

PIERFRANCESCO DE' MEDICI, 1430–1476: A RADICAL ALTERNATIVE TO ELDER MEDICEAN SUPREMACY?

By Alison Brown

A man of 'a rare and courteous nature',¹ 'a bit of a backwoodsman', 'fat' and slow:² none of these contemporary descriptions of Cosimo de' Medici's nephew suggests a political activist. Pierfrancesco's character and his role in Florence remain obscure. Was he simply a large, slow-moving country-lover who genuinely preferred to escape the urban pursuits and political responsibilities enjoyed by his more sophisticated cousins? Or did his placid exterior conceal the germs of that resentment which later led his sons to break from the elder branch of the family and survive its downfall in 1494? This political question is also of social and cultural interest, since the division of the family entailed disagreement about patronage and the social bifurcation of a household which had lived in common until the 1450s and made no wills until the 1470s.

Outwardly the family was united until the events of 1494, but in fact the roots of division were formed in Pierfrancesco's lifetime and were nourished by a variety of causes: by the lack of primogeniture in Italy which gave financial advantages to single heirs; by Pierfrancesco's own ambivalent and uncertain attitude towards his cousins; by (according to one observer)³ the contaminating influence of his father-in-law Angelo Acciaiuoli. Above all, the growing authority of Cosimo and his descendants strained family loyalty. As the elder branch advanced, its members became less willing to share power and status in Florence, even with their own cousins. The separate tax returns submitted in 1469 and the separate wills of the next decade were signs of a diverging attitude to authority and the exercise of power in Florence. This culminated in the revolt and exile of Lorenzo and Giovanni di Pierfrancesco in the spring of 1494, and their triumphant return, re-named 'Popolani', after their cousins' downfall in November 1494. The account which follows offers fragmentary but important evidence of this private—and ultimately public—dissension among the Medici.

Pierfrancesco was born in 1430 to Lorenzo di Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici and Ginevra di Giovanni Cavalcanti.⁴ As a boy he visited the Val d'Arno with his mother and members of her powerful and old-established family.⁵ But when his father died on 23 September 1440, his mother and his maternal grandmother, Costanza Malespini (who came from another old

The following abbreviations are used throughout the footnotes: ASF = Archivio di Stato, Florence; MAP = Mediceo avanti il Principato.

¹ Nicodemo Tranchedini to Francesco Sforza, 2 December 1454, ed. R. Magnani, *Relazioni private tra la Corte Sforzesca di Milano e Casa Medici, 1450–1500*, Milan 1910, p. iv, doc. 6: 'ha l'animo gentile et pelegrino'.

² pp. 86–7 and 95 below.

³ pp. 95–6 below.

⁴ On Pierfrancesco and his father, G. Pieraccini, *La Stirpe de' Medici di Cafaggiolo*, i, Florence 1924, pp. 43–47, 149–55 (who refers to another brother, Francesco, who predeceased his father [p. 149]). Pierfrancesco was born on 15 May 1430, ASF, Libro di età, *Tratte 443 bis*, fol. 21 3r. Cf. Lorenzo de' Medici's *Ricordi* (ed. A. Fabroni, *Laurentii Medicis Magnifici Vita*, Pisa 1794 ii, p. 6).

⁵ Contessina to Cosimo de' Medici, 4 March 1438, ASF MAP 11, 227, Pieraccini,

magnate family) renounced their right to guardianship over the ten-year-old Pierfrancesco in favour of his father's brother, Cosimo de' Medici.⁶ The brothers had shared a common household in Via Larga and after his father's death Pierfrancesco continued to live on close terms with his cousins. He was evidently loved by the whole Medici family. He is mentioned fondly in their letters and included in family events. In 1443 he asked his cousin Piero to send some bagpipes to him in Trebbio, a fortified residence in the Mugello, to help him entertain 'lots of women' who were coming on Sunday.⁷ And when he returned from Rome with Piero in 1451 his aunt Contessina asked her other son Giovanni 'to greet Pierfrancesco on my behalf and say welcome home, telling him how much I want to see him'.⁸ On another occasion Pierfrancesco wrote affectionately to this cousin, 'the young Giovanni de' Medici', whom he addresses as his 'dear brother';

I have heard that you would very much like to come and stay up here and that the only reason you didn't come was to prevent me from catching the pox. There's no need for you to stay away for this reason, since Lorenzo says there's no more danger as it's all dried up. So I beseech you to come at all costs so we can spoil you and you can benefit in other ways'.⁹

He was consulted by Cosimo on family marriages,¹⁰ and he provided horses for the 'young Lorenzo de' Medici' in 1465.¹¹

No dissension between the cousins was as yet apparent, but the seeds of

La Stirpe, i, p. 46, translated by J. Ross, *The Lives of the Early Medici*, London 1910, pp. 10–11 (with the incorrect date '1427/8'): 'La Ginevra et Piero Francesco sono in Valdarno et Amerigho Chavalcanti è rimasto con loro'. On the Cavalcanti, L. Martines, *The Social World of the Florentine Humanists, 1390–1460*, London 1963, pp. 60, n. 149, 202, cf. Giovanni Cavalcanti, *Istorie fiorentine*, Milan 1944, p. 263.

⁶ ASF MAP 161, fols. 1r–5v (2–13 December 1440).

⁷ ASF MAP 17, 29 (2 August 1443), G. Baccini, *Le ville Medicee di Cafaggiolo e di Trebbio in Mugello*, Florence 1897, p. 124; Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 150: 'perochè ci verà domenica di molte done e non se ne truova una [cornamusa] in questo paese'.

⁸ *VII Lettere di Contessina Bardi ne' Medici ai figliuoli Piero e Giovanni*, ed. T. Casini and S. Morpurgo, Florence 1886 (Nozze Zanichelli-Mariotti), no. vi (5 January 1451), Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, pp. 152–3: 'Saluta Pierfrancesco per mia parte e dilli che sia il ben tornato, che gran voglia ò di vederlo'.

⁹ ASF MAP 103, 93, n.d.: 'Charo fratello, etc. Ho sentito chome tu ai grande voglia di venire a starsi quassù, ma solo lasci perchè il

vaiuolo non mi si appichi. E non bisogna che per questo tu lasci peròche Lorenzo dicie non è più da dubitare conciossiacosachè sia secchato. Sichè io ti priego che tu venga a ogni modo imperochè noi ti faremo vezzi di starne e d'altre cose vantaggiate . . . Tuo Pierfrancesco a Trebbio'. *Verso*: 'giovane Giovanni di _____ de' Medici. In Firenze'. Pierfrancesco also addresses his cousin Giovanni di Cosimo as 'Iuveni Iohanni de' Medicis Fratri [honora]ndo' in 1445 (ASF MAP 5, 577).

¹⁰ See Cosimo's letter to Pierfrancesco, 26 November 1461, ASF MAP 2, 480 (cf. Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 152), asking for his advice on Nannina's possible marriage to a Rucellai (anticipating her engagement to Bernardo Rucellai which took place that year).

¹¹ Pierfrancesco de' Medici to ' . . . Iuveni Laurentio . . . de Medicis Florentie', 6 April 1465, ASF MAP 137, 140 (cf. Pieraccini, *ibid.*): 'Ho avuto una tua lectera . . . dove mi chiedi chavagli [the horse he wanted being ill, he sends two others] . . . ti priego potendo lo facci achonciare, et racchomandotegli, se ò altro che ti piaccia, manda per esso'.

future trouble were already there. Pierfrancesco's father, like his father before him, left no will. On his death his fortune was shared with his brother Cosimo. All business contracts were automatically terminated; and as soon as his maternal relations had renounced their rights on 13 December 1440, Cosimo was appointed Pierfrancesco's guardian.¹² On the same day an inventory was prepared for the Guardians of Wards in Florence which listed only their joint property (including their house in Via Larga 'with another house adjacent and next to it' and the fortified houses at Trebbio, Cafaggiolo and Careggi, but excluding their business assets and Monte investments):

the said Cosimo . . . protesting that because of his many public and private commitments and because of the multiplicity of his business operations and uncertainty about [their] debts and credits and possessions and rights, he was incapable of giving or adding any more definite possessions to the said inventory at the moment.¹³

In the course of the next three years Cosimo gradually added details of Monte holdings (totalling some 78,265 florins) and other credits, including the estate of their cousin Francesco di Giuliano di Averardo de' Medici who had died intestate by 1443.¹⁴ On 25 March 1441 Cosimo 'changed the books and the names of the companies' of their bank before drawing up, in November 1441, a statement of its total capital value of 73,956 florins.¹⁵ During his tutelage Pierfrancesco's capital was not allowed to be put at risk by participation in the bank's profits and losses; it could merely draw interest at 5% on loan to Cosimo. For administrative reasons, and because Pierfrancesco's share of the profits of the bank would have been more than the interest to which he was restricted, he was later compensated for the financial difference from the time of his father's death until 24 March 1441, when Cosimo closed the accounts and restructured the bank.¹⁶ He was not, however, reimbursed for the same financial difference between this time and his

¹² ASF MAP 161, *cit.*, fols. 5^v-7^r.

¹³ *Ibid.*, fols. 8^r-11^v: 'Protestans dictus Cosma . . . quod propter multas occupationes quas habet et publice et privatim, et propter multiplicia eius traffica et propter incertitudinem debitorum et creditorum et bonorum et iurium . . . ipse non potest ad presens alia certa bona dicto inventario ponere et seu addere' (fol. 11^r).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, fols. 11^v-14^r. On the inheritance of Francesco di Giuliano di Averardo, R. de Roover, *Il Banco Medici dalle origini al declino, 1397-1494*, Florence 1970, pp. 58-59, and D. Kent, 'I Medici in esilio: una vittoria di famiglia ed una disfatta personale', *Archivio storico italiano*, cxxxii, 1974, pp. 62-63.

¹⁵ ASF MAP 161, fol. 20^r: 'et cum nobis constet quod dictus Cosma sub die xxquinta mensis martii anni domini mccccquadragesimo primo mutaverit libros et nomina societatum', cf. MAP 153, no. 3, fol. 1, de

Roover, *Banco Medici*, p. 89. Of this sum, roughly two-thirds belonged to Cosimo and Pierfrancesco, *ibid.*, tav. 13, p. 90. According to Lorenzo de' Medici (*Ricordi*, p. 7), however, the total capital worth or *valsente* of Cosimo and his brother in 1440 was 235,137 florins.

