of Sant'Andrea, Mantua); *ibid.*, pp. 483–5.
140. *Ibid.*, p. 493 n. 34.
141. Most discussions of street shrines within the oeuvres of individual artists tend to show these cropped out from the wall surfaces where they were originally installed, much as they appear in museums and galleries. This treatment parallels the stripping of jewels from miraculous images, discussed in Garnett and Rosser, 2013, p. 126, as resulting from the 'fastidiousness of modern clerics' and the 'purgation' exercised by art-historical conservation.
142. Vasari, 1966–, vol. 3, p. 562.
143. Nelson and Zambrano, 2004, p. 48; see also Bartoletti, 2008, pp. 117–24. The whole tabernacle has now been removed to the Museo Civico, Prato.
144. Bartoletti, 2008, p. 35, cites Cesare Guasti's *Calendario pratese* (1859) for reference to the 'alley of Marietta the prostitute'.
145. The association of street shrines and sites where prostitutes solicited in the streets is a recurring theme; at night, the lamps that burned in front of the holy images also served to locate the prostitutes. For the systematic application of the chamfered street corner block as deployed by Ildefonso Cerdà in Barcelona, see Kostof, 1991, pp. 151–3.
146. Bartoletti, 2008, p. 54, on the corner of via Silvestri and via Santa Trinità.
147. For the 'Tabernacolo del Ceppo', see *ibid.*, pp. 39–52; the classic biography of Datini remains Origo, 1957.
148. Undated, Mazzei, 1880, p. 106.
149. For discussion of the Romita tabernacle, see Bartoletti, 2008, pp. 61–9.
150. Mazzei, 1880, p. 106.
151. Discussed further in Chapter 4 in relation to family enclaves.
152. Discussed in Chapter 2; see Eckstein, 2016; Eckstein, 2018.
153. Lillie, 2014.
154. *Ibid.*, notes the significance of the location, from Vasari, 1966–, vol. 3, p. 358.
155. For the installation of the fresco, raised up to its original height, in the exhibition 'Building the Picture', Sunley Room, National Gallery, London, see Lillie, 2014.
156. For this ceremonial approach to the cathedral, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 178–9.
157. Leoncini, 1994, pp. 36–7.
158. Garnett and Rosser, 2013, p. 282 n. 12, citing Cardelli, 1990, pp. 176–90.
159. Fiori, 1995, p. 55.
160. Stinger, 1985, p. 34.
161. Fiori, 1995, p. 57.
162. *Ibid.*, pp. 57–8.
163. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
164. *Ibid.*, p. 34, reports that an image on that site was recorded from at least 1400; a commission of 1523 by Cardinal Alberto Serra di Monferrato to Antonio da Sangallo the Younger for a new classical aedicule is recorded in an inscription on the base of the piece.
165. Origo, 1962, p. 3.
166. For theoretical discussion of the window as frame, see Randolph, 2014, pp. 69–102; see also Chapter 6.
167. Jacobs, 1961, ch. 2: 'The Uses of Sidewalks', pp. 29ff. For discussion of surveillance, see Chapter 3; Nevola, 2013b, pp. 100–02.
168. Lefebvre, 1991, pp. 16–18.
169. *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17.
170. Baxandall, 1972; see also Chapter 2.
171. Vasari, 1966–, vol. 3, p. 444, was dismissive of the work of Rosselli, but considered the fresco his best in Florence; a number of studies have explored the historical events depicted, most recently Curran, 2013, which draws on Borsook, 1981; see also Strocchia, 2002.
172. This valuable relic was said to have materialised from remains of consecrated wine in a chalice turned into flesh and blood overnight; for the full extent of its impact in the patronage of art for the church, see Borsook, 1981, pp. 148–9; Strocchia, 2002, p. 744.
173. For Corpus Christi processions, and the Sant'Ambrogio relic, see Borsook, 1981, pp. 149–51; Strocchia, 2002, p. 745, clarifies



- that 600 days' indulgence were awarded to visitors to the shrine on the feast days of the Assumption, Sant'Ambrogio and the dedication of the convent church; this was part of Pius II's wider promotion of the Corpus Christi cult.
