

Roland Günter

A Town in Tuscany

A fabric woven of history, town planning, architecture and images

Biographical notes

Roland Günter studied in Münster, Munich, Istanbul and Rome, and received his doctorate in Munich in 1965. He worked at the Rhineland Office for Public Monuments in Bonn between 1965 and 1970, where he became interested in the cultural heritage of the industrial age, and classified factories, infrastructure and housing estates as listed buildings. He was one of the leading academics responsible for bringing about major changes in the criteria for the listing of buildings with regard to their age and type of use, and encouraged the involvement of academics working in other disciplines. He was appointed to a professorship in Bielefeld in 1972. During his time there, he also worked at the universities of Cologne, Dortmund, Duisburg, Zurich, Berlin, Hamburg (where he obtained his post-doctoral teaching qualification), Karlsruhe and Bochum ("the Bochum Chair"). In 1976/1977 he was involved in the Dutch universities' *Wissenschaftskolleg* in Wassenaar (Leiden). He supported over one hundred citizens' action groups, and contributed in many cases to their successful outcomes. Between 1989 and 1999, his writings supported the Emscher Park (in the Ruhr district) International Building Exhibition, the most important structural town planning programme in the world. Since 1996, he has also worked for a similar International Building Exhibition in Saxony-Anhalt. He has been chairman of the German Werkbund (Association of Craftsmen) in North Rhine-Westphalia since 2002. He lives with his family in Eisenheim (Oberhausen).

Publications

Roland Günter has written extensively in German. Several hundreds of his works are listed in a comprehensive bibliography to be found at: www.roland-guenter.de.

The translator

Anna Viesel graduated in Modern and Medieval Languages from Cambridge University, and now lives

and works as a translator in Trier, Germany. She heard about Roland Günter's book in its original German when she was staying at the castle of Montauto at the kind invitation of Countess Lucrezia Barbolani di Montauto, and attending the Southbank Sinfonia summer music festival in Anghiari. The festival is the climax of a year of orchestral playing on the part of young musicians from all over the world under the direction of Simon Over. They are based in London, but come out to Anghiari every July to perform several orchestral and chamber music concerts a day in the town of Anghiari and at beautiful venues in the surrounding area, many of which feature in this book.

A note from the translator to the reader of the English online version

The original German edition of the book is richly illustrated with photographs, sketches and maps, unfortunately missing from this online-only translation. You may, however, access the German e-book with all its illustrations at roland-guenter-werke.de. You will find an English translation of the captions in a separate document on the website. The print version, published in 2006, also contained an index, which is not reproduced here. Instead, I hope readers will find the summary of each chapter in the Table of Contents may help them to find their way around the book. The superscript numbers in the text refer to endnotes that are to be found at the end of each of the 17 chapters. A bibliography is added at the end of the document.

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This book is dedicated to Martin Einsele (1928-2000). As a town planner, he was strongly influenced by geography. He was a sensitive architect, and was the first to be critical of planning in the Ruhr district. We have him to thank for the first sustainable redevelopment of a West German town, the town of Hattingen. He was a professor of the universities of Dortmund, Darmstadt and Karlsruhe. Martin was a frequent visitor to Anghiari, and designed the table and bench in front of our house on Poggiolino square.

My thanks are also due to: Janne Günter, Stefania Bolletti, Gian Franco Di Pietro, Michael Peterek, Darko Stevcic, Walter Del Sere, Franco Talozzi, Anna Albergo, Danilo Bianchi, Enrichetta Panci, Nello Scimia, Pasquale Meoni, Valerio Dell'Omarino, Fabiano Giabbanelli, Annibale Del Sere, Pippo and Vittoria Bellanti, Santino Farinelli and his wife, Bruno Rossi, Stefanie Risse, Barbara Wameling-Einsele, Birgitta Lancé (Deutscher Werkbund), Elmar Lancé (Deutscher Werkbund). I am grateful to Pietro Lazzarini, who opened my eyes to the culture of Tuscany many years ago, and to Vittorio Dini,

who importantly preserved the memory of a declining agro-pastoral culture in the Apennines.

My thanks also go out to the Münschke family, who have once again helped to produce an extremely complex book.

Ricardo and Assunta in wonderful Pennabilli-Maciano again placed their beautiful *albergo* Lago Verde at my disposal when I was intensively engaged in writing this book. I should also like to thank Gianni Giannini and Tonino Guerra for their inspiration.

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1. Introduction

by Vittorio Dini

2. Overture

The author promises his readers a better understanding of larger central Italian towns through his “biography” of the now small town of Anghiari. He turns our attention to a realistic appreciation of the town past and present, of cultural and social objects and events, the people that created them, and the landscape that shaped them.

3. Fundamentals

The author describes the Tiber and Sovara valleys, the surrounding mountains, the climate and the seasons. He provides information on the size of the area, the natural resources, changes in population density, and the system of local government. The reader is introduced to Lorenzo Taglieschi, the 17th century local historian who provides much of the background material for the earlier part of this book. The chapter concludes with a discussion on Anghiari's unique location and the preservation of its history.

Chapter sub-headings: The geography of the town – An invaluable written source: Lorenzo Taglieschi – Heritage as a matter of course, or as a stumbling block – Morphology: the drama of the landscape

4. Features of urban development

This chapter chronicles the building of the fortress and the encircling town walls over the course of four centuries. It contrasts the part of Anghiari protected by a wall with the later development of the town beyond the wall. It deals with the erection of town gates and the making of paths and alleyways, public squares and roads.