¹⁶ ASF MAP 161, fols. 20^r-21^r: 'laudamus . . . quod non obstantibus supra dispositis . . . quod dictus Pierfranciscus habeat participare cum dicto Cosma in lucris et comodis factis et obventis occasione trafficorum . . . etiam a die mortis et post mortem dicti Laurentii usque ad per totam diem xxquartam mensis Martii de dicto anno mccccquadragesimo . . . Et hoc maxime quia rationes trafficorum . . . non potuerunt nec poterant comode videri nisi in fine dicti anni et finito dicto anno, et quia comoda et lucra obventa occasione dictorum trafficorum a dicta die mortis dicti Laurentii usque ad per totam diem xxquartam dicti mensis martii mccccx^lo magis

coming of age ten years later.¹⁷ Since this was a time of expansion for the bank, with new branches founded in Avignon, London, Pisa and Milan, Pierfrancesco must have felt he was being treated unfairly, and this may account for the charges of maladministration which Pierfrancesco's sons later levelled against Cosimo's guardianship of their father, as well as against their own guardian, Cosimo's grandson Lorenzo il Magnifico.¹⁸

Pierfrancesco emerged from tutelage at the age of twenty-one, and it was then agreed to make a formal division of the Medici estate. Six arbitrators were appointed on 23 March 1451. They were carefully selected from both sides of the family, but of the six only Carlo Marsuppini and Bernardo de' Medici made the final arbitration eight months later.¹⁹ On 17 November 1451 it was decreed that the house in Via Larga was to remain in common between both branches for the next five years (by which time the nearby palace, still under construction, would be ready to receive Cosimo's household and his family).²⁰ Cafaggiolo and Careggi were given to Cosimo; Trebbio to Pierfrancesco. The entire capital of the family bank was divided equally between both branches; and as Cosimo took this opportunity to retire officially, the share of Pierfrancesco, newly-qualified partner, was in effect double that of his two cousins—27,000 florins as against their 13,500 florins each.²¹ Lorenzo de' Medici, in his *Ricordi*, commented bitterly that this arbitration consigned Pierfrancesco:

half of all our possessions, giving him a gross advantage over us and all the best items . . . and at the same time he carried off a third share as a partner in all our companies, in which he has gained more than us through having fewer expenses.²²

conferunt et maiorem utilitatem faciunt dicto Pierfrancesco quam quod dicto tempore dicte pecunie steterint in depositum penes dictum Cosmam ad rationem quinque pro centinario' (fol. 20^v).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, fols. 20^v–21^r: 'Ita quod in effectu dicta ratio provisionum dictarum pecuniarum dicti Pierfrancesci ad dictam rationem quinque pro centinario pro anno et ad rationem anni de qua et quibus in proximo precedenti capitulo facta est mentio, incipiat et incipere debeat die xxvinta mensis martii anno domini mccccquadragesimo primo et sequi debeat usque ad per totam diem xxquartem mensis martii proximo preteriti [1451]'.
¹⁸ ASF MAP 88, no. 392, fol. 508 (1499), referring to the 'administratione di tutelle di Pierfrancesco nostro padre et nostre, nelle quale pretendiamo essere stati gravati et doverci rictentare molte cose a nostro beneficio che per ancora non se ne trova la via'. On the expansion of the bank, de Roover, *Banco Medici*, pp. 89–95.

¹⁹ ASF MAP 161, fols. 19^r–34^v. The arbitrators were Marcello Strozzi, Carlo

Marsuppini, Alamanno Salviati, Amerigo Cavalcanti, Giovanni Serristori and Bernardo de' Medici. Cf. Lorenzo de' Medici's *Ricordi*, cit. n. 4 above, p. 7, Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, pp. 149–50, C. S. Gutkind, *Cosimo de' Medici, Pater Patriae, 1389–1464*, Oxford 1938, pp. 197–9.

²⁰ See I. Hyman, '15th century Florentine Studies: the Palazzo Medici and a ledger for the church of San Lorenzo', New York PhD thesis, 1968, esp. pp. 70–79; cf. A. Warburg, 'Der Baubeginn des Palazzo Medici', *Gesammelte Schriften*, i, Leipzig 1932, pp. 167–8, pl. xxiii; W. A. Bulst, 'Die ursprüngliche innere Aufteilung des Palazzo Medici', *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz*, xiv, 1969–70, pp. 369–92.

²¹ de Roover, *Banco Medici*, p. 95, and pl. 14, p. 97.

²² *Ricordi*, cit.; 'la metà di tutti i nostri beni, grassamente dandoli il vantaggio ed migliori capi . . . e nel medesimo tempo lo ritirò compagno per il terzo in tutti i nostri traffici, dove ha avanzato assai più di noi, per aver avuto manco spese'.

The arbitrators also specified that Pierfrancesco was to share only the expenses incurred in rebuilding San Lorenzo where his father and grandfather were buried: not Cosimo's expenditure on his palace in Via Larga, no expenses in San Marco (which Pierfrancesco's son Lorenzo later said 'we do not want on our backs, because our father never wanted them'), none in Santa Croce, SS. Annunziata, San Miniato al Monte, San Francesco dal Boscho in the Mugello, the Camaldulensian hermitage of Camaldoli, nor the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.²³

We do not know if this implies that Pierfrancesco wished to disown Cosimo's political and cultural imperialism or merely to escape its cost. San Lorenzo, close to the houses of Cosimo and Pierfrancesco in Via Larga, was a family church and burial place; and there shared expenses were justifiable. San Marco was another matter. Cosimo was entitled to regard the cost of its renovation as shared until his brother's death, since it was begun as a joint project attributed to both Cosimo and Lorenzo in the monastery's chronicle. Moreover, shortly after Lorenzo's death, work was apparently halted on account of the opposition of families owning rights there. On the other hand, as elsewhere, it was Cosimo who received the credit—and the criticism—for his munificence. Despite the terms of the 1451 arbitration, Pierfrancesco's sons were charged as much as 7,776 florins for their inherited share of the building expenses, suggesting that work may in fact have continued after 1442. If so, Pierfrancesco's unwillingness to be saddled with additional expense is understandable.²⁴ Patronage was a field in which the family was already beginning to be divided.

At this stage of his life Pierfrancesco appeared uninterested in both politics and culture, preferring to spend his days in the wild and beautiful castle of Trebbio. From the summit of its tower overlooking the Apennines it is just possible to see the red rooftop of Cafaggiolo, his uncle's allotted domain, lying strategically below, on the main road to Bologna and a stone's throw from the other main route across the Apennines through Imola.²⁵ There Cosimo was able to see visitors passing in and out of Florence and

²³ ASF *MAP* 161, fol. 22^{r-v}, and on San Marco, *MAP* 104, no. 48, fol. 456^v: 'La spesa della muraglia di san marcho nolla vogliamo adosso, perchè nostro padre nolla volle mai'; on Cosimo's building programme, Gutkind, p. 198, and E. H. Gombrich, 'The Early Medici as Patrons of Art', *Norm and Form. Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, i, London 1971, pp. 35–57. There is a list of building expenses in San Lorenzo owed by Lorenzo and Giovanni di Pierfrancesco to Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici, 1476–80, in ASF *Notarile* G 620 (ser Simone Grazzini, 1472–94), fol. 218^v, and *MAP* 104, no. 48, fols. 455^r, 469^r: four sums totalling 3285 florins, representing half of the total expenditure. Lorenzo and Giovanni accepted these sums but complained: 'non c'è stato mai mostrato il conto delle spese' and feared that the expenditure since the death of their father was 'un residio

di denari che s'avevano a spendere in detta muraglia' (*MAP* 104, no. 48, fol. 456^v).

²⁴ On Cosimo's reputation for munificence, A. D. Fraser Jenkins, 'Cosimo de' Medici's patronage of architecture and the theory of magnificence', this *Journal*, XXXIII, 1970, pp. 162–70; and on criticism of his intervention in San Marco, Gombrich, 'The Early Medici', p. 42. The chronicle of San Marco is edited by R. Morçay in *Archivio Storico Italiano*, lxxi (i) (1913), p. 11 (cf. Fraser Jenkins, p. 169). On Medici expenses there, see n. 94 below.

²⁵ On Trebbio, described in 1440 as 'unum casamentum sive fortilitium' (ASF *MAP* 161, fol. 9^v), B. Patzak, *Die Renaissance-und Barockvilla in Italien*, ii (*Palast und Villa in Toscana*), Leipzig 1914, pp. 67–75, pls. xxxiv–xxxvii, and Baccini, *Le Ville Medicee*, cit.

entertain them with lavish hospitality. But Pierfrancesco in his eyrie did not share his uncle's enthusiasm for politics, choosing to spend his time hunting and riding, sending game to his friends and family, buying and selling horses and descending to Florence as infrequently as possible.²⁶

Left to his own devices Pierfrancesco might have been happy to remain a countryman all his life—but this was not to be. In May 1456 he married Laudomia, daughter of Angelo Acciaiuoli,²⁷ Cosimo's faithful supporter and now a pre-eminent member of his regime. Angelo was soon worried by his son-in-law's way of life and in September 1456 wrote to him with advice:

Don't be robbed of a moment by saying 'we'll do it tomorrow', because the moment never returns. You are of an age when you should be acquiring some talents. It's no use procrastinating. It will bring you honour and profit to adopt the habits of your relations and to begin a new way of life which will lead you from this one. I love you so much and my love is equalled by my sense of responsibility for you, so although I know you mean well, I can't stop continually thinking about you; and thinking about you, I can't write without saying something to you. Please excuse my importunity as a sign of the love that I bear you.²⁸

Worse than Pierfrancesco's sloth, however, was his apparent disregard for Cosimo, by then an old man, as Angelo reminded Pierfrancesco a few months later. Nothing pleases old men more, he told him, than to see themselves not only loved, honoured and obeyed by the younger generation, but cherished by them as well:

I know you are a bit of a backwoodsman and hold Cosimo in such respect

²⁶ Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, pp. 151–2.

²⁷ According to Litta, *Famiglie celebri italiane*, i, tav. 5, Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 154, and C. Ugurgieri della Berardenga, *Gli Acciaiuoli di Firenze*, Florence 1962, ii, p. 532, Laudomia was Angelo Acciaiuoli's sister; but all contemporary evidence suggests she was his daughter: Tranchedini's letter, 2 December 1454 (n. 1 above: 'Piero Francesco . . . ha preso per dona la figliuola del nostro Angelo Azaiolo'); the chronicle of Fra Giovanni di Carlo (quoted by R. Hatfield in *Studies on Machiavelli*, ed. M. P. Gilmore, Florence 1972, p. 331) referring to the marriage of Angelo's 'aliam filiam suam Laudomiam' to Cosimo de' Medici's nephew; Angelo's letter to Pierfrancesco referring to him as his 'figluolo' (ASF MAP 2, 442, 4 March 1457); and BNF Magl. xxvi, 146 (del Migliore), recording Pierfrancesco's marriage in 1456 to 'Laudominae domini Angeli de Acciaiuolis'. On the date of their marriage, see Pierfrancesco's letter to the Priors of San Gimignano (10 May 1456, ed. A. Gherardi, 'Spigolature Sangimignanesi', *Miscellanea Storica d. Valdelsa*, x, 1902, pp. 135–6, doc. vi):

'A dì xxiii di questo io meno la donna', and del Migliore above. Tranchedini in his letter of December 1454 must refer to their betrothal. On Angelo Acciaiuoli, *Dizionario biografico d. Italiani*, i. s.v.; *Dispatches with Related Documents of Milanese Ambassadors in France and Burgundy, 1450–1483*, ed. P. M. Kendall and V. Ilardi, i, Athens (Ohio) 1970, pp. xli–xliii; Martines, *Social World*, pp. 335–336, etc.