174. Vasari, 1966–, vol. 3, p. 444. Debate revolves around the identity of the cleric standing at the door of the church and the kneeling priest at the foot of the steps; for the question as to whether the fresco evokes the foundation events of 1320 or a more contemporary scene, see Borsook, 1981, p. 182; Curran, 2013, p. 162; Strocchia, 2002, p. 753. For broader discussion of piazzas and their functional attachment to churches, see Bruzelius, 2014, pp. 124–33.
175. For the Città Rossa territories, see Rosenthal, 2006, pp. 168–71, which notes that the first stone was placed in the mid-1480s.
176. Strocchia, 2002, p. 745 n. 40, notes the purchase in February 1489; Borsook, 1981, p. 183, suggests that these frescoes may have been executed in lieu of rent or out of piety, though this is not documented.
177. ASF, Decima Granducale, 3784 (1561), fols 100, 101; 3782, fols 153v ff.; see also Strocchia, 2002, p. 760.
178. See Chapter 4; see also Bianchi and Grossi, 1999.
179. For another artisan-dominated confraternity of Santa Maria delle Nevi on nearby borgo la Croce, see Rosenthal, 2006, p. 170 and n. 34.
180. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
181. For these 'subgeographies' marked out on the city, see *ibid.*
182. Geertz, 1973, p. 453; for Geertz's ideas applied to the analysis of early modern ritual, see Muir, 1997, pp. 1–14.
183. It is impossible here to address the extensive scholarship on the contemporary reception of artworks, the implications of which are considered magisterially in the various chapters of Shearman, 1992, a work that has inspired countless other studies. Among these, for a view of how gender impacted access to artworks, see Randolph, 1997.
184. See, most recently, Eckstein, 2014, pp. 45–51.
185. *Ibid.*, pp. 44–5; Henderson, 2006, pp. xxvi–xxviii; Paolozzi Strozzi and Bormand, 2013, pp. 460–61 (Ludovica Sebregondi).
186. Eckstein, 2014, p. 44 and n. 42, collates early written sources that tend to suggest that Masaccio's fresco was in the monastic cloister of Santa Maria del Carmine, though a location in the nave has been hypothesized.
187. Borsook and Offerhaus, 1981.
188. As formulated in Fortini Brown, 1988.
189. Lillie, 2014.

#### CHAPTER SIX

- Palladio, 1997, p. 88.
- Burns, 2008, pp. 40–43, with extensive earlier bibliography.
- Ibid.*, p. 42; Anderson, 2017.
- Anderson, 1978, p. 1.
- Ibid.*
- Jacobs, 1961, repr. 1992, p. xviii.
- For the rigid system of causal relations between urban morphology and social patterns proposed by the Chicago School of urban sociology, see Stevenson, 2013, pp. 10–12, 21–3.
- Gehl, 1987, pp. 15ff.
- Discussed further below; key contributions to this argument are Cohen and Cohen, 2001–2; Kent, 1987.
- For the vast literature on the palace, which informs this chapter, see Burroughs, 2002; Clarke, 2003.
- This debate originated in the contrasting theories of Goldthwaite, 1968, and Kent, 1971.
- Ackerman and Rosenfeld, 1989.
- Palladio, 1997; Serlio, 2005; Alberti, 1991; see Martini, 1967; Weil-Garris Brandt and D'Amico, 1980.
- Discussed most recently in Beltrami and Burns 2008, p. 79 (Guido Beltrami), with no firm attribution.
- Bruschi, 1969, pp. 1040–46; Bruschi, 1989.
- Frommel, Ray and Tafuri, 1984.
- See Chapter 2, with bibliography.
- Bruschi, 1969, p. 1041, with supporting evidence from a print of the Palazzo Caprini façade on the via Alessandrina (1549) by the engraver and cartographer Antoine Lafréry (see fig. 30). For the significance of the use of the orders in the palace, see Ackerman, 1983, p. 33; Clarke, 2003, pp. 187–94, observes that such stonework had no 'rustic' connotations in the 15th century.
- The presence of shops along via Alessandrina is again confirmed in the Lafréry print, see Bruschi, 1969; d'Amelio, 2008.
- For a developed argument on site as a dominant conditioning factor for the design of palaces, see Nevola, 2011b.
- Friedman, 1992.