Chapter sub-headings: Urban expansion and town fortress – The Etruscan Upper Town – The Upper Town under supreme rulers – The fortress with its original wall c. 1000 – The first phase of enlargement and construction of a second wall about 1048 – A number of enlargements – The second enlargement around 1181 with the third wall – The large unwalled sector – the *borghetto* about the year 1200 – The town tower (13th century) – The third circular enlargement and the fourth wall c. 1200 – The outer district beyond the gates: the *stradone* and the large market square, the Mercatale – The fortress (*cassero*) of 1334 – Relocation of the abbey (1359); its surrounding district – The fourth circular enlargement and the fifth wall c. 1420 – The modernisation of the fortress – The impact of the fortress on people's minds – Views of the town – The unwalled Croce district – The new 18th century district along the town wall – The only break in the structure (1932) and the move away from the Old Town (1960 onwards) – A change of perspective

5. Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages

Here the author charts the history of the town from Etruscan times to the late twelfth century. He speculates on the origin of the name Anghiari. He pays particular attention to the Lombards and their successors the Franks, their fortresses, the feudal system under their rule, the relationship between town and country, as well as relations between the local population and their Germanic overlords. The latter part of the chapter details how the monks of Camaldoli came to rule Anghiari, how the town won a degree of independence, but then came under the influence of Arezzo.

Chapter sub-headings: Etruscan and Roman Anghiari – From Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages: the Ostrogoths – Destruction and survival in Antiquity – Rule from Byzantium (the Eastern Roman Empire) – Two centuries of Lombard rule and the start of a long process of re-stratification – Religion as a power base – Rule by the Frankish kings – The social system and the chain of

fortresses – The people's assembly as an early form of participation – Self-government (1075) – The supremacy of the Camaldoleses monks – The first free citizens – Conflicts and steps towards emancipation

6. The Middle Ages

In this chapter the author discusses who ruled Anghiari, and when, from the 13th to the early 16th century, the officials involved in the administration of the town and the surrounding area, the popular movement, the class system and the resulting power struggles.

Chapter sub-headings: General political climate and micro-structure – Town rulers from the Tarlati family (1322 onwards) – Regulatory measures and infrastructure in medium-sized towns – Piety, socio-cultural networks, welfare for the poor – Mendicant orders: reforms, poor relief and participation – Hospitals provide relief for the poor in times of great adversity – The surrounding countryside

7. Transition to the Florentine Republic

Here the author describes how Anghiari came under Florentine rule at the end of the 14th century. He examines the new local administration, the office of the vicario, taxation and the criminal justice system.

Chapter sub-headings: A small territory in difficulties – The administration and its headquarters: the palace of the vicario – The town was largely self-governing – Regulation and conflicting interests – Taxes and dues

8. Life in the Late Middle Ages

In this long and important chapter the author deals with food production in the surrounding area and its distribution through markets in the town, the movement of people from the countryside, the growing variety of trades and professions together with their workplaces and shops. Festivities, births, marriages and deaths are all mentioned, but the greater part of this chapter concerns everyday life in Anghiari, the families who dwelt in the town, and their living quarters. The author relates the buildings and thoroughfares of the Late Middle Ages to the present day, pointing out features of interest that are still visible. He gives his readers a tour of the Museo Taglieschi, and takes them on a walk through the streets and squares. He then moves to a discussion of the local waterways and the water supply in the town, and closes with remarks on the hills and mountains surrounding Anghiari.

Chapter sub-headings: Town and country – Ways of life around 1385 – Trades and trading – Fellow citizens of the Jewish faith – A wedding – Festivities – Culture of death – Education – Home life – Terraced houses on Via della Misericordia – The Taglieschis' house: (museum) – Streets – Tracks – The road system in the surrounding area – Squares – Arcades – Water – The series of mills – The mountains

9. Religion and social culture

After a short discourse on religion in Antiquity, the author finds echoes of the ancient beliefs in Christianity. He goes on to trace the development of Catholicism up to the end of the 18th century, particularly in its relationship to secular power and in its charitable works. Referring to Anghiari itself, he sketches the history of the abbey (Badia), and discusses the beliefs of the townspeople themselves, their need for religion in their personal lives and their belief in miracles. The church buildings in Anghiari are described together with the works of art housed in them. The final section in this chapter refers to the charitable activities of the confraternities.

Chapter sub-headings: Magic, disasters, miracles, piety – Sacred places – Socio-cultural structure of the town; confraternities

10. Aesthetics

The author looks at Anghiari from the aesthetic point of view, both what it has been given by nature and what Man has made of it architecturally. He traces fashions in buildings and building materials, relating these to the attitudes of the designers and their clients. He returns to the topic of the churches from Chapter 9, commenting on the buildings, their altars and works of art, and the artists that produced them. He re-visits the Museo Taglieschi first described in Chapter 8, concentrating above all on the paintings.

Chapter sub-headings: Aspects of aesthetics – Houses and space – The way the town saw itself – Burgundian luxury as a model – The sign system of the Florentine avant-garde in the 15th century – A 16th century sign system – Symbolic community buildings – Feast days – The world of paintings – The townsfolk take possession of sacred places – The iconic and the presence of Man – Artists – Museo Taglieschi

11. Disasters

In this chapter, the author chronicles both natural and man-made disasters through the centuries. Anghiari suffered plundering from armies on the move, occupation, and direct attacks from enemy forces. The outstanding humanitarian disasters were recurring outbreaks of the plague. At regular intervals the town also suffered from famine as a result of failing harvests due to floods, storms or drought.

Chapter sub-headings: Rootless men take to soldiering – Military disasters – Pacifists – A bandit as a mercenary general – Mercenary leaders from Anghiari – The Battle of Anghiari – Niccolò Machiavelli on the Battle of Anghiari – Life as an armourer – Non-political violence and an enduring legend – Disasters

12. The rule of the Medici 1512-1737

This chapter contains background material on the politics of Florence and the rise to power of the Medici family. The author chronicles the history of their rule up to the end of their dynasty. Anghiari is mentioned in this context above all in connection with disputes and fighting between the Medici supporters and their opponents.