²⁸ 2 September 1456, ASF MAP 2, 445, ed. Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 150: 'non ti lasci furare il tempo con dire 'domane faremo', perchè il tempo non si raquista; tu se' in età da darti a 'mparare qualche virtù; non volere indugiare. Ad te fia honore et utile seguitare e costumi de' tua e dar loco alle conversationi che ti levassino da questa via. Io t'amo tanto e tanto mi pesa il fatto tuo che, benchè io intenda da te l'animo tuo buono, nientedimeno non posso fare che continuamente non vi pensi, e pensandovi non ti posso scrivere che io non te ne dica qualche cosa. Priegoti che tu scusi la mia importunità come amore che io ti porto'.

that you don't cultivate him as I would like, nor do you try to learn from him as you need to do. And so I tell you that while he lives, stay around him as much as you can, for you cannot have a truer nor a better master than him.²⁹

Was this true? According to Nicodemo Tranchedini, Cosimo loved Pierfrancesco as much as 'any of his sons'. Angelo Acciaiuoli himself also assured this somewhat 'unusual' and wayward youth that he loved him 'no less than the five sons of my own'.³⁰ But the ambivalence Cosimo felt towards his nephew and former ward is revealed in a letter he wrote to him in 1459, which concerns a joust in honour of the young Galeazzo Maria Sforza when he visited Florence in April that year:

Today I have had a letter from you and understand what you write about the business of your horse—having heard of the joust to be held for Count Galeazzo's visit—and how you have had the idea of jousting yourself, if I were agreeable. I never dreamt you were thinking of such a thing, having heard you say more than once that you were not thinking of jousting any more. For this reason we did not believe you needed the horse, and also I did not think we ought to embark on such an expense for you at the present. However, if it would please you, I will be content with what you want.³¹

From Trebbio Pierfrancesco asked his secretary, Bartolomeo Scala, to tell Cosimo that 'it's not true what he's been told';³² and he neither took part in the joust nor joined the banquet given by his cousins for Galeazzo Maria, instead awarding his horse and armour to Guido da Faenza.³³ Since it cost Lorenzo de' Medici's father at least four thousand florins to have him joust in 1469,³⁴ Cosimo may understandably have been unwilling 'to embark on such an expense' for Pierfrancesco, especially as Pierfrancesco had already enjoyed his joust with horses provided by both Borso d'Este and Francesco

²⁹ 4 March 1457, ASF MAP 2, 442, partly edited by Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 150: 'io so che tu hai un po' del salvatico et è tanta la reverenza che tu hai a Cosimo che tu non li stai d'atorno come vorrei; nè cerchi da imparare da lui come è il bisogno tuo. Et così ti dico che in mentre che vive, stàlli d'atorno il più che tu puoi, perochè tu non puoi haver nè più vero nè miglor maestro che lui'.

³⁰ N. Tranchedini to Francesco Sforza, 2 December 1454, ed. Magnani, p. v: 'che l'ama como qualunque sia de li figlioli'; Angelo Acciaiuoli to Pierfrancesco de' Medici, 4 March 1457, above: 'io non amo meno te ch' e cinque figliuoli che io ho'.

³¹ 17 March 1459, ASF MAP 2, 452 (cf. Pieraccini's misinterpretation of this letter, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 151): 'Questo di ho avuto una tua lettera et inteso quanto mi schrivì sopra 'l fatto del tuo chavallo, avendo inteso della giostra si debbe fare per la venuta del chonte

Ghaleazzo, et chome aresti il pensiero a volere giostrare se io me ne chontentassi. Io non chredetti tu fussi in tal pensiero, avendoti sentito dire più volte tu non avere pensiero più a giostrare, et per questa chagione non credemo avessi il bisogno del chavallo, et anchora mi pareva non fusse da entrare in questa spesa per te al presente. Pure, se ttu te ne chontentassi, io sarò chontento a quello vorrai tu'.

³² B. Scala to Pierfrancesco de' Medici, 21 March 1459, ASF MAP 4, 377: 'ditemi vadi a Cosimo a dire non è il vero di quanto gli è suto detto, che lo farò di subito et aviseròvi della risposta'.

³³ Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 151.

³⁴ According to Piero de' Medici's catasto it cost fl.4269.15.4, ASF *Catasto* 924, *cit.*, fol. 311^v), but according to Lorenzo's *Ricordi* (ed. Fabroni, *cit.*, ii, p. 40) it cost his father 'circa a ducati diecimila'.

Sforza.³⁵ This time, it was true, he had his own horse and armour; but a joust was evidently a privilege—like a coming-out ball—which young Medici could enjoy and win but once. Cosimo may also have been deterred by the fact that his grandson Lorenzo was appearing ‘in a fine display of arms’ with eleven young Florentines the following night.³⁶ However, he was scrupulous to let Pierfrancesco do what he wanted, just as he was willing to let him play his full part in the state when he came of political age.

Pierfrancesco’s initiation into politics began in August 1458 when he was elected a member of the Balìa which followed the *parlamento* of 11 August. He was not yet of statutory age for this council and was not among those elected for his district on 14 August.³⁷ But all his family were represented in it *ex officio*, as were his father-in-law Angelo Acciaiuoli and his maternal uncle Amerigo Cavalcanti; and perhaps as a result of their influence his name was added to complete San Giovanni’s quota of representatives.

Political responsibilities followed quickly. In the autumn of 1458 Pierfrancesco was elected one of six ambassadors to congratulate and offer homage to the new Pope, Pius II. Angelo Acciaiuoli was also a member of this embassy; and he must have welcomed the opportunity of initiating his son-in-law into the world of diplomacy and business in Rome.³⁸ A year later, in November 1459, Pierfrancesco was elected to the Signoria in Florence, although still under age. In this capacity he was asked to do his first political favour for his cousins. Piero di Cosimo, a Monte Official, had already told Pierfrancesco that he wanted to escape ‘the nuisance’ of the Monte, and on 7 December (with one month of Pierfrancesco’s office as prior gone, Piero reminded him, and Christmas approaching) he asked Pierfrancesco to effect their ‘exchanges at the Monte’ and to assure everyone of his sincerity ‘without believing what others say’. However, on the 15th Piero and his four co-officials were re-elected for another year, so at least on this occasion Pierfrancesco was unable to grant his cousin’s request.³⁹

The following year (1460) Pierfrancesco was elected to another important office, the Otto di Guardia, which had been given absolute authority or *balìa*

³⁵ Tranchedini’s letter of 2 December 1454, ed. Magnani, p. iv, and I. del Lungo, *Florentia: uomini e cose del Quattrocento*, Florence 1897, p. 412.

³⁶ Cambi, *Istorie, in Delizie degli eruditi toscani*, ed. I. di San Luigi, xx, Florence 1785, p. 371: ‘una bella armegiera’.

³⁷ N. Rubinstein, *The Government of Florence under the Medici, 1434–94*, Oxford 1966, pp. 107, n. 5, and 290. The minimum age was 30.

³⁸ C. Guasti, ‘Due legazioni al sommo pontefice’, *Scritti Storici*, Prato 1894, pp. 85–90; Cambi, *Istorie, Delizie*, xx, p. 362 (omitting Angelo Acciaiuoli’s name, however); cf. R. Morçay, *St Antonin*, pp. 269–71 and L. Pastor, *Storia dei Papi*, ii, Rome 1961, pp. 16–17. This legation, like the one to congratulate the previous Pope Calixtus III in 1455, in which Giovanni de’ Medici was included, was headed by S. Antonino, Archbishop of

Florence.

³⁹ ASF MAP 5, 750 (7 December 1459): ‘Havendovi parlato quanto è el disiderio mio circha al uscire di questa noia del monte, richordo alla S. V. chome voi siate al secondo mese del vostro offitio et avvicinate alla pasqua che con le feste vi torrà tempo assai. Priegovi che operiate che si faccia gli schambii nostri al monte in favore del quale non potresti fare più utile chosa . . . Et fate fede a ciaschuno che quanto io schrivo venga dall’animo et dal cuore senza dare fede alle parole d’altri’. On his office Cambi, *Delizie*, xx, p. 377 (correcting Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 153). The minimum age for the Signoria, Colleges and Otto di Guardia was 30 years, for the Gonfaloniership of Justice 45 years. For Piero di Cosimo’s re-election as *Officiale del Banco*, ASF *Tratte* 81, fol. 58r.

to deal with political crimes after the discovery of Girolamo Machiavelli's conspiracy against the regime in 1458. Contessina de' Medici told her son, Giovanni, that Cosimo was only too thankful to give up 'the burden' of this office and to appoint Pierfrancesco in his place. Yet Cosimo was not a member of the Otto in 1460; and although Giovanni had been elected to it in 1456 (when it lacked *balia*), his mother's admonition to him to 'look now to yourself' suggests that there may have been an element of rivalry between the cousins.⁴⁰ Whatever their personal relationship at this time, it is at any rate clear from his offices that Pierfrancesco was approved by the *accoppiatori* and the new Council of One Hundred; and he had now to be taken seriously by other members of the family. He had entered upon the 'new way of life' his father-in-law had urged upon him.

This life introduced Pierfrancesco to new acquaintances such as the eminent Cardinal of Rouen, Guillaume d'Éstouteville, whom he met in Rome in 1458. As a client of the Medici Bank, Éstouteville's bonds with Pierfrancesco were mercenary rather than pastoral. But letters written after Pierfrancesco's return to Florence show that Pierfrancesco had succeeded in establishing a personal relationship with the Cardinal, expressed by gifts of wine and sparrow-hawks and offers of hospitality in Florence. Éstouteville professed to be 'amazed' not to have heard from Pierfrancesco since his return and feared he had forgotten the Vernaccia wine: if not yet drinkable, he was to let him know when it would be.⁴¹ Pierfrancesco's apologies secured from Éstouteville confirmation of his promise to stay with him on his way to the Congress of Mantua the following spring, the promise of a cardinal 'in this day and age' being 'worth more than that of a merchant whosoever he is'.⁴² Subsequently the Cardinal urged the merchant not to overdo preparations, he was sure his quarters were more than adequate.⁴³ While attending the chapter of

⁴⁰ ASF *Otto di Guardia*, 2723 bis, fol. 57^r, *Tratte* 81, fol. 5^r (Pierfrancesco was elected on 22 August for 4 months from 1 September 1460, cf. fol. 3^r for Giovanni's appointment in March 1455/6). Contessina to Giovanni and Ginevra de' Medici, 28 August 1460, in *VII Lettere di Contessina ne' Bardi*, no. vii: 'Cosimo ci à levato via la ricadia d'essere degli Otto e fattone Pierfrancesco in suo scambio, sì che attendete pure a voi', translated by Janet Ross (*Lives of the Early Medici*, p. 63: 'This might also be done for thee', cf. Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 153. On the Otto, G. Antonelli, 'La magistratura degli Otto di Guardia a Firenze', *ASI*, cxii, 1954, pp. 3-39, and on its special powers in 1458 and 1460, Rubinstein, *Government of Florence*, pp. 111-12.