- For the first use of the term 'building boom' in the context of palace architecture in Renaissance Italy, see Goldthwaite, 1972; see also Calabi, 2001.
- See Chapter 2. Friedman, 1992, pp. 69, 93; Friedman's excellent article errs towards architectural determinism in juxtaposing medieval social practices assembled on the street (primarily trade) to the uniquely aesthetic priorities of the Renaissance façade.
- A vast and growing literature has developed, following Ajmar-Wollheim and Dennis, 2006; see Corry, Howard and Laven, 2017, again with a focus on interiors.
- Alberti, 1991, p. 292 (Book IX, ch. 1).
- Friedman, 1992, p. 102; for the Antinori palace, see Rubin and Wright, 1999, pp. 68–9.
- For further discussion of designed alignments, see Nevola, 2007, p. 123. For the Zecca façade in relation to processional routes, see Fagiolo and Madonna, 1997.
- Alberti, 1991, p. 106 (Book IV, ch. 5). See Smith, 1992, pp. 98–129, for a reading of Alberti in relation to the rhetorical concept of *varietas*, in direct opposition to Heydenreich, 1996, p. 50, which sees Pienza as an 'ideal city' with centralised design.
- Westfall, 1978.
- Clarke, 1999, p. 398 (quoting F. Beroaldo, *Suetonius cum commentario*, Bologna, 1493, fol. a2v).
- Ibid.*; see also Rospoche, 2015, pp. 181–5.
- Rospoche, 2015, pp. 182–3.
- For a similar point regarding the pervasive presence of IHS monograms, see Origo, 1962, p. 3.
- Landucci, 1985, p. 59.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 217; the Strozzi torch braziers were remarked on by Vasari, who reported, in his life of Cronaca, that they had been made by Niccolò Grosso Caparra (Vasari, 1966–, vol. 4, p. 239). For tabernacle lighting, see Bargellini, 1971, pp. 18–19; Conti, 1928, vol. 2, p. 10.
36. Ciabani, 1984; Kent, 1987, pp. 59–60; Strocchia, 2006, pp. 71–4, 496; see also Chapter 4.
37. Ciabani, 1984; Kent, 1987, pp. 59–60; Milner, 2013.
38. Tuohy, 1996, pp. 128ff.
39. For a discussion of the house, see Folin, 2016.
40. A nephew of the owners, Giacomo, was a medical doctor, which could account for the Asclepian symbol, though this cannot be confirmed: see Chambers, 1984, p. 416.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 398–9, 415–16.
42. Clarke, 2003, p. 173; Fraser Jenkins, 1970.
43. Elet, 2002, pp. 456–9; Kent, 1987, p. 60; Schiaparelli, 1908, p. 39.
44. Kent, 1987, p. 60, largely followed by Elet, 2002, p. 451; see also Kent, 1994, p. 202.
45. Translated from Pedretti, 1957, p. 17. For the Anonimo's identity, see Wierda, 2009.
46. For Vasari and stories, see Barolsky, 1999; Barolsky, 2015.
47. Machiavelli, 1964, p. 9 (Book IV, ch. 2).
48. For the proposal that this may have been painted for the confraternity of Gesù Pellegrino, see Land, 2011.
49. Preyer, 1998.
50. Nevola, 2007, pp. 74–8.
51. Hyman, 1977, p. 163.
52. Kent, 1987, p. 61; Preyer, 1998, pp. 360–61, followed by Elet, 2002, pp. 456, 458.
53. For the Ruccellai loggia, see Kent, 1972.
54. Murphy, 1997, p. 140.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 141; Preyer, 2004, p. 93 n. 50, questions the location but proposes no alternative. For the Pancone de' Raugai, see Lippi, 1731, p. 203.
56. Dei, 1984; Romby, 1976, p. 58. For the use of family loggias in medieval Siena, see Piccini, 1983, pp. 230–34; for the loggia and Piccolomini's views on it, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 74–80, 86.
57. Cafà, 2010, pp. 440ff. For loggias as a feature of medieval elite housing, see Broise and Maire Vigueur, 1983; Robbins, 1994.
58. From a considerable literature, see Cafà, 2007.
59. Beltramini, 2008, p. 92, notes the urban significance of the portico and compares with the unexecuted plans for Palazzo Thiene.