Chapter sub-headings: The first coup d'état: rule by princes – The Republic is temporarily re-born – The second coup d'état: the princes rule once and for all – Rule by the grand dukes – A simmering state of civil war – The last three Medici rulers – Living conditions and infrastructure

13. Rule by the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty (1737-1759) – the 18th century

The author opens this chapter by recounting how Tuscany came under Habsburg-Lorraine rule once the Medici dynasty died out. He then moves to Anghiari itself and the founding and building of the theatre, which is still standing and in use nowadays. The third and final part of this chapter concerns the reforms, for instance the abolition of capital punishment, introduced by the Habsburg-Lorraine grand dukes.

Chapter sub-headings: Transfer of power – The burghers' theatre – Decline and Habsburg-Lorraine reforms

14. The 19th century 1800-1914

After giving a brief description of the changes wrought in Tuscany during Napoleonic times, the author sketches the situation in agriculture, health and education prior to the industrial era. He then describes the advent of the railway line between Anghiari and Arezzo. In the next section, he passes from local to national politics, charting the development of the Risorgimento and the movement for Italian unification. Focussing again on Anghiari, he gives his readers a taste of the local political drama of the times. The building of the town's covered market is dealt with in detail, with the author returning briefly to the national level and the situation at the beginning of the 20th

century, before finishing the chapter with a portrait of Anghiari at this same time.

Chapter sub-headings: Napoleonic rule and the Restoration – The beginnings of an industrial society – Industrialisation of routes: road and rail – On the way to a “second bourgeois society” – A politically motivated crime on the piazza – The covered piazza, Galleria Magi (1882/1889) – An uneasy transition to the industrial era – Brigandry – The Giolitti era: a time of economic boom, corruption and militarisation

15. The first half of the 20th century

As in Chapter 15, the author moves constantly from the national political level (in this case the parts played by socialism, communism and fascism) to the effect of national politics on Anghiari and the surrounding region, covering the period from the First World War to the end of the Second World War. The author charts the rise and fall of Mussolini and the part played by Italy in the Second World War. The chapter closes with the influence of fascists in Anghiari and the activities of the resistance movement.

Chapter sub-headings: Turmoil and the early industrial era – Fascism

16. The second half of the 20th century

This long chapter is full of detail on Anghiari in the post-War era up to the time of the writing of this book (published in 2006). It is also the most personal chapter in the work, in that it details the author's active support for the preservation of the beautiful old town and his suggestions for its future development. He assesses the work of local politicians, their failures and achievements, and introduces his readers to a number of the town's inhabitants, having recorded their life stories and his conversations with them.

Chapter sub-headings: Industrialisation and socio-cultural change after 1955 – Simple houses undergo change – Suburbanisation – Busatti - a factory producing historic textiles – The banks – The decorative arts; antiques; restoration – Changes in the life of the town – A biography of Bruno Rossi – Festivities – The era of Mayor Franco Talozzi (1976-1991) – The Old Town as a complex monument (1980) – Culture in a small town: the international Culture Prizes (from 1979) – Events – Parco Tiberina: an innovative tourist project fails – Political repercussions from the Albiano project – Changes in farming areas – Politics at all levels as entertainment – The land development plan: a safeguard, and its prospects for the future – An interview with Professor Gian Franco Di Pietro – A contradictory society – New citizens – More work on the Old Town – Popular theatre – A project to enhance the square in front of the theatre – The Free University of Autobiography

17. The urban fabric in architectural theory

Introduction by Professor Vittorio Dini

Roland Günter, whom I have known for nearly 30 years, is a German academic, a student of cultural history and an astute researcher into Tuscan culture.

Many German visitors to Tuscany, referred to in their homeland as the “Tuscany faction”, have read his book “Toskana” since it appeared in 1985. His readers are both travellers and owners of second homes who have gone on to acquire a second culture. Several editions of “Toskana” have been published, including a recent one.

Roland Günter has a profound understanding of Tuscany. He looks at it not from the outside, as many visitors do, but from within. Many academics fail in this respect, but it is the only way to get to

the heart of a people's mentality. This approach alone will reveal the idiosyncrasies of hearts and minds, and of behavioural patterns. He and I share an affinity with those historians, particularly those of the French School, who are interested in the history of the human mind.

We have discussed such matters at length on many occasions, over a good meal washed down with excellent wine.

Professor Günter celebrates his birthday on the same day as Max Weber. We might add that, according to the myth of Romulus and Remus, it is the day Rome was founded in 753 BC. Max Weber had, of course, died before Professor Günter was born, but the writings of this great sociologist had a profound influence on him. In particular, Max Weber taught him to bring a lively curiosity to his travels, and to approach the world with the toolbox of interdisciplinary studies. It is a truism to say "life is a whole", but many academics seem to have forgotten that this simple fact applies both to individual lives and to the collective. Roland Günter is not a specialist who dissects life, scalpel in hand, as is unfortunately so often the case. He looks for – and finds – links and continuities, and relates them to the values, knowledge and traditions of the various generations.

It is a method of investigation that renders this book useful for workers in a variety of disciplines. It provides insights that are often exciting and unexpected.

This is the first book of its kind – the first to examine a Tuscan town in all its complexity. One would have to search for a long time to find a similar work on another town.

His research is the result of 30 years of experience in a town between the rivers Arno and Tiber. Life lies at the heart of it. Roland Günter spent many years in other Italian towns too, above all in Lucca, Arezzo, Urbino, Rome, Santarcangelo di Romagna and Pennabilli.

He is at home in various academic disciplines when working on architectural history and the history of town planning, but is never out of touch with real life. Of his methodology, Thomas Schleper once said he laid the foundations for a human-centred history of architecture.

The complex method he used in studying the town may have a significant influence on urban theory. He sees the town as a fabric, a fabric composed of all who have been living there for some three thousand years.