⁴¹ Carlo de' Medici to Pierfrancesco de' Medici, 1 December 1458, ASF *MAP* 137, 93: 'essendo ieri a cena con Monsignor di Roano . . . ragionando di voi dixte che si maraviglava che poi vi partiste non gli abiate mai scripto nè mandato a dir niente,

et che dubitava non vi fusse uscito di mente la vernaccia, che se non è anchor da bere, avisatelo quando [s]ia'.

⁴² The same, 9 December 1458, ASF *MAP* 137, 86, referring to Pierfrancesco's letter to him of 2 December: 'La scusa vostra a Monsignor di Roano feci oggi . . . Fugli grata et dissemi ch'io vi dovessi scrivere che in ogni modo è disposto di farvi chiaro per effetto che la promessa d'uno cardinale è più da stimare al dì d'oggi che quella di qualunque merchatante che sia, inperochè quello vi promisse, c[i]oè dismontare in casa vostra, vedrete ve la terrà meglio non avete fatto voi della promessa della vernaccia'.

⁴³ Éstouteville to Pierfrancesco de' Medici, 11 April 1459, ASF *MAP* 139, 225, referring to his letter 'sopra lo apparecchiamento havete fatto de la casa vostra e grande vostra affectione verso di noi' for which he thanked him warmly, 'rendendone certi la stantia sia molto più in ordine de quello voriamo, la quale havendo noi acceptate liberamente, haveriamo a caro non ve forzassate tanto de

Augustinian Friars in Siena, 'free from curial cares',⁴⁴ he welcomed as 'a great pastime' a gift of sparrow-hawks. When he wished to complain of his treatment at the hands of customs officials at the gates of Montepulciano, 'which offends too much the dignity of the [Cardinal's] Hat', it was to Pierfrancesco he wrote, enclosing letters for Cosimo, Piero and Giovanni de' Medici and Luca Pitti.⁴⁵

The buying and selling of horses plays a large part in Pierfrancesco's correspondence and it is probable, as Pieraccini has suggested, that he dealt in them commercially and not simply for pleasure.⁴⁶ He enjoyed racing, as we know from a poem by his secretary and factotum, Bartolomeo Scala, in praise of his champion, Swallow, as fast as 'swift-flowing rivers'.⁴⁷

Bartolomeo Scala, subsequently chancellor of the Guelf Party and then 1st Chancellor of Florence, was appointed in 1457 to work for Pierfrancesco, and his years in Pierfrancesco's service coincided with the latter's initiation into politics.⁴⁸ Scala may have been intended to act as tutor as well as political mentor, to encourage his pupil to emulate the cultural interests of his cousins. Scala's classes on Virgil, which the poet Luigi Pulci attended, were conducted in Pierfrancesco's house, and it was while Scala was with him that Pierfrancesco wrote to ask Carlo de' Medici in Rome for some manuscripts, among them an Apicius.⁴⁹ Pierfrancesco's artistic patronage was, however, minimal.⁵⁰ Since he was a partner in the Medici Bank, much of Scala's work for him must have concerned business matters which had to be dealt with during Pierfrancesco's lengthy absences in Trebbio, chasing debtors, authorizing payments and writing letters.⁵¹

ornare'. The Cardinal of Rouen was one of six cardinals chosen to accompany the Pope to the Congress of Mantua, staying in Florence from 25 April until 6 May 1459, O. Raynaldus, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, x, Lucca, 1753, pp. 180, 196.

⁴⁴ The same, 30 August 1460, ASF MAP 103, 91: 'sichè in questo mezo staremo de qui liberi dale sollicitudini curiali, haveremo bono exercitio in fare e provare essi terzoli, che ne serà uno grande passatempo'.

⁴⁵ The same, 22 November 1462, ASF MAP 139, 223: 'contra la dignità del Cardinalato . . . offende troppo la dignità del Capello'.

⁴⁶ *La Stirpe*, i, p. 152, cf. also de Roover, *Banco Medici*, p. 206.

⁴⁷ Florence, Bibl. Naz. MS. Conv. Soppr. G.8. 1438, fol. 20^v: 'par cum rapidis currere fluminibus'.

⁴⁸ For Scala's career, see my biography *Bartolomeo Scala, 1430-1497, Chancellor of Florence: the Humanist as Bureaucrat*, Princeton, N.J., 1979, esp. pp. 22-31.

⁴⁹ See Carlo de' Medici's letter to Pierfrancesco of 9 December 1458, *cit.*, 'De' libri mi scrivete farò ogni diligentia perchè n'abiate copia et maxime di quello Apicio';

Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 151; *Bartolomeo Scala*, p. 25. Dr. Albinia de la Mare suggests that MS Laur. 30, 2 (a Latin translation of Ptolemy's *Cosmography*) belonged to Pierfrancesco before his son Lorenzo, whose ex libris it bears, and since it is in the hand of a scribe used by Bartolomeo Scala, Scala may have been responsible for commissioning it on Pierfrancesco's behalf, see 'B. Scala's Dealings with Booksellers, Scribes and Illuminators, 1459-63', this *Journal*, XXXIX, 1976, p. 244.

⁵⁰ A pair of chests and a tondo commissioned for his marriage from Apollonio di Giovanni in 1455 is all that we know of; E. Callmann, *Apollonio di Giovanni*, Oxford 1974, pp. 35 and 79 (no. 113); P. Schubring, *Cassoni*, Leipzig 1915, p. 435; E. H. Gombrich, 'Apollonio di Giovanni', reprinted in *Norm and Form*, London 1966, p. 16. But his deficiencies were more than made up for by his sons, who revealed themselves to be more adventurous patrons than their cousins by the end of the century, see my pp. 102-3 and n. 108 below.

⁵¹ See, for example, Pierfrancesco's one surviving letter to Scala, 19 December 1457, ASF MAP 98, 525, and *Bartolomeo Scala*, p. 26.

As long as Giovanni de' Medici was alive there were no open signs of discord between the two branches of the family. As Director General of the Medici Bank Giovanni enjoyed clear authority in business matters and Pierfrancesco collaborated with him as a partner, often through the offices of Scala.⁵² Pierfrancesco was elected an Official of the Zecca or Mint for six months from March 1463, to be replaced on 6 June when he went on an embassy to Mantua.⁵³ But the death of Giovanni in November 1463, followed by Cosimo's death in August 1464, revealed a rift among the leading citizens which had important repercussions on Pierfrancesco's career. His father-in-law no longer attempted to conceal his growing hostility to Piero de' Medici's leadership and the city became deeply divided.

In 1466, as a result of a scrutiny of offices and disagreement over whether to grant a subsidy to the Sforza rulers of Milan, it was considered necessary to make all Florentine citizens over fourteen years old who were *veduti ai Tre Maggiori Uffizi* sign an official oath to agree to keep the peace.⁵⁴ But before the month was out another oath was signed by more than four hundred citizens. This unofficial oath was specifically republican, vowing (in breach of the official oath) to uphold 'just and popular government by customary means'. It was signed by men such as Angelo Acciaiuoli, Luca Pitti, Niccolò Soderini and Dietisalvi Neroni, who later that summer led a conspiracy against the regime. It was also signed by Pierfrancesco, sole Medici representative—and this was the first open sign of political dissent.⁵⁵

Pierfrancesco's equivocal attitude to his cousins at this time is graphically illustrated by an entry in the recently-discovered chronicle of Marco Parenti. Describing Piero de' Medici's preparations in the days of crisis preceding the quashing of the conspiracy on 2 September 1466, Parenti relates how Piero sent for his cousin Pierfrancesco, 'a very rich man', and asked him for a loan of ten thousand florins:

Having seen how serious the disturbances were, [Pierfrancesco] was unable to refuse what at another time he would not have given him. He at once took this money to his house and showed great generosity in all his financial needs.⁵⁶

⁵² de Roover does not discuss Pierfrancesco's role in the Medici bank as such, but there are references to his partnership in *Il Banco Medici*, pp. 127, 338, 359 and 551, cf. the *Inventarii* to the Medici Archives, *esp.* vol. iv (Rome 1963).

⁵³ ASF *Tratte* 81 fol. 47^r, cf. Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 153.

⁵⁴ On 8 May 1466, ed. A. Municchi, *La fazione antimedicca detta del Poggio*, Florence 1911, doc. 4, pp. 116–17; cf. G. Pampaloni, 'Il giuramento pubblico in Palazzo Vecchio a Firenze e un patto giurato degli anti-Medici, Maggio 1466', *Miscellanea di studi in memoria di G. Cecchini: Bulletin Senese di Storia Patria* (ii), lxxi, 1964, pp. 212–38, *esp.* 224; Rubinstein, *Government of Florence*, p. 156.

⁵⁵ The oath of 27 May 1466 is edited by

Pampaloni, above n. 54, pp. 233–8, cf. Rubinstein, pp. 156–8. Pierfrancesco's name is on p. 236.

⁵⁶ Florence, Bibl. Nazionale, MS Magl. xxv, 272, discovered and being edited by Professor Mark Phillips, to whom I am indebted for this reference (see M. Phillips, 'A Newly Discovered Chronicle by Marco Parenti', *Renaissance Quarterly*, xxxi, 1978, pp. 153–60); 'Piero trovandosi in quel tempo male in ordine a denari, mandò per Pierfrancesco de' Medici, suo cugino, huomo richissimo, et chiesegli in prestanza fiorini 10,000. Lui, veduto tanto tumulto, non gle seppe negare, che in altro tempo non l'harrebbe servito. Subito gle' portò a casa con questi denari, monstrò gran larghezza in tutti e bisogni dello spendere' (p. 78).

Here we can see the conflicting traits of openheartedness and alienation which were to characterize Pierfrancesco's attitude towards his cousins. Faced by a crisis for survival, the family bond still ensured his generous support; but already money as well as politics was affecting the relationship.