60. Lenzo, 2014a; Lenzo, 2014b.
61. Lenzo, 2014b, p. 159.
62. For the close association of the Carafa with the Seggio di Nido, see de Divitiis, 2007.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 161, quoted from Senatore, 1997, pp. 3–19.
64. Pane, 1955, p. 101; Fulvio Lenzo, 'Sorrento, sedile di Dominova', in *Historical Memory, Antiquarian Culture, Artistic Patronage*, online at <http://db.histantarti.eu/web/rest/Edificio/135>, 2012 (accessed 15 February 2019), which focuses especially on the collection of antiquities and *spolia* that were often gathered together for display at the *seggi* sites. The tiled dome is somewhat later in date.
65. Lenzo, 2014b, pp. 160–62.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 161; transcribed in full at <http://db.histantarti.eu/web/rest/Edificio/135> (accessed 26 June 2020).
67. Alberti, 1973 (accessed 10 March 2016). The story is part of a group of tales telling of love between rival families, which contributed to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* story; these include Masuccio Salernitano's *Mariotto and Giannozza* (novella 33) and Luigi da Porto's *Historia novellamente ritrovata di due nobili amanti* (Venice, 1530).
68. For San Giovanni festivities, see Trexler, 1980, pp. 240ff.
69. Alberti, 1973.
70. *Ibid.*
71. For the wider context of stories as historical sources, see Martines, 1994; Martines, 2001, pp. 199–231.
72. Randolph, 1997.
73. For more severe punishment for criminal offences committed at night, see Dean, 2007, pp. 172–3; for night-time and violence, see Ekirch, 2005, pp. 61–90.
74. For the ringing out of the Bargello bell for those going to the gallows, see Atkinson, 2016b, pp. 106–7; for the ritual, see Terpstra, 2008b.
75. Luigi da Porto, 1530: Patrizi, 1986.
76. For the development of the vernacular novella during the Quattrocento, see Brand and Pertile, 1996, 154–8.
77. Alberti, 1991, pp. 28 (Book I, ch. 12), p. 119 (Book V, ch. 10); Howard, 2001, pp. 131–2.
78. Clarke, 2003, pp. 22ff.
79. The text that opened up this approach is Simons, 1988; see also Musacchio, 2008, pp. 74–7.
80. Randolph, 2014, pp. 69–102, esp. p. 93.
81. Alberti, 1972. For a reading of Giannozzo Alberti as parodic of patriarchal misogyny, see Najemy, 2002.
82. Randolph, 2014, pp. 92–3.
83. Cohen, 1992; Cohen and Cohen, 2001–2, p. 68.
84. Ajmar-Wollheim, 2006; Cavallo, 2006.
85. On *impanate* (waxed or greased cloth) and wooden shutters used to close windows, as opposed to expensive glass, see Cavallo and Storey, 2013, p. 92; Musacchio, 2008, pp. 74–5.
86. My thanks to Michael Diers for bringing the painting to my attention at the international conference 'Imaging the Public Square' at the Kunsthistorisches Institut, Florence, 22–4 October 2015.
87. Fortini Brown, 1988, pp. 152–6.
88. Cohen and Cohen, 2001–2, p. 68.
89. Eckstein, 2014, pp. 109ff.
90. Bridgeman, 1988.
91. Cowan, 2011; Fortini Brown, 2004, pp. 71–6; Howard, 2002, pp. 96–7.
92. Cowan, 2011, p. 734.
93. For *fama* in relation to gossip and its circulation in public space, see Horodowich, 2005.
94. Serlio, 1618–19, Book IV, fol. 154v.
95. For urban rituals in Venice, see Muir, 1981; see also Fortini Brown, 1990.
96. For the Tempio di Gennazzano, see Bruschi, 1969, *passim*, incl. pp. 108–51; see also Wilinski, 1965.
97. Tafuri, 1992, pp. 109ff.
98. Fagiolo and Madonna, 1997.
99. Nevola, 2011b, pp. 159–60.
100. Frommel, 1986, pp. 61–3; Spezzaferro, 1980.
101. Rebecchini, 2013, pp. 169–71.
102. *Ibid.*, p. 178 (Fabrizio Pellegrini to Federico Gonzaga).