Roland Günter is a German who lives in the Ruhr District and in Tuscany (he would add: in Amsterdam too), and is following in the footsteps of the many immigrants mentioned in his book who have settled in Central Italy over the course of thousands of years.

He thus sees himself as part of an experiment, a model for the future, a person with homes in various locations in the world, one who concentrates his skill and ingenuity on the search for deeper roots. He looks to build a better future, one founded on the experience of many ages and places.

Roland Günter lives in the present too, through the many discussions he has had with intelligent persons who constantly shed light on Central Italy and the town. In this sense, the book is a product of the community. The community speaks to the reader through the author's mediation. The centuries come to us like the present, caught in a broad net of individual and collective memories.

One citizen of Anghiari merits particular mention: Franco Talozzi. This self-taught man has spent his entire life in pursuit of education and a deeper understanding. It is he who shaped the town and made it fit for communal life. His extraordinary achievements enabled citizens to communicate better. He raised awareness of, and saved, things that his contemporaries – who overrated their own era – had marked for destruction. Not all of them made an effort to understand him.

The story of Franco Talozzi has been told for the first time in detail in this book. He was a beacon in

the generation that drove the upheaval of the 1970s. We need men with his charisma now, just as much as they did then.

This book gives the non-Italian reader access to one of the famous regions of “Old Europe”. Its author paints a fresh picture of Tuscany that allows us to experience past centuries in the present day. It tells us we have no need to fear the future.

Professor Vittorio Dini, a historical sociologist at the University of Siena/Arezzo, studies cultural processes. Early on in his career, he began applying methods of oral history to save the waning agro-pastoral culture in the Apennines from oblivion. His former students, mostly teachers, now form an important cultural network throughout Central Italy.

Vittorio Dini has also been involved in historical research into migration in the “Central Italian melting-pot”. He gathers evidence and uncovers the traces that remain. Above all, he searches for unconscious traces in the collective memory, which often reveals itself in everyday life. He is publishing a comprehensive book on the subject, which includes a chapter by Roland Günter on the new immigrants from Germany who have found in Tuscany a second homeland and a second culture.

Vittorio Dini lives in the Old Town of Arezzo, 15 kilometres from Anghiari.

Federico Fellini: “There may be tales of Rome – a few. And of Naples, but only folklore. Sicily has always been seen in terms of the stories of its *mafiosi*. But the story of the rest of Italy – the real Italy … has yet to be told, which is sad, because as a country it's truly unbelievable.”¹

Fernand Braudel speaks of “specks of historical dust” and “micro-historical elements”, an allusion to Georges Gurvitch's “Microsociology”.²

Tonino Guerra: “The world is an infinity of stories.”

1. Overture

It's early morning. A traveller descending from the night train at Milano Centrale experiences in a flash an apparently typical scene: a huge station with elegantly dressed men rushing past, lots of beautiful young women, whispering, agitation, loudspeakers, everything concentrated under one large overarching roof. It's like a piazza. The film director Michelangelo Antonioni could sensitively sum up an atmosphere like this.³

Then the traveller notices people buried behind their newspapers in the elegant train to Bologna, more comfortable than trains north of the Alps. Smart passengers are tasting the flavour of the moment in their various sports magazines. Five days later, and no-one will look at these papers again – they are entertainment for the moment.

Other papers are full of articles about terrorists and terrorism. People in Italy, more than anywhere else, fill their heads with sensational stories of this kind, without having experienced anything like it in their own lives: they will never have seen a real-life terrorist, a bomb at their feet or a train that has

been blown up. But they swallow it all and panic, as if it's all going to happen any minute now.

This completely fictitious happening-of-the-minute totally engulfs many people – and they are punished for it too. They are robbed of time for living, time that could be, should be, ought to be important to them, because it will never come back.

History has shown that there have always been people with a tendency to live outside reality, who have spun themselves a cocoon of fiction. Before the terrorists came, it was the communists, even though they had never come across them in reality – and presumably didn't want to either. Before the communists, it was the fascists. And before them, the Protestants. For the Protestants, it was the Catholics. For the Germans, it was the French, and for the French it was the Germans. Going back even further, it was all kinds of heretics – the discussions were always the same, identical in structure, but with different words, different labels, different appearances – always the same banalities, made seductive with glitter and suggestive of meaning that was never really there.

In the 1970s, twenty terrorists threw Germany into a state of panic. In Italy it was similar, while people largely looked the other way as Mafia structures were spreading across the whole land. The spectacular fall of the New York twin towers, which might even have been blown up by their country's own secret service (if they murder their own presidents, they are presumably in a position to do that too), prompted a crazed George Bush to declare that the Third World War had broken out and to spend ever greater sums on ridiculous global re-armament – benefiting particular interests, of course. The machinery of illusion is set in motion, and far too many people are taken in by it and sacrifice much too much of their precious time on it – of their own free will.

You can treat illusions quite differently from reality. Illusions can be carelessly brushed aside. Whether you dismiss them or not is a different matter, but it is a relief, conscious or otherwise, to know that you can, if you want to.

We don't care to test whether our illusions will stand up to examination. They feed our comfortable prejudices that see a terrorist in every sleeping Muslim or bearded or black-skinned man. Wait and see: tomorrow the media will be pushing some new and irrefutable story at the global village pump.

Once we have seen through all this, it's time to move on to the real world, to where memories of the past can be found in the present, enabling us to pass beyond the perceived here-and-now. We could read Petrarch, Boccaccio or Machiavelli, listen to Verdi and Puccini or watch Fellini and Tonino Guerra.

This book is going to open a door on the life of a medium-size Tuscan town. We are going to experience the complexity of real life through a mixture of science and literature; if we keep an open mind, it will set us thinking about our own lives.