After forming part of the Balia which followed the failure of the Pitti conspiracy in September 1466, Pierfrancesco enjoyed no more political office in Piero's lifetime. Despite his loan to Piero, he was evidently compromised by his relationship to Angelo Acciaiuoli, now exiled from Florence for life, as well as by his political and financial differences with his cousins. Relations with Piero, which remained outwardly friendly, were inwardly detached, as we can see from letters exchanged in 1469. At the suggestion of two friends (both keen supporters of the Medici regime), Pierfrancesco offered to escort Clarice Orsini from Rome for her wedding to Lorenzo de' Medici in June 1469. This was the first time the mercantile Medici had married out of Florence into the Roman aristocracy and the Milanese ambassador in Florence predicted it would give the people—as well as some leading citizens—plenty to talk about.⁵⁷ But when Pierfrancesco heard Piero had changed his mind and had, after all, decided to send his son Giuliano to Rome to escort Clarice to Florence, he was quick to retract his offer—deciding (if Piero approved)

to take the route to fill my barrels, because my company would indeed be superfluous to them. I shall do my best to return as quickly as possible to be in time for the wedding, and I shall leave this responsibility to Giuliano, for it seems to me this would be more honourable for you and for all the family.⁵⁸

Later that year, in August 1469,⁵⁹ Piero de' Medici wrote to Pierfrancesco about the forthcoming Catasto, for which the two branches of the family had hitherto submitted a joint return:

I thought it would have been a good idea for us to have had a good talk together, either here or with you, to discuss your and my affairs—in my opinion, a matter of some importance. You do not think so, and I am willing to accept this patiently and will do by letter what I would have done *viva-voce*. Principally it seems to me we should divide our taxes for reasons you can understand better than me, especially in the present distribution decreed by law; and if it were arbitrary or anything else, do not doubt that as long as I am alive, you would be treated on the same

⁵⁷ S. Sacramori to G. M. Sforza (7 December 1468), Milan, Archivio di Stato (ASMi), SPE Fir. 275: 'Secondo mi questa cosa darà da dire assay al popolazzo et ad altri de quisti principali.'

⁵⁸ Pierfrancesco to Piero de' Medici, 28 March 1469, ASF MAP 16, 286, Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 153; 'Piglierò partito, se vi parrà, seguire il cammino a fornire e miei boti perchè invero la mia compagnia con loro parebbe superflua. Et ingegnieròmi tornare

più presto potrò di costà, per essere a tempo alle nozze e lascerò questa cura a Giuliano, che mi pare sia più l'onore vostra e di tucta la casa'. The two friends were Giovanni d'Antonio di Salvestro [Serristori], who witnessed Pierfrancesco's will in 1476, and Angelo della Stufa.

⁵⁹ ASF MAP 137, 114. Although '1463' is written on the back of the letter and is given as the date in the *Inventario*, the letter is actually subscribed '11 August 1469'.

basis as me. And as for pecuniary and honorary offices, I would also do the same for you as for myself, and of this you can rest assured.⁶⁰

He went on to tell Pierfrancesco that Tommaso and Accerito Portinari and all the partners and agents of the Medici companies were foregathering to settle the accounts and do their duty by Pierfrancesco and himself:

For I decided once and for all to know how we stand and in how many feet of water I find myself, in order to be able to navigate according to the disposition of the times.⁶¹

He was determined, he said, not to labour as in the past, despite understanding 'little, as you know'; he was infirm, weighed down by troubles, ill-served by everyone; and such time as was left to him he wished to spend more tranquilly than hitherto.

All these things need careful examination and I would willingly tackle them with you, because they concern you as much as me. But if you do not agree, then nor do I, though this could or should be no reason for renouncing such a task. So what I would dearly like would be for you to change your mind. If not, I shall persevere according to God's guidance and will try to see they do their duty by us both. And you will be informed of the outcome one way or another.⁶²

Piero's wish to ascertain 'how many feet of water' he found himself in is consistent with what we know of his attempt to discover the true state of the Medici bank after the deaths of Giovanni and Cosimo, as a result of which he tried to liquidate some branches and introduce economies in others.⁶³ As Giovanni's, and subsequently Giuliano's, partner in many contracts of the Medici bank, Pierfrancesco was intimately concerned with its affairs. One should not read too much into the tone of these letters, but Piero's and Cosimo's to Pierfrancesco both suggest that they were dealing patiently but firmly with someone rather intractable whom they could ill afford to alienate. Despite their clear political advantage (with their implied power to influence tax officials) Pierfrancesco was their business equal and would shortly succeed to the position of senior member of the family.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*; 'Io giudicavo essere stato bene che qui o costi ci fussimo abboccati insieme per conferire de' facti tuoi e miei, che secondo il parere mio importa. Non ti pare, et io resto paziente e contento, e farò per lettera quello che viva voce harei facto. Et principalmente a me pare che per te e per me faccia il dividerci alla gravezza per respecti che meglio di me puoi intendere, maxime nella presente distributione che è per leggie, e quando fussi arbitraria o per altro modo, non fare dubbio alcuno che vivente io, tu sarai tractato al pari di me et circa l'utile et honore tanto sempre farò per te quanto per me proprio, et di questo vivi sicuro'.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*; 'perchè io delibero una volta sapere

e fatti nostri, et in quanti palmi d'aqua io mi truovo, per navicare poi secondo la dispositione de' tempi'.

⁶² 'perchè me ne intendo poco, come tu sai'; 'Tucte queste cose vogliono bona examina, e con te io le praticarei volentieri, perchè ti tocca come a me. Hora se non ti pare, non pare ancora a me, nè per questo si debbe nè può lasciare tale opera adrieto. Il perchè se muterai proposito, l'harò charo; perseverando, io andrò drieto alla opera secondo che dio m'amaestrerà, e ingegneròmmi che a te et a me sia facto il dovere, et del seguito per uno modo o uno altro harai notitia'.

⁶³ de Roover, *Banco Medici*, pp. 519-24.

In the event the cousins did present separate tax returns, which provide interesting evidence of their relative wealth. Although Pierfrancesco was described as 'richissimo' in 1466 when he lent money to Piero, in 1469 Piero declared himself to be the richer with some 23,763 florins invested in the Monte as against Pierfrancesco's 17,163 florins, and about 44,649 florins in property as against Pierfrancesco's 30,198. The difference between their taxable assessments was some 21,000 florins, Piero (or rather, by then, Lorenzo, his heir) being taxed 332 on 66,452 florins, Pierfrancesco 225 florins on 45,065. Neither cousin gave details of business profits, and de Roover suggests that the family's temporary withdrawal of money from the Avignon bank may have been to avoid declaring it in the catasto. Perhaps as a result of Piero's concern that the officials did 'their duty by us both', the cousins were taxed for the same amount of 5,000 florins.⁶⁴ So whatever the supposed advantage of Pierfrancesco after the 1451 arbitration, it had by then apparently disappeared.

Piero died less than four months after writing to Pierfrancesco, leaving him (after Carlo de' Medici, Cosimo's illegitimate son) doyen of the family. Pierfrancesco and Carlo headed the funeral procession, followed by the young Lorenzo (heir apparent) in the second group of mourners and his brother Giuliano in the third. Lorenzo wept copiously on their return and 'he and Pierfrancesco made each other many grand gestures' (Marco Parenti reported) 'and their friends try to keep them united: we'll see what happens'.⁶⁵ The day after the funeral Pierfrancesco lent Lorenzo and Giuliano 8166 florins,⁶⁶ in return he was appointed to a series of offices. This underlines his virtual exclusion from public life during Piero's lifetime.

On 17 December Pierfrancesco was appointed an Official of the Monte in Piero's place. According to the Milanese ambassador it was a clever move. In this way Lorenzo drew Pierfrancesco to him without any show of having done so, 'although he is what your Excellence knows him to be' wrote Sacramoro, referring presumably to known differences between the two Medici.⁶⁷ The following year Pierfrancesco was appointed a Keeper of the Laws and one of the all-important *accoppiatori* in charge of electing the

⁶⁴ ASF *Catasto* 924 (S. Giov. Leon d'Oro), fols. 295^r-313^r (Piero's return) and 314^r-326^r (Pierfrancesco's return), de Roover, *Banco Medici*, p. 39. Their Monte shares were nominally worth about four times their market value.

⁶⁵ Marco Parenti to Filippo Strozzi, 3 December 1469, ed. C. Guasti in A. Macinghi negli Strozzi, *Lettere di una gentildonna fiorentina*, Florence 1877, pp. 608-9, cf. Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 153: 'Lorenzo al tornare dal morto piagneva molto per la via. Lui e Pierfrancesco si sono fatte molto grande proferte, e i loro attendono a tenergli uniti. Vedremo il fine'.

⁶⁶ ASF *MAP* 148, no. 42, fols. 61-62: receipt to Pierfrancesco signed by Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici, 4 December 1469,

cf. *MAP* 104, no. 48, fol. 460^r (1485 settlement); cf. Lorenzo de' Medici, *Lettere*, i, ed. Fubini, Florence 1977, p. 184, note, referring to 30,000 ducats lent by Pierfrancesco on the death of Piero to the Rome branch of the bank.

⁶⁷ S. Sacramori to G. M. Sforza, 13 December 1469, ASMi SPE Fir. 283, fol. 36^v: 'Lorenzo va repezando assay de li mali contenti del Mco. Piero et ad altro non attende. Suo cosino Pierofrancesco, benchè'l sia quale sa la Ex^{ta}. Vostra, l'ha saputo tirarlo a si, et hállo facto fare offitiale del Monte in locho del padre senza dimostrazione che esso l'habia facto'. Pierfrancesco's election as an Official of the Monte 'loco dicti Pieri mortui' is in ASF *Tratte* 81, fol. 58^v.

Signoria.⁶⁸ During his term as *accoppiatore*, as we shall see, Pierfrancesco was accused of deviating from the wishes of the Milanese in the election of the Gonfalonier of Justice; and the same year saw an attempt to reform the method of choosing *accoppiatori*, since it was felt they could no longer be relied on.⁶⁹ Pierfrancesco was nevertheless elected one of the first forty members of the Balìa created in 1471 to carry out this reform.⁷⁰

At the end of August 1470 Pierfrancesco was sent as ambassador with Jacopo Guicciardini to Naples and then to Rome to negotiate the general league and peace treaty signed there on 22 December.⁷¹ This Italian league of peace and friendship was intended by the Pope as the prelude to a crusade against the Turks, for which the Milanese were notably less enthusiastic than the more vulnerable southern Italian states. Florence was divided between the pro-Neapolitan peace party, which reflected the popular desire for the treaty, and the Mediceans who supported Milan. After Otto Niccolini's death in the autumn of 1470 the Mediceans gained the upper hand and had a secret clause inserted in their ambassadors' mandates to impede the signing of the treaty—which they never subsequently allowed to be ratified in Rome.⁷² According to Sacramori, Pierfrancesco was transferred from Naples to Rome, where Niccolini was ambassador, to slow negotiations to walking pace, 'being fat as he is'; once there Sacramori assured Galeazzo Maria Sforza that Lorenzo de' Medici was having him watched by Gentile Becchi (Lorenzo's former tutor) 'to prevent him fishing to the bottom'.⁷³ Although Pierfrancesco's role in these negotiations is unclear, he must have been suspect to the Milanese on account of his relationship to Angelo Acciaiuoli (then exiled in Naples), and perhaps for this reason he was transferred from Naples to Rome and then kept under Becchi's surveillance.