103. The scene does not offer a totally accurate depiction of the piazza, but evidently evokes that recently

- developed space; Hemsoll, 1988.
104. For women at windows as 'living ornaments [...] who looked out [...] from their windows, doorways, balconies', see Musacchio, 2008, pp. 76–7.
  105. Friedman, 1992, and bibliography cited above.
  106. Cohen, 2001–2; Dennis, 2008–9.
  107. Jütte, 2015, p. 70.
  108. For 'house scorning', see Cohen and Cohen, 2001, pp. 94–5.
  109. Ginzburg, 1987.
  110. Jütte, 2015, p. 69, citing Infessura, 1890, p. 161.
  111. Landucci, 1985, p. 21; see also Jütte, 2015, p. 145.
  112. *Ibid.*
  113. Bertelli, 2001, p. 241; Jütte, 2015, p. 145; Plaisance, 2008, p. 115.
  114. Preyer, 1998; for the elaborate ceremonials that governed movement in and through 17th-century palaces in Rome, see Waddy, 1990.
  115. Cohen and Cohen, 2001–2; Preyer, 1998, pp. 359–61.
  116. Preyer, 2006.
  117. Hanke, 2010; the Genoese palace gardens were a market-led equivalent of the Roman cardinals' sculpture collections, for which see Wren Christian, 2010.
  118. Palladio, 1997 (Book II, ch. 3), a point followed at greater length by Scamozzi, 1615, p. 254.
  119. Bruschi, 1969, pp. 1040–6; Bruschi, 1989; Tafuri, 1984a.
  120. Ackerman, 1983, p. 33; Bruschi, 1969, p. 604; see also Clarke, 2003, pp. 187–94, who argues that such stonework had no 'rustic' connotations in the 15th century.
  121. Bruschi, 1969, p. 1043.
  122. These were areas typified by dense commercial activity. The streets of the Vatican Borgo served the varied needs of residents and pilgrim visitors, and the Rione Ponte area was the focus of predominantly Tuscan merchants and bankers; see, for example, Lee, 1994, pp. 326–9.
  123. A rare exception is Conforti, 2008, p. 133 (not developed further); see also Welch, 2005, pp. 134–7.
  124. Lowe, 1991, pp. 264–8, where an annual rental income per shop of 20 *carlini* is reported.
  125. Pagliara, 1984. For the urban reordering of the area, see Tafuri, 1984b; Tafuri, 1992, pp. 109–113; see also Burroughs, 1982.
  126. Pagliara, 1984, pp. 171, 179–81; this construction method, which allowed for the immediate rental of ground-floor shops before completion of the rest of the building, was also used for the Palazzo Todeschini Piccolomini in Siena.
  127. For the overlap of the housing of the elite local nobility with these streets, see Cafà, 2010.
  128. For Sant'Eustachio as a site of commercial activity and the headquarters of the Dogana di Terra, see Modigliani, 1998, p. 122. For the palace, see Frommel, 1998b, who notes the inclusion of shops without further comment.
  129. For the decoration of this palace, see Acidini Luchinat, 1999, vol. 1, pp. 110–12, who notes that Tizio's relative Valerio was a merchant in the Dogana, p. 133 n. 51.
  130. For the markets at Sant'Angelo in Pescheria, see Modigliani, 1998, pp. 161–76; see also Vaquero Piñeiro, 2008. For the house of Lorenzo Manilio, see Clarke, 2003, pp. 229–30; Tucci, 2001, pp. 23–33, 103–117, reports that Manilio used one of the shops for his own business activities.
  131. For Siena, see English, 1984; Nevola, 2007, pp. 49–51; see also Herlihy, 1969; Lansing, 1991, pp. 84–8.
  132. Nevola, 2007, p. 160, with documents; see also Balestracci and Piccini, 1977, pp. 131, 135. For ancestral property as expressive of links to the clan, see Piccini, 1983.
  133. For Florence, see Kent, 1971.
  134. Balestracci, 1984; Tuliani, 2002, n. 13.
  135. Tuliani, 2002; for the statement that the majority of *fondachi* were magnate-owned in the 14th century, see Balestracci and Piccini, 1977, pp. 137–41.