Our eyes will be opened to the foundations of a famous landscape, one of the most exciting in the world. It was here that important foundations, indispensable for our attempts to make sense of our present-day world, were laid.

The Tuscan cultural metropolis, Florence, is built on these same foundations, and you will come to understand Florence better after you have read this book. The small town of Anghiari will thus be the key to all other larger cities.

The drama is played out here on a smaller stage, but in the same way as grand theatre. A minor dramatic work can prepare us for a major one.

Anghiari is representative of central Italian towns. There are few places in Tuscany where history is so completely preserved, and so exceptionally well.

Above all, it strikes us as one of the most interesting towns from a topological point of view. Aesthetically, it's one of the most beautiful.

It also offers an exciting present – the remains of the past are there to be discovered and maybe a lot of the future too – in the form of structural history.

Anghiari is not a large town like Florence, Lucca, Siena, Arezzo or Leghorn. For many centuries, it will have been a medium-sized town in size and structure. Having hardly grown since then, Anghiari is now a small town.

If we reconstruct its social and cultural history, we get an insight into the history of everyday life in Tuscany – both past and present.

The small town may also be viewed as a basis for the Florentine metropolis. For if we look closely we see that the metropolis, every metropolis, becomes exciting where it can be considered as a collection of smaller “villages”. This is true of Paris with its Quartier Latin and other districts, of New York, of Hamburg with Pöseldorf, of Düsseldorf and Cologne. Let's ignore the many urban theories of yesteryear, they lack any empirical basis, discourage us from careful observations of life as it is and distract us with their high-flown abstractions.

The small town of Anghiari opens our eyes to genuine connections between everyday life and great art. We may assume that the most important creative means, developed for the most part after 1400 by the avant-garde artists of Florence, were closely related to everyday phenomena in the region.⁴

Small things have their significance for greater ones.

The great artists, Raphael or Fellini, Michelangelo or Antonioni, derived their experience from small-town central Italy; superficially we see the enigmatic metropolis, but in fact they depict the small living spaces that go to make up the big cities.

I have learnt all this from Tonino Guerra, the most important scriptwriter of poetic cinema, who lives only 30 miles east of Anghiari in the village of Pennabilli. He fills the great world of film with essentially small but important things. The films he made with the world's most important directors (De Sica, Antonioni, Fellini, Rosi, Taviani, Anghelopoulos and others) owe what they are to the fact that each and every member of the audience perceives that the most valuable dimension is that of the individual human being, his dignity, his beauty and his meaning. All other dimensions take second place.

A small town makes historians ask themselves whether they are serious about truth and reality – or whether they are busying themselves with outward show, name dropping and status.

The author, who spends between one to two months a year living and writing in this town and claims to be a citizen of Anghiari and not a foreigner, has worked hard to produce this book.

The town is his material, and he works on it, as do many of his friends. Santino is a restoration professional, Annibale a weaver in a factory, Franco makes *dolci*, Anna works in a restaurant kitchen, Nello is a gardener, Enricetta stands guard over the piazza, Leonardo is the Man Friday of the tobacco warehouses, Walterone the omnipresent factotum of the municipal authorities, Gian Franco, Giorgio, Saverio all wield their pens.

If we seek to understand life as a whole, if we are looking for overall impressions, we must bring many branches of science into play. Curiosity was the driving force behind this book, and I hope my readers will not detect a specialist academic behind it.

The author did not study geography, but he is the first to admit that it is the great complexity of the subject that he finds attractive. Geographers are also attracted to the author's interdisciplinary

methodology. In 1998, it was the Geography Department and Professor Lienhard Lötscher at the University of Bochum in Germany that invited the author to become a visiting professor (“the Bochum Chair”).

Any shortcomings seem preferable to the author than smooth specialist bluffing, which is what we are often served up with when history is squeezed into the corset of a single discipline. Frequently, it doesn't give us a clue about what life, in all its abundance, is like.

Heinrich Mann wrote a wonderful book about a small Italian town (*“Die kleine Stadt”*).⁵ Whenever the author took students from Hamburg, Bielefeld and Karlsruhe on an excursion to Anghiari, that book was compulsory reading for the students of art history, cultural history and design, as well as for the urban planners, architects and sociologists. A work of literature opened their eyes to the complexities of life.

Heinrich Mann wrote: “The small town is to be understood politically, as a hymn to democracy”, adding bitterly, “but of course nobody notices it”.⁶

The novel belies our first impression of it as a small-town genre painting, being in fact “a school for humanity”. In Heinrich Mann's words: “Let us believe in more humanity, despite all we know about Man; let us believe in the future of the people, in spite of the past. Let us not pretend our beastliness does not exist, but let us assume there will also be good moments in history when the beasts are suddenly moved by the Spirit to raise their heads slightly above the ground, as if they had a vague premonition of what Man was meant to become”.⁷ Heinrich Mann talks about “getting a single 'small town' to sing”.⁸

This book is a challenge to historians and art historians of every shade. It is an attempt to grasp the complexity of life as a whole.

To a large extent, our only historical sources are legal statements about institutions and functions, and how they change. If we merely read them as a legal history of institutions, then we read them too narrowly. They are much more than that: they are symbols that mirror social conditions and movements; moreover, when read in context, they provide evidence of complexity, the distribution of power, situations of conflict and balances. With their help, we can almost always draw conclusions about social groupings and their relationships.

This, therefore, is how such detective work always proceeds. In principle, it is nothing more than the voyage of discovery that a stranger makes as he finds his way around the history of the life of a town, provided he looks for the reality behind mere appearances.

Up to now, academics have mostly worked alongside each other – each sticking to the restrictive practices of his own discipline. Academic historians have failed to tackle town planning, architecture and art, while for a long time town planners, architects and artists have ignored history as an academic subject and the history of the theatre. Sociology and psychology, important academic disciplines, have largely avoided their fields of application. All of them are still at it, more or less undeterred, even though they have had thirty years in which to gain greater insights (a few exceptions – false alibis – are mentioned as an excuse). Such neglect always does harm to their own cause.