As an *accoppiatore* in charge of selecting the Signoria in 1470–1, Pierfrancesco was in an even better position to support or damage his cousin. In Sacramori's opinion he did not fail to use his power against the interests of Milan and Lorenzo: 'If only messer Angelo Acciaiuoli had not launched him on a bad path!'⁷⁴ he exclaimed, as he described how 'that piece of meat

⁶⁸ ASF *Tratte* 81, fol. 42^v (elected a *Conservator Legum* on 5 February 1470 for 6 months beginning on 25 March 1470) and Rubinstein, *Government of Florence*, p. 240.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 176–7, Fubini, ed., Lorenzo de' Medici, *Lettere*, i, pp. 206–7, F. Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine dal 1378 al 1509*, ed. R. Palmarocchi, Bari 1931, p. 24: 'Ma cominciando qualche volta nel Cento a variare le elezione de' disegni dati, Lorenzo e gli amici suoi cominciorono a dubitare che non variassi un tratto negli accoppiatori, di che sarebbe facilmente seguita la alterazione dello stato'.

⁷⁰ Rubinstein, *Government of Florence*, p. 303.

⁷¹ ASF *Leg. Comm.* 17, fols. 57^r–58^v (election and mandate to Naples, 27 July and 31 August 1470), 60^v–61^v (instruction to Rome, 10 October 1470). He was instructed to join Niccolini in Rome on 14

September.

⁷² On the secret clause, see Brown, *Bartolomeo Scala*, p. 172, and on the failure to ratify, Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, pp. 23–4; in general Pastor, *Storia dei Papi*, ii, pp. 401–5, and now Lorenzo de' Medici, *Lettere*, i, especially Fubini's commentary and notes to letters 60, 66, 67, 70, pp. 175–9, 211–24, 230–8 and documento I, pp. 251–6.

⁷³ S. Sacramori to Galeazzo Maria Sforza, 1 September 1470 (ASMi SPE Fir. 280): '[Pierfrancesco de' Medici] ha ad essere compagno al ditto d. Otho [Niccolini], perchè essendo luy grasso come è, vadeno di passo et non di corsa . . . et cossì andiamo cum più longa et più copertamente si pò'; 12 December 1470: 'et Lorenzo c'è ha là uno d. Gentile che tene bene dritto Piero-francesco perchè'l non pescha el fondo'.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 22 December 1470: 'Salvo se d.

who sees as little with his brain as with his eyes' was canvassing for Gonfalonier of Justice, his own candidate, Antonio Martelli, instead of the protégé of Sacramori and the Duke of Milan, Angelo della Stufa. Fortunately Lorenzo proved more compliant and agreed to support della Stufa, who was duly elected at the beginning of 1471. He introduced reforms to control the election of *accoppiatori*, evidently to eliminate the risk of uncooperative members such as Pierfrancesco.⁷⁵ Before new *accoppiatori* were elected in the summer, however, Pierfrancesco persistently supported for the Signoria men like 'Strozzo degli Strozzi whom Lorenzo did not want' but 'whom that beast Pierfrancesco wanted, and he allowed himself to be governed by that harmful Domenico Martelli, who is *illud idem* as Jacomo Pazzi.'⁷⁶ To Sacramori's annoyance, after being first rejected, both Martelli and Pazzi were appointed to the reforming Balia created that summer, along with Pierfrancesco himself.⁷⁷

Sacramori's reports are biased by personal antagonism. But we know from the attempts of Pierfrancesco's and Lorenzo's friends to 'keep them united' on Piero's death that there were serious differences which encouraged Pierfrancesco to oppose the political policies of his cousin. In linking his name with men known to be hostile to Lorenzo (Jacopo Pazzi, Domenico and Antonio Martelli) Sacramori indicates that Pierfrancesco was in the early 1470s in a position to challenge Lorenzo's primacy. This opposition had no coherent programme to compare with the republicanism of the Pitti conspirators. In 1469 Jacopo Pazzi was accused of currying favour with the people during his office as Gonfalonier of Justice by refusing to discuss money matters, thus causing trouble for his successor. Later that year 'questa umbra de d. Jacomo di Pazi' offended the Mediceans by entertaining the Venetian ambassadors in defiance of the official alliance of Florence, Milan and Naples against Venice and the Pope.⁷⁸ In 1470 it was adherence to the Aragonese party (with which Pierfrancesco was associated through Angelo Acciaiuoli) which signalled dissent, as did electoral opposition to Medicean candidates. In 1484 the son of Pierfrancesco's unpopular candidate for the Gonfaloniership of Justice, Niccolò di Antonio Martelli, offended Lorenzo de' Medici by belonging to a different electoral pressure group from Lorenzo's without his knowledge.⁷⁹ By supporting such varied expressions of political dissent Pierfrancesco helped give them a coherence they otherwise lacked.

Agnolo Azzaiolo non l'havesse messo in mal camino'.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Et quel pezzo di carne de Pierofrancesco de' Medici che vede sì pocho col cervello como cum gli occhi, perchè l'è de li accoppiatori, scrive a Lorenzo che fazza Confallonero Antonio Martello, et dàgli la sua voce et scrive et prega li compagni che fazano el medesimo'. On della Stufa's election, see Brown, *Bartolomeo Scala*, p. 64, and Rubinstein, *Government of Florence*, p. 180.

⁷⁶ 1 May 1471, ASMi SPE Fir. 281: 'Ècce anchora certi de' priori che sonno pocho benivoli d'epso Lorenzo . . . Ècce un' altro Strozzo di Strocci che Lorenzo nol voleva et

quella bestia de Pierofrancesco de' Medici l'ha voluto, et lassassi governare a quel cativo de d. Domenico Martelli, che è *illud idem* che d. Jacomo [Pazzi]'; cf. his letter of 5 May, *ibid.*: 'Quel bestiale de Pierofrancesco è stato in gran parte casone de questo per soe fantasie'.

⁷⁷ Rubinstein, *Government of Florence*, pp. 183, 303, 308.

⁷⁸ S. Sacramori to Galeazzo Maria Sforza, 7 April 1469 (ASMi SPE Fir. 276); and Lorenzo de' Medici, *Lettere*, i, p. 46, n. 3.

⁷⁹ Rubinstein, *Government of Florence*, p. 217, n. 3.

Pierfrancesco's own discontent, however, was fed by resentment about family precedence and money. Sacramori says he took it badly that the head of the house was younger than him.⁸⁰ For his part, Lorenzo resented what he regarded as Pierfrancesco's unfair share of the family possessions and business. His bitterness towards Pierfrancesco is reflected in conversations reported not only by the biased Sacramori but also by Sacramori's nephew and successor as ambassador in Florence. In January 1473, when the Duke of Milan attempted to recover a loan of ten thousand florins to Lorenzo, he was told that, far from returning his money, Lorenzo was on the point of asking for more, motivated by his trust in Galeazzo Maria and the offer made to him when his father died; without this he would have to withdraw money from the Monte,

as his cousin Piero Francesco does every day, which is a beastly thing to do and enough to make them lose credit.⁸¹

When Sacramori's nephew renewed the Duke's request a year later, using every argument he could think of, 'opportune and inopportune', Lorenzo blandly replied that he could not believe the Duke really needed the money; and he summoned the General Manager of the Medici bank, Francesco Sasseti, to explain his difficulties. These included the death of the Cardinal of San Sisto, who owed him thousands of ducats, his credit with the Apostolic Camera, from which he could withdraw not a cent:

and as a final powerful argument he alleged the division of the company of Piero Francesco his cousin, to whom he said he owed dozens and dozens of thousands of ducats, which he had to repay before all else.⁸²

At the end of that financial year Pierfrancesco was in fact owed nearly sixty-one thousand florins by Lorenzo and his brother Giuliano, and this debt was inherited by Pierfrancesco's sons to spoil their relationship with Lorenzo.⁸³

In February 1474 Pierfrancesco elected Lorenzo his procurator (for that occasion alone) for presentation to the church of St. Thomas in Florence of

⁸⁰ S. Sacramori to Galeazzo Maria Sforza, 1 May 1471 (ASMi SPE Fir. 281): 'et anchora *egre fert* che la reputatione de la casa loro sia in più giovane de luy.'

⁸¹ S. Sacramori to G. M. Sforza, 28 January 1473, ASMi SPE Fir. 283: 'de' quali dinari luy faceva concto de uscire delle la Monte che d'epso fa ogni di Pierofrancesco suo cosino, che sonno bestiale e da farli perdere el credito'.

⁸² F. Sacramori to G. M. Sforza, 4 May 1474, ASMi SPE Fir. 286: 'Et finalmente per potissima allegò la divisione della compagnia de Pierofrancesco suo cosino, al quale diceva esse debitore de desine et de desine de migliara de ducati, et bisognagli li restituisca ante omnia'.

⁸³ ASF MAP 104, no. 48, fols. 454^v, 465^v

(cf. MAP 104, no. 71, fol. 651^v): Lorenzo and Giuliano owe Lorenzo and Giovanni di Pierfrancesco fl.60,971 1s. 7d. 'per resto del conto de' traffichi et delle compagnie avute con Pierfrancesco nostro padre che finirono insino a di 24 di marzo 1474[5]'. According to the account of Lorenzo di Piero, drawn up at the time of the 1485 settlement (see n. 94 below), he owed his young cousins fl.56,509 4s. 7d. 'per uno saldo facto d'acordo con lui [Pierfrancesco] la buona memoria di Giuliano mio fratello . . . in di 26 di marzo 1475.' But this account adds a sum of 6,419 florins owed to the cousins for their share in the banking, silk and wool companies in Florence, which does not appear to be separately itemised in their accounts, ASF *Notarile G* 620, *cit.*, fol. 219^r, cf. MAP 99, no. 8, fol. 31.

which he was presumably patron. The case has been compared to Lorenzo's presentation of Marsilio Ficino the following year to the Rinieri family's benefice of St. Christopher which, according to Bernardo Rinieri, 'we gave . . . to the said messer Marsiglio at the request and instance of Lorenzo di Piero di Chosimo de' Medici.'⁸⁴ It is likely that Pierfrancesco was similarly requested to relinquish his benefice by Lorenzo, for patronage was another field in which Lorenzo, like Cosimo, extended his influence as he became politically more powerful.