  136. For what follows, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 126–8; see also Balestracci, 2004.
  137. Piccini, 1983, p. 230 n. 27, citing ASS, Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala, 1186, fols 324–9 (September 1489); see also Gabrielli, 2004. For what follows, see Nevola, 2007, pp. 126–8.
  138. ASS, Lira, 144, fols 339, 360.
  139. ASS, Lira, 185, fol. 65.
  140. ASS, Lira, 144, fol. 273.
  141. *Ibid.*
  142. *Ibid.*, fol. 335; for the zoning of this area for luxury trades, see Nevola, 2006a, pp. 68–70.
  143. Balestracci, 2004, p. 141; Balestracci and Piccini, 1977, pp. 119–20, 138–40; Quast, 2000, p. 461, with visual documentation from the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.
  144. First noted in Balestracci, 2004, pp. 141, 149.
  145. For Genoa, for instance, see Heers, 1977; Owen Hughes, 1975. For Florence, see Kent, 1971. For Rome, see Broise and Maire Vigueur, 1983.
  146. Ajello Mahler, 2012, pp. 85 ff.; Ajello Mahler, 2019.
  147. Ajello Mahler, 2012, pp. 89ff.
  148. *Ibid.*, pp. 147–52.
  149. *Ibid.*, pp. 304–5.
  150. These family systems resemble those of institutions (discussed in Chapter 4) of multiple rental residential and commercial property units, such as the Università Vecchia in Perugia and the Loggia Vasariana at Arezzo.
  151. A similar point is made in Robbins, 1994, pp. 170–71, in considering properties belonging to the Alberteschi and Mattei (extant on the piazza in Piscinula) and properties in Anguillara with a loggia or portico on the street; see also Broise and Maire Vigueur, 1983, pp. 152–3.
  152. Gehl, 1987, p. 23.
  153. For additional details, see Nevola, 2005b; Nevola 2007, pp. 116–19.
  154. Von Fabriczy, 1903, from ASF, Conventi Soppressi, Badia di Firenze, Familiarum, VI, no. 317 [nuovo], fol. 245v; Pietro Turamini was a wealthy banker, see ASS, Lira, 57, fol. 23v (1453), and heirs in ASS, Lira, 185, fol. 143 (1481).
  155. Nevola, 2005b.
  156. Sozzini, 1571, nos 105, 149. For eminent domain, see Chapter 1; see also Ceen, 1986, pp. 29–30.
  157. Discussed in Chapter 4.
  158. Nevola, 2005b, p. 153; Quinterio, 1989.
  159. For examples of how Giuliano spread this palace style across Italy, see Lamberini, Lotti and Lunardi, 1994; Quinterio, 1996.
  160. See, most recently, Carl, 2008.
  161. Carl connects the Spannocchi emperor frieze with the lost façade of the Medici bank in Milan, which similarly employed portrait busts of emperors; *ibid.*

162. Ammannati Piccolomini, 1506, fol. 301v (14 August 1475), misunderstood as a letter from Gonzaga in Quinterio, 1996, p. 255 n. 17, and Von Fabriczy, 1903; see now Ammannati Piccolomini, 1997, p. 1989. Also reported in Ugurgieri Azzolini, 1649, p. 323. Considerable speculation has surrounded the interior appointment of the palace and various secular images produced by the so-called Master of the Story of Griselda; see, most recently, Syson, 2005.
163. For the *palaio alla lunga*, see Heywood, 1904, pp. 98–105. For the routes in 14th- to 16th-century usage, see Balestracci, Barzanti and Piccini, 1978, p. 9.
164. Further on this enclosed piazza, see Nevola, 2005b.
165. ASS, Lira, 221, fol. 231 (1488) for the tax return of Ambrogio Spannocchi's heirs, accounting for these shops.
166. Syson, 2005; Syson *et al.* 2007, pp. 226–27, 230–45. Such collections conform with the highest standards outlined for other cities; Ajmar-Wollheim and Dennis, 2006.
167. Reported by Allegretti, 1733, col. 840; see also ASS, Spannocchi, A12, fols 22, 44. Giulio di Ambrogio married Giovanna Mellini, while his brother, Antonio, married Alessandra di Neri Placidi. For biographical details of Antonio, see Syson *et al.*, 2007, p. 226.