As long ago as 1991, in one of the greatest books ever written on the subject, the art historian Theodor Hetzer criticised the reductive procedure practised in his discipline. His colleagues, proponents of academic restrictive practices, “punished” him for this by ignoring him, excluding his views from academic discourse. Hetzer was above all this, stating, “I wish to write on how Italian buildings fit into Italian life as a whole, on how they relate to the people and to nature ... how, down

the ages and in all styles, we find a unity and continuity that are missing elsewhere; ... let us ... trace the life-line of these buildings, without troubling ourselves about fossilising and fossilised terminology. We could call this academic work – or pleasure – as long as it is founded on the “genuine principle” of observation, as Goethe once said in the annals of history”.⁹

Few academics have grasped the fact that life is a whole, and thus an unconditional invitation to interdisciplinary thought. Some fuzzy contours will result, they can't be helped, but the worst mistake of all is to dissect life along the lines of specialist disciplines. A mistake remains a mistake, however much the specialists sing its praises within the confines of their own tribes.

A greater understanding surfaces from time to time. The chief curator for the Rhineland has a historian at his side who, in his turn, works hand-in-hand with an art historian. The French art historian Daniel Arasse says, “We must rid ourselves of all kinds of [tribal] scholarliness, in order to get to the heart of a work.”

There is a second problem that Niccolò Machiavelli dealt with, providing some important guiding principles from the year 1520.¹⁰ The History of Florence is Machiavelli's one and only work of history, and indeed his final great work. Cardinal Giulio Medici, who commissioned the book, wanted a traditional history book with the usual ideological tributes, but Machiavelli developed a completely new form of historical writing, sticking to the facts in a brutally honest way. He no longer explained history against a sacral backdrop, but in a thoroughly profane way – doing a psychological analysis of the group dynamics of particular interests and their ensuing conflicts. The result is a text book of political psychology.

There is a moral in this – but it is not to be found in how we deal with history, but in the conclusions we draw from it: “For if any entertainment or instruction is to be gained from history, it will be from detailed description; if the citizens that govern a republic [!] are to derive any benefit, it will be from explanations of the origins of hatred and unreasonableness in the cities, so that they, grown wise through the misfortunes of others, may remain at peace.”¹¹

The first thing any good theatrical or literary practitioner and any good film maker does, is to give his audience a fresh view on things. The seduction of even the most unwilling is also a part of Art: persuading them to see the familiar anew, as if it had just been created in front of their eyes.

It is particularly difficult to write history in Italy at present. Everyone knows that the political system collapsed, and that it is now helplessly trundling along under new labels, superficial as ever. And this is true of all the political groupings. Italy is the country with an unbroken tradition going back to classical Antiquity – there are many villains straight out of Antiquity at the leadership level.

And it is not only the evidence of high-level politics that enables the author to identify what makes Italy difficult: the lack of a problem-solving culture in politics and administration, which is apparent in small-town politics too.

This is particularly sad, because extremely important socio-cultural traditions are rooted in this country: traditions of people joining forces to solve their common problems together.

The author has often wondered why, in the face of all this wretchedness, he continues to take pleasure in travelling to Italy. The answer is simple and can be given in two sentences: many people born there fail to understand the world around them because they are distracted by television, and are thus unable to rely on their own perceptions – but: the country remains indestructible. The author's conclusion is therefore: what a wonderful country this must be, if it can withstand so much superficiality!

This book therefore has a hidden thread running through it. Both perpetrators and victims have always lived off disasters. But in this country and in this small town it is life, and not a disaster, that is the myth.

If we read this old and small town in the light of its intellectual history, if we experience its centuries-old beauty, we will understand how it produced the genius of Michelangelo, who was born in the district administered by the *vicario* of Anghiari, or Piero della Francesca, who lived in the neighbouring town of Sansepolcro.

Many travellers also make their way to Italy for another reason, which the actor Christoph Quest put it into words: "Because there we see that we too are beautiful."

The biography of a town is like the biography of a person. The sociologist Richard Grathoff commented, "Biography has something solid about it." There are many people sailing about on the oceans of history. Nevertheless, as the philosopher Edmund Husserl stated defiantly, the Earth does not move.

We too are in search of something new and solid in these times of globalisation. Some interested physicists are using the word "terrestrial", meaning they relate everything to the Earth. Psychologists ask: How are you situated? What necessities relate to the situation in which you find yourself?

This small town will open up a few paths for us to go down in our search for knowledge.

- 1) The growth of a town. Anghiari enables us to see how it grew in an almost unique way. The chain of early ring-shaped enlargements, forming a semi-circle around the neck of the hill, is particularly impressive. The transformation from a military to a civilian town is clearly visible. In the course of its history, the town has been used for different purposes – it has become civilised, a typical burghers' town. The town-planning emphasis has shifted away from the military, and from the dominance of the abbey, to the civic.
- 2) The tower house, with its balconies with a view, atop the highest point, is evidence of a passionate interest in the landscape as early as the Middle Ages. This is presumably a tradition unbroken since the days of Antiquity.
- 3) The character of the imposing town as a fortress on a promontory becomes particularly apparent when viewed from the north. Once again, the link between military and civic buildings is clearly visible. The blocks of houses seem huge, especially to the north of Sant'Agostino. Windows are small, and few and far between. Sant'Agostino reveals a link between church and castle which is much more common north of the Alps. Part of the building, the apse, is a fortification.
- 4) The walled town stands alongside a large unwalled and open area of the town. It is rare in Tuscany for the open area of a town to be so well developed. On the one hand, this is proof that the burghers were courageous in their risk-taking, but on the other, that they were reluctant to take on the gigantic task and expense of building another town wall for the extensive military facilities.
- 5) The *stradone* and its terrace. This long and steep thoroughfare crossing the valley is one of the unique civil engineering constructions in Central Italy and, seen from the perspective of a town planner, it is without a doubt the crowning glory of the town. The terrace of the marketplace forms part of it. Viewed from above, it looks like a hanging garden.
- 6) In Anghiari, the protective shell around the people of the 15th and 16th centuries has been excellently preserved, enabling us to gain an insight into their living conditions. Basically, not much has changed

since then. People accustomed to spending many months outside their homes, living in the open air, have become strongly attuned to the society of others; time spent in the company of others is entirely normal.