Pierfrancesco died on 19 July 1476 from an abscess or growth on the hip with which he had been ill for about forty days, refusing to have it cut until, 'urged by Lorenzo and necessity', it was too late to save his life.⁸⁵ On the eve of his death he made his will, the first within his family, and among the witnesses was Guglielmo de' Pazzi. He appointed his sons his sole heirs, but if they died intestate and without masculine issue Lorenzo and Giuliano di Piero were to inherit his estate. His mother Ginevra, with Lorenzo and Giuliano, were to be their guardians.⁸⁶

Pierfrancesco's death by neglect contrasts with the more sophisticated care lavished on his valetudinarian cousins and is consistent with the sluggish rusticity which seems to have characterized this rotund countryman. Difficult as it is to see him as the leader of a formal opposition party to his cousins, he evidently harboured more resentment towards them than has hitherto been suggested. Fond though he may have been of them, his attitude towards the head of the house was always equivocal, not openly rebellious but non-cooperative: unwilling to be burdened with Cosimo's building costs or to discuss his tax returns with Piero, ready to avoid accompanying Lorenzo's bride from Rome and disinclined to follow his political or financial leadership. By openly supporting political opposition to his cousins' policies—signing the republican oath in 1466, backing rival candidates for the Signoria in 1470–1, showing ambivalence as ambassador to Naples and Rome in 1470—Pierfrancesco anticipated and must have influenced the behaviour of his sons. Thanks to his wealth and the radical example of his wife's family he sowed the seeds of their later role as supporters of policies other than those of the elder branch of the Medici family.

When Pierfrancesco died his sons Lorenzo and Giovanni were only thirteen and nine years old. The tables were now reversed, in that Lorenzo il

⁸⁴ Ricordi di Bernardo Rinieri, ASF *Conv. Soppr.* 95,212, fol. 166^r (27 October 1475): 'E a detto messer Marsiglio la demo a preghiera e stanza di Lorenzo di Piero di Chosimo de' Medici e sopra la sua coscienza se non fussi ben governata'. The comparison is made by Fubini, ed., Lorenzo de' Medici, *Lettere*, i, p. 503, n. 3.

⁸⁵ ASF *MAP* 104, no. 48, fol. 456^r: 'Il dì della morte di nostra padre che fu a dì 19 di luglio 1476'; F. Sacramori to Galeazzo Maria Sforza, 19 and 23 July 1476 (ASMI SPE Fir. 291): 'la infermita sua fuo una apostematione in una cossa, de la quale el stete amalato circa de xl. dì'.

⁸⁶ ASF *MAP* 159, fols. 13^r–15^v, drawn up by ser Antonio di ser Battista Bartolomei on 18 July 1476. The witnesses were ser Nerozzo di Antonio da Prato, cathedral chaplain, Giovanni di Antonio Serristori, Francesco di Tommaso Sasseti (Director General of the Medici Bank), Guglielmo di Antonio Pazzi, Fruosino da Panzano, Sandro Pagagnotti (Medici factor and arbitrator between the two branches of the family in 1485) and Lorenzo di Bernardo de' Medici. Pierfrancesco bequeathed £1 piccolo to the Opera of the Florentine Walls and £2 piccoli to the Opera of the Duomo and its new sacristy.

Magnifico was the oldest member of the family and—after the murder of his brother Giuliano two years later—was entitled to a whole share of the wealth of his branch of the family in contrast to his cousins' divided patrimony. The situation was uncomfortably reminiscent of Pierfrancesco's childhood in the 1440s: for the second time the younger branch of the family fell under the tutelage of the elder branch. At first their relationship seemed friendly enough. In September 1475 Lorenzo il Magnifico invited his young cousin Lorenzo to go to Pisa with him. Although Pierfrancesco refused to allow him to go then, he professed to be pleased for him to go later.⁸⁷ Shortly after Pierfrancesco's death his young sons accepted Lorenzo's suggestion that they should buy Angelo della Stufa's farm at Castello because (they wrote to him): 'we are certain you would not advise us in any manner contrary to our interests and that you have no reason to harm us'.⁸⁸ In saying this, however, they (perhaps unwittingly) voiced a fear that gained substance in the years which followed. Lorenzo was in a position to exercise the same control over his young cousins as Cosimo had formerly exercised over their father, and to deprive them—like him—of the free use of their money during their years of tutelage. According to them he did not fail to profit from the opportunity.

Their charges against Lorenzo il Magnifico at the time of the 1485 arbitration are quite specific. They include the following: he failed to pay them interest on the value of their companies, which totalled fl. 130,557; or to repay them money lent since their father's death, totalling fl. 53,643; or their father's loan to Lorenzo of fl. 8166.⁸⁹ They claimed that they suffered financially from having to keep several thousands of florins at hand in ready cash (referring to the thirteen bags containing 20,043 florins given to them by Lorenzo on 4 December 1476 after their father's death but retained by Lorenzo in his house and taken back for his own use on 1 May 1478).⁹⁰ They alleged that they were derived of their Mugello possessions and produce which, for want of money, they were forced to sell prematurely. By taking their money Lorenzo prevented them from continuing their policy of buying property at a good price when the opportunity arose (here doubtless referring to the series of forced loans totalling 33,600 florins demanded from them during the Pazzi War in 1478–9).⁹¹ For the same reason they were unable to pay their taxes, thereby incurring fines in addition to the taxes—and also, they might have added, loss of office, since in 1484 Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco was

⁸⁷ Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco to Lorenzo il Magnifico, 4 September 1475, ASF *MAP* 32, 541, edited and translated by E. H. Gombrich, *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, ii, London 1972, p. 79, no. 1.

⁸⁸ ASF *MAP* 33, 741, 2 September 1476, *ibid.*, p. 80, no. 2.

⁸⁹ ASF *MAP* 104, no. 48, fol. 456^r, cf. n. 66 above.

⁹⁰ See n. 91 below.

⁹¹ ASF *Notarile G* 620, fol. 219^v, listing two sums of 22,600 and 11,000 florins borrowed on 1 May 1478 and 27 September 1479 respectively (Lorenzo il Magnifico's account, drawn up by ser Simone Grazzini, which formed the

basis of the official settlement in 1485; a copy or draft of part of it exists in the hand of Lorenzo's secretary, ser Niccolò Michelozzi, in *MAP* 99, no. 8, fols. 30–31), and *MAP* 104, no. 48, fols. 454^v, 459^r, 460^r, 467^v, listing five sums of 5000, 8000, 8000, 1600 and 11,000 florins borrowed on 2 May, 20 June, 8 and 13 August 1478 and 27 September 1479 respectively (Lorenzo and Giovanni di Pierfrancesco's accounts, a series of drafts in differing arrangements); cf. *MAP* 137, no. 1004 (a receipt for 33,000 *scudi d'oro* lent to Lorenzo il Magnifico by the Bank of Pierfrancesco de' Medici on 14 August, 1 October and 27 September 1479). This sum is

one of only two members of the scrutiny council to be disqualified because of tax debts.⁹² They also lost their payments from the Monte. As a further inconvenience they were unable to invest in the silk or wool or any other industry, for thanks to Lorenzo they had lost credit and could do nothing without money.

If we had been able to avoid lending him this sum of money, we should happily have done so and not only would we not have lent it to him but we would have got back what he held before. But we were forced to lend it, and if we had not done so he had already told me once in his study that as guardian of our inheritance he would take it. Then we asked him every day and tried to withdraw as much money from the bank as possible, but for the last four years he has prevented us from making withdrawals.⁹³

There was disagreement about the total amount of money Lorenzo il Magnifico owed his cousins when Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco came of age, but a settlement was made whereby he gave them his Cafaggiolo estate and some sixty-six farms, mills and houses in the Mugello: amendments in favour of Lorenzo il Magnifico were later made.⁹⁴

considerably less than that of 53,643 florins quoted by de Roover (*Il Banco Medici*, p. 532 and note 56, using Lorenzo and Giovanni's accounts, misdating the last payment in 1478) or that of 60,000 ducats quoted by Guicciardini (*Storie fiorentine*, p. 76). The difference is accounted for by the sum of 20,043 florins (listed by de Roover as the first of six loans borrowed on 1 May 1478) which was in fact money held by Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici for Lorenzo and Giovanni di Pierfrancesco in 13 bags, given to them after the death of their father on 4 December 1476 and taken back by Lorenzo il Magnifico on 1 May 1478. When this sum figures in Lorenzo and Giovanni di Pierfrancesco's accounts of money owed to them by Lorenzo il Magnifico it is nearly always balanced by an identical sum owed by them to their cousin (*MAP* 104, no. 48, fols. 454^v-455^r; 465^v-466^r) and where it is not, it is listed separately from the other five sums borrowed in 1478-9 (*ibid.*, fols. 461^r, 462^r; cf. 459^r, 460^r, 467^v). While it was doubtless used by Lorenzo il Magnifico for the expenses of the Pazzi War instead of for the needs of his young wards as intended, by common agreement it was not included with the other loans from his cousins in 1478-9.

⁹² Rubinstein, *Government of Florence*, p. 212.

⁹³ *ASF MAP* 104, no. 48, fol. 456^v: 'Se noi avessimo potuto fare di non prestargli questa somma di danari, volentieri l'aremo fatto, et non solamente non glele aremo prestati, ma aremo rivoluti quelli teneva inanzi. Ma fu

forza glene prestassimo che se non glene avessimo prestati, mi disse già nello scrittoio suo che chome tutore della redita se gli torrebbe. Di poi glene abbiamo richiessti ogni giorno, et ingiegnatoci di trarre del bancho più danari che sia stato possibile. Ma lui da quatro anni in qua ci à serrato la tratta.'

⁹⁴ See *ASF Notarile G* 620, fols. 218^r-225^v (the arbitration by Domenico Bartoli and Ridolfo Ridolfi on 22 November 1485, cf. *MAP* 159, fols. 49^r-62^v, and *MAP* 99, no. 8, fols. 30-31 and n. 91 above) and *ASF MAP* 104, no. 48, fols. 454^r-469^r. It is difficult to compare the two sets of accounts accurately, for not only do they present payments differently, but Lorenzo and Giovanni di Pierfrancesco's consist of a series of differing accounts with no final statement, some including interest due and some not. In general both sets agree over sums of money lent to the sons of Pierfrancesco by the Medici bank for expenses during their tutelage, over building expenses in San Lorenzo (see n. 23 above), over money owed to them after the death of their grandfather, half of which Lorenzo il Magnifico retained for the building expenses of San Marco (7776 florins, despite the provisions of the 1451 settlement, see p. 85 above), over their share of the losses incurred by the London branch of the Bank (22,985 florins) and over their loans to Lorenzo il Magnifico during the Pazzi War (n. 91 above). According to the 1485 settlement (based on Lorenzo il Magnifico's

Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco pursued the *cursus honorum* in Florence, which—like his father—he entered earlier than he should have done: at the age of seventeen a member of the 1480 Balia,⁹⁵ at the age of twenty an ambassador to France (thanks to the mediation of his father's former secretary, Bartolomeo Scala, by then first chancellor of Florence);⁹⁶ in 1484 a member of the scrutiny council (though disqualified for debts, as we have seen), in 1493 drawn Gonfalonier of Justice.⁹⁷ Through his mother's family he also associated with the 'republican' opposition group of 1466 which came into its own again after the 1494 revolution. He spoke out in favour of his exiled Acciaiuoli uncles, and after their return from Naples was a close friend of his cousin Zanobi Acciaiuoli.⁹⁸ He blamed Lorenzo il Magnifico for failing to support his friends the Vespucci in their affairs.⁹⁹ In January 1489 he and his brother Giovanni joined the Milanese and Genoese ambassadors in Florence in asking Lorenzo il Magnifico to pardon a youth who had killed a servant of the hated Otto di Guardia and had then attempted to escape. But after giving them 'fair words', Lorenzo il Magnifico instead ordered the youth to be hanged from a window of the Bargello and had four of those who had encouraged his escape tortured, refusing himself to leave the piazza until the crowd was completely quiet.¹⁰⁰