168. For a detailed account, see ASS, Spannocchi, A12, fols 22, 44; see also Ugurgieri Azzolini, 1649, p. 323–4.
169. Ugurgieri Azzolini, 1649, p. 324.
170. For these panels, see Syson, 2005.
171. Syson *et al.*, 2007, p. 231: white (standing for silver), blue and a flash of gold on one leg (Piccolomini) and red on the other (Spannocchi).
172. For example, a deep dish in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, inv. no. WA2004.217, and another in the British Museum, London, inv. no. 1857,0804.32, both late 15th century.
173. Syson *et al.*, 2007, pp. 226–7.
174. Marini, 1988; Nevola, 2005b, pp. 151–3, includes a plan of the site of the new piazza.
175. ASS, Spoglio Balia, C18, fol. 47 (26 April 1480). A wall was built in 1527: ASS, Spannocchi, A1 bis, fols. 10, 23, 24.
176. The Spannocchi piazza thus precedes by almost fifty years the better-known private piazza of the Strozzi, planned from the 1480s, but executed in the 1530s; Elam, 1985; Elam 1986.
177. For documents regarding remodelling of the site, see ASS, Spannocchi, A1 bis, fols 10, 24, and esp. 23 (7 August 1540).
178. For *cassoni* and family rites of passage, see, for instance, Campbell, 2009; Musacchio, 2008; Randolph, 2014, pp. 139–68.
- (Ludovica Sebregondi).
6. Ibid.
7. Sebregondi and Parks, 2011, p. 254 (Ludovica Sebregondi).
8. Sebregondi and Parks, 2011, p. 252 (Stefano Dall'Aglio); Sebregondi, 2004, pp. 54–5.
9. On 'mediatisation' in media studies as a term for the political shaping of media narratives, see Corner, 2018, with earlier bibliography.
10. Mirzoeff, 2015, pp. 296–8.
11. Ibid., p. 298.
12. Lotz, 1977, remains a key study for the formal development of the typology.
13. This focus on the formal aspects of urban design and the role of architects in these remains a dominant theme in the limited scholarship on the piazza – as, for example, in studies of piazza San Marco (Venice), the piazza del Campidoglio (Rome) and piazza Maggiore (Bologna): respectively, Morresi, 1999; Bedon, 2009; and Tuttle, 2011.
14. See the discussion in Chapter 3.
15. Discussed in Chapter 6; see also Elam, 1985.
16. Camille, 2001.
17. As I complete this book, I am starting a new comparative project, funded by a Humanities in the European Research Area grant, 'Public Renaissance: Urban Cultures of Public Space between Early Modern Europe and the Present' (see <http://heranet.info/projects/public-spaces-culture-and-integration-in-europe/public-renaissance-urban-cultures-of-public-space-between-early-modern-europe-and-the-present-pure/>), which focuses more specifically on squares and piazzas.
18. Mirzoeff, 2015, pp. 62–9.
19. Discussed in Chapter 1.

#### EPILOGUE

1. See, most recently, Sebregondi, 2011.
2. From a vast scholarship on Savonarola, see Weinstein, 2011. For Savonarolan iconography, including discussion of the wide diffusion of his image, see Sebregondi, 2004, pp. lxxi–lxxiii; Sebregondi, 2011.
3. Sebregondi and Parks, 2011, p. 250 (Ludovica Sebregondi); the image entered the San Marco museum only in 1915, after it was purchased from private owners.
4. Foucault, 1977, esp. pp. 3–7, 195–228
5. Sebregondi, 2004, pp. 15–17; Sebregondi and Parks, 2011, p. 254

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- AOMS Archivio dell'Opera Metropolitana, Siena
- ASA Archivio di Stato, Arezzo
- ASF Archivio di Stato, Florence
- ASMn Archivio di Stato, Mantua
- ASP Archivio di Stato, Perugia
- ASP, OSMM  
ASP, Ex Congregazione di Carità, Ospedale di Santa Maria della Misericordia
- ASR Archivio di Stato, Rome
- ASS Archivio di Stato, Siena
- BAV Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City
- BCS Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati, Siena
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