7) The cultural politics of the mayor, Franco Talozzi, was for many years unique, especially his prize for culture (from 1979 onwards). The town became a focal point for first-class intellectuals to gather. Just imagine the many beautiful evenings on which writers like Gian Franco Vené, Giorgio Manzini and Saverio Tutino sat on the piazza in front of Café Garibaldi, deep in conversation. Vené, through his Italy-wide contacts, partly as editor-in-chief of “Panorama”, was able to draw a network of persons to Anghiari. Many guests joined them, like Vittorio Dini from Arezzo, as well as some German intellectuals.

8) Vené continued to be active in the town, starting up a tradition of popular theatre, which is still flourishing long after his death in 1992. In summer, plays are staged in one of the most scenically rich squares in the country: the Poggiolino.

9) In nearby Pieve Santo Stefano, Saverio Tutino, an excellent journalist (*Unità*, *Repubblica*) and writer (as are many journalists in Italy) founded the Diaries Archives, of significance throughout Europe, and where the richest sources are stored, especially pertaining to social history.¹² In 1999, together with Professor Duccio Demetri of Milan and Renato Li Vigni, he founded the Free University of Autobiography in Anghiari.

Notes on:

Overture (2.)

- 1 Federico Fellini, *Sono un gran bugiardo. L'ultima confessione del Maestro raccolta da Damian Pettigrew*. Roma 2003 (first Paris 1994), 58.
- 2 Braudel, 1990, 614
- 3 Michelangelo Antonioni: *Eclipse* (1962).
- 4 Cf. Urbino: Günter, 2003, *passim*.
- 5 Heinrich Mann, 1986.
- 6 Heinrich Mann, 1986, 468. In a letter dated 1909 to René Schickele.
- 7 Heinrich Mann in a letter dated 1910, Heinrich Mann, 1986, 437 and 480/481.
- 8 Heinrich Mann, 1986, 461.
- 9 Hetzer, 1951, 13/14.
- 10 Machiavelli, 1520/1987.
- 11 Machiavelli, 1520/1987, 12.
- 12 The Fondazione Archivio Diaristico was founded in the commune of Pieve Santo Stefano (AR) in 1984, funded by Banca Toscana. Annual awards ceremony on the piazza, with a great event “memorie in piazza” (memories on the piazza).

3. Fundamentals

The geography of the town

To the north-west lies the central region of Tuscany with Florence and Arezzo (the Arno Valley).

Geographically, politically and culturally, the Upper Tiber Valley has always been a border area.¹

To the north lie the Monti Rognosi, which literally translate as the “mangy mountains”, where iron ore was discovered. To the west of the foot of these mountains lies the present-day big city of Arezzo. Beyond it rises the massif of the Alpe di Catenaia with Monte di Castello.

To the north-east rise the Apennines with Monte Fumaiolo, their highest peak. The Tiber has its source at the foot of this mountain.

To the east run the Apennines with the Alpe della Luna. Beyond them lie the Marche with the Montefeltro area and the towns of Pennabilli and Urbino.

To the south lies Umbria with the Apennines of the Serra di Burrano, at the foot of which lies the ancient town of Gubbio. Città di Castello is to be found before the mountains, and somewhat further away, Perugia.

The Tiber Valley. The floodplain of the Tiber lies between the two mountain ranges, which run in parallel but are of different heights.² To the north, it is bordered by the hill of Montedoglio.

The Tiber floods regularly, changing the position of its river bed and destroying paths.³ The area of importance for historical settlements is not the expanse of the Tiber floodplain, but the area to the west of it, the hilly country around the Sovara Valley.

To the south, the medium-sized town of Città di Castello is situated on the Tiber.

The ridge of the Alpe di Poti runs between the Tiber Valley and Arezzo. To the west of Arezzo lies the basin of the Chiana plain.

Lago Tiberino. The Upper Tiber Valley was once a lake, Lago Tiberino. It originated 600,000 years ago and existed for some 200,000 years. It stretched from the present Pieve Santo Stefano and covered an area now taking in Sansepolcro, Città di Castello and Umbertide, and reaching as far as Perugia and Assisi. It then divided into two arms, one that extended up to Spoleto and another to Todi and Terni. In this period, it was the largest freshwater lake in Europe, bigger than Lake Geneva or Lake Constance. (The great lakes in Scandinavia and Russia were formed later.) It was connected to the sea at Todi.

It was originally between 100 and 200 metres deep, but gradually the rain washed debris from the Apennines down into it.

The stones of Anghiari. Anghiari's chain of hills forms the western side of the Tiber Valley. It consists of limestone (*roccia calcarea*). The entire historical centre of Anghiari stands on a rock formation known as *breccia serrata agglomerata*, a mixture of gravel and crushed stone.

The floodplains of the Tiber and Sovara are of alluvial rock.

The climate. As Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote in 1614, the air temperature is fairly mild (*temperata*), and the vegetation is proof of this. There is a light wind blowing, whatever the season, which means there is sufficient movement of air.