In April 1494 Lorenzo and Giovanni, because of their close relationship with Charles VIII of France and Lodovico Sforza (no longer friends of Piero de' Medici), were exiled to their estates outside Florence for conspiring against the government. For this disloyalty the Council of Seventy wanted to imprison them for life until dissuaded by Piero di Lorenzo.¹⁰¹ They remained in the Mugello until October, when they fled to join the French King and

accounts, see above n. 91), Lorenzo owed his young cousins 110,399 florins, they owed him 48,992 florins; according to them, he owed them 130,557 florins, they owed him 51,396 florins, making his outstanding debt to them some 79,161 florins instead of 61,407 florins according to the adjudicators. On 28 September 1486 Sandro Pagagnotti adjudged that Lorenzo il Magnifico was now owed 2,118 florins by his cousins who were to return four farms to him (ASF *Notarile G* 620, *cit.*, fols. 230^r–231^v). On 1 February 1488 they acquired more Mugello property from him worth 5200 florins, for which they paid by giving him their credit of 5250 ducats with the Duke of Urbino for jewels sold to him (ASF *MAP* 104, no. 48, fol. 464^{r-v}).

⁹⁵ Rubinstein, *Government of Florence*, p. 315.

⁹⁶ ASF *Leg. Comm.* 21, fols. 49^v–52^r; *MAP* 39, 44 and 51, 265, B. Scala and Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco to Lorenzo il Magnifico, 16 and 17 October 1483, see Brown, *Bartolomeo Scala*, p. 120.

⁹⁷ ASF *Tratte* 15 (unfoliated): 29 September 1484: 'scrutineum arrotorum': elected by 64 votes in favour, 2 against; and 28 August

1493: listed under 'veduti vivi' (when he was still too young to exercise the office, however).

⁹⁸ See his letter to Giovanni Lanfredini in Naples, 28 May 1484, Florence, Bibl. Naz. MS II, v, 12, fol. 52, recommending 'la faccenda di Raffaello Acciaiuolo mio tio', and on Zanobi, see the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, i, s.v.

⁹⁹ See his letter to Sandro Pagagnotti, ASF *MAP* 84, 104 (undated), edited and translated by Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, pp. 80–81, no. 3.

¹⁰⁰ Described by the Ferrarese ambassador in Florence, 19 January 1489, ed. A. Cappelli, *Lettere di Lorenzo de' Medici . . . conservate nell' Archivio Palatino di Modena (Atti e memorie d. R. Deput. di storia patria per le provincie modenese e parmense, sez. di Modena)*, i, 1863, p. 305.

¹⁰¹ See the 'Libro di debitori e creditori e ricordanze' of Tommaso Ginori, ed. J. Schnitzer, *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte Savonarolas*, i, Munich 1902, p. 94. Their decree of exile by the Signoria on 29 May is in ASF *Signori Deliberazioni* 96, fol. 95^r.

Lodovico Sforza outside Milan, returning to Florence on 12 November, three days after their cousin Piero had fled.¹⁰²

It was at this time that the brothers changed their name from Medici to Popolani. Nonetheless it is unlikely that their sympathies were any more populist than those of their great-uncle Angelo Acciaiuoli, who, while fighting for the cause of 'liberty' in Florence,¹⁰³ enjoyed a close and courtly relationship with the King of France and the Duke of Milan. Nor did the brothers sustain for long their role of party leaders.¹⁰⁴ They offered an alternative to their cousins' increasingly unitary regime in the years before the revolution, like crown princes adopting policies which contrasted with those of the reigning monarch. In Francesco Guicciardini's *Dialogo del Reggimento di Firenze* the Medicean Bernardo del Nero says that after Giuliano was murdered in 1478 and Lorenzo injured, 'we thought, if Lorenzo died, of turning to Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco because he was the nearest', suggesting that Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco was regarded as a viable successor (although in these circumstances not an alternative) to the primacy of the elder Medici.¹⁰⁵

Options for dissent were limited in late fifteenth-century Florence; but such as they were, Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco took them. In external politics he supported the old French and Milanese entente recently abandoned by Piero di Lorenzo with—as Guicciardini thought—such disastrous consequences for the peace of Italy.¹⁰⁶ At home he let himself be associated (at least in public) with a more humanitarian approach to law and order, sympathizing with the popular hatred of the Otto di Guardia and its arbitrary justice which Lorenzo il Magnifico upheld, and perhaps too with the surprised reaction of visiting ambassadors to Lorenzo's secret methods of investigating crimes.¹⁰⁷

In the field of patronage Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco disowned the building programme of his cousins and supported a new trend which contrasted with their less adventurous tastes. He was one of Botticelli's principal patrons. It was he who commissioned *Spring, Pallas and the Centaur*, a Bacchic frieze for his house in Florence, and probably Botticelli's illustrations for Landino's *Commen-*

¹⁰² *Ricordanze* di Tribaldo de' Rossi, *Delizie*, xxiii, p. 295, Luca Landucci, *Diario fiorentino*, ed. I. del Badia, Florence 1883, p. 78.

¹⁰³ *Delizie*, *cit.*, p. 291: 'esere tutta 2 baroni de Re di Francia, o veramente Lorenzino sagretario de Re di Francia e Giovanni suo fratello barone de Re, chosi si dicie per el popolo'. Cf. Jean Matharon's instruction, 11 June 1494, ed. G. Canestrini-A. Desjardins, *Négotiations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane*, i, Paris 1859, p. 416, commending Lorenzo and Giovanni, 'tum etiam ipsius Regis officiales sunt ordinarii'. On Angelo Acciaiuoli's relationship with the Dukes of Milan, cf. *Dispatches with related documents*, quoted in n. 27 above.

¹⁰⁴ On Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco's role after the revolution, see, for example, S. Bertelli, 'Machiavelli e la politica estera fiorentina', *Studies on Machiavelli*, ed. M. P. Gilmore,

Florence 1972, pp. 31-72.

¹⁰⁵ Ed. R. Palmarocchi, Bari 1932, p. 165: 'noi che desideravamo uno stato simile, pensamo, in caso che Lorenzo morissi, voltarci a Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco, perchè era el più prossimo'.

¹⁰⁶ *Storie fiorentine*, p. 88.

¹⁰⁷ See the comment of the Modenese ambassador on the capture and examination of two men suspected of attempting to murder Lorenzo: 'Nondimeno l'esame secretissimo che è stato fatto di loro, come si è inteso, ha dato ammirazione non poca a noi altri ambasciatori che lo abbiamo inteso. Il qual esame è stato fatto per li infrascritti cittadini primarii e congiunti di affinità e stretta amicizia con il M^{co} Lorenzo', ed. A. Cappelli, *Lettere di Lorenzo de' Medici*, *cit.*, p. 308 (18 May 1490).

tary on Dante.¹⁰⁸ He was one of Michelangelo's first patrons.¹⁰⁹ He befriended Marsilio Ficino, who asked him to provide for his tomb and in return bequeathed Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco, 'for his kindness to him and on account of certain just reasons moving his mind and conscience', his treasured copy of Plato's *Dialogues* in Greek.¹¹⁰ He was a close friend of the soldier poet Michele Marullo, who dedicated to him his *Epigrams* and paganizing *Hymni naturales*.¹¹¹ Marullo admired the atheist Lucretius and his doctrine of pleasure as the highest good, so antipathetic to stoic upholders of public order in the state, and he may have helped to stimulate an interest in this still relatively unknown poet among Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco's circle. Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco was also the friend and business associate of Amerigo Vespucci, and it was to him that Amerigo dedicated his famous *Mundus novus* describing for the first time his discovery of people in southern America without temples or laws, who 'live according to nature and can be said to be epicureans rather than stoics'.¹¹² Amerigo Vespucci's family, too, felt they had been badly treated by the elder Medici and it is possible that Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco and his friends found in epicureanism support for their anti-authoritarian views.

Pierfrancesco did not share his son's cultural tastes, but in other ways there were strong resemblances between father and son. Francesco Guicciardini, who must have known Lorenzo, described him as 'good natured' compared with his more restless brother Giovanni,¹¹³ recalling Nicodemo Trancedini's description of the young Pierfrancesco's 'rare and courteous nature'. But both Pierfrancesco and Lorenzo also harboured strong feelings of resentment beneath their friendliness which queered their pitch with the heads of the family, particularly Pierfrancesco's relationship with the young Lorenzo il Magnifico, his son Lorenzo's with Lorenzo and Piero and then, more reprehensibly, with his brother's young son, Giovanni delle Bande Nere.¹¹⁴ The family bond kept the two branches outwardly united until 1494, but the seeds of dissent, expressed outwardly by contrasting attitudes to politics, law and patronage, had been sown many years earlier in Pierfrancesco's childhood.

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¹⁰⁸ See R. Lightbown, *Sandro Botticelli*, London 1978, i, pp. 56, 70-73, 82, 92, 99, 148; Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, pp. 128-9, 40-41, 64-66; and in general on Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco, Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, pp. 353-357; and bibliographies in P. O. Kristeller, *Supplementum ficinianum*, Florence 1937, ii, pp. 331-2, Canestrini-Desjardins, *Negotiations*, i, pp. 198-200.

¹⁰⁹ Lightbown, *Botticelli*, i, p. 129.

¹¹⁰ Ficino's will, dated 29 September 1499, ed. Kristeller, *Supplementum ficinianum*, ii, pp. 194, 195: 'tamquam de se bene merito et ob certas iustas causas animum et conscientiam suam moventes'.

¹¹¹ *Carmina*, ed. A. Perosa, Verona 1951,

cf. A. Perosa, 'Studi sulla formazione delle raccolte di poesie del Marullo', *Rinascimento*, i, 1950, pp. 133-4.

¹¹² *Mundus novus*, 1503-4, facsimile reprinted in *Prime relazioni di navigatori italiani sulla scoperta dell' America*. Colombo, Vespucci, Verazzano, ed. L. Firpo, Turin 1966, p. 88: 'Preterea nullum habent templum, et nullam tenent legem . . . Vivunt secundam naturam et epycuri potius dici possunt quam stoici'.

¹¹³ *Storie fiorentine*, p. 90: 'uomo bonario'.

¹¹⁴ Pieraccini, *La Stirpe*, i, p. 355, describing Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco's treatment of his nephew and ward: 'poco scrupoloso, punto generoso, molto egoista'.