The mean annual temperature is 13 degrees Celsius, or 55 degrees Fahrenheit.⁴

The climate is produced by coincidental effects. “The physical origins of the hot, dry summers are not hard to explain. The higher the sun stands in the north, the larger is the Azores High. As long as it blocks their path, cyclonic low-pressure systems are unable to move further eastwards. It is only when autumn approaches that the floodgates open, and the Atlantic invasion begins anew.” (Fernand Braudel)⁵

In summer, the climate looks heavenly, but it is problematic – on account of extreme differences and sudden fluctuations in temperature. In any case, there are only two months of hot weather. Central Italy has a mild climate for many months of the year.

“The Sahara brings drought, the bright light, the endless blue skies, whereas the Atlantic – if does not happen to be producing clouds and downpours – spreads the grey mist, the water vapour that one would not expect to find to such an extent under Mediterranean skies during the winter months.”⁶

It can rain for days on end in winter. Then the rivers burst their banks.

“In winter, or to be more precise, from the equinox in September to the equinox in March, the Atlantic influence has the upper hand. The high pressure area over the Azores makes room for Atlantic low pressure systems that march one after the other towards the warm waters of the Mediterranean ... they hurry along over it. The low pressure systems make the winter weather extremely unsettled. They produce rain, winds that abruptly change direction and churn up the sea.”⁷

Water, forests and grazing land. All over the world, the spread of civilisation is a history of deforestation. How natural resources are dealt with has always been “at the heart of all civilisations”. “The classic canon of environmental education is everywhere expanding into a historical educational canon plain and simple.” (Joachim Radkau)⁸

Inhabitants. Compared with the rest of Europe, the area was once very densely populated. In 1529, the number of persons living in the county (*contado*) and the town was 16,930.⁹

In 1951 it was only 8,528 inhabitants. The numbers went on decreasing, to 7,028 in 1961 and 6,002 in 1971. The population mainly declined in the agricultural districts, above all in the uplands.

In 1981, the population rose slightly, to 6,078.

The area of Anghiari (13,058 hectares) is almost one and a half times the size of Sansepolcro (9,148 hectares).

But Sansepolcro has more than twice the number of inhabitants. When we compare numbers of inhabitants, it becomes plain that Sansepolcro has absorbed some of the migrants from the whole of the surrounding countryside. The number of persons living there in 1951 was 12,063, in 1961 it was 14,586, in 1971 it was 15,549 and in 1981, 15,486.¹⁰

The population density in both towns is below the Tuscan average.

Local government entities. Anghiari belongs to the joint local authority of the Upper Tiber Valley (*Comunità Montana Alto Tevere – Val Tiberina*). It comprises seven communities: Anghiari, Badia Tedalda, Caprese Michelangelo, Monterchi, Pieve Santo Stefano, Sestino and Sansepolcro (where the administration is based).

Anghiari lies in the Province of Arezzo, which was formed within the Grand Duchy of Tuscany in about 1825. The province belongs to the Region of Tuscany. The regional government is based in Florence.

The town as a historical monument. The entire historic town centre is a protected heritage site. It is held to be a unique historical monument.

An invaluable written source: Lorenzo Taglieschi

A lucky chance. Many written sources have been lost in the many internal crises and wars of Anghiari's history.¹¹ But there is one rare piece of good luck.

Commissioned by his father, Lorenzo Taglieschi (1598-1654) began, in 1615, writing a history of Anghiari up to around 1614. He held many offices in the town, above all in the monastery of Santa Croce. He was elected Prior in 1630, then appointed adviser (*sindaco*) to the *vicario* and Chamberlain of the commune; finally, during the time of the plague (1630-1632), he was appointed to oversee health

matters. Lorenzo Taglieschi never married and had no children – his family ended with his death. His gravestone is to be found to the right of the Presbytery of Santa Croce. The second altar on the right of the entrance is the Taglieschi family altar.

Lorenzo Taglieschi was an enlightened conservative. He made no efforts to disguise the fact that he despised the “plebs”.¹² And time and again, whenever there were uprisings against taxation, he advised the people to come to an arrangement with their rulers, whatever they might be like.¹³

But being extraordinarily intelligent, he was also a realist. This meant he provided a wealth of facts, so it is possible to pass judgements other than those that he passed.

He was also in a position to recognise ambivalence. His religious beliefs allowed him to see through, and articulate, abuses of power.

Although a supporter of the Medicis, he did not spring to the defence of Duke Cosimo I, but remained reserved. He may have been one of those supporters who, though actually favouring a republic, made the best of things as they were, for the sake of peace. He judged the émigrés from Florence harshly, calling them rebels and bandits.

From time to time, there are fragments of Taglieschi that could be combined to produce a theory of history.

“For the most part, a ruler is subject to the empty gullibility of his people and his own unsound judgement, being led by emotions rather than reason”. (*È sottoposto alle vane credulità del volgo e a'giuditij suoi poco sani, mossi le più volte e condotti più dall'affetto che dalla ragione.*)¹⁴

In 1614, we find Lorenzo Taglieschi working critically with his sources. In each case, he questions an author's credibility.¹⁵ He carefully compares the writers he reads and their reports.¹⁶

The most reliable authors are for him those who were closest to the events. He examines the points on which reports differ. In cases of doubt, he reveals who claimed what, and allows the reader to form his own judgement. This comes near to present-day methods.¹⁷

Taglieschi was able to use many sources that were lost after his time. The long list of his sources shows that he consulted archives and books comprehensively.

The situation regarding sources. To a certain extent, Taglieschi attributes the lack of sources from the early Middle Ages to a dearth of writers after the coming of the barbarians and the decline of the language, which led to a purely oral tradition.¹⁸

In 1346, under Perugian sovereignty, all private and public files were taken away, after which they were lost, never to return.¹⁹

It is also likely that many documents were destroyed at the time of the plague, around 1400.²⁰

Nowadays, it is mostly visual sources that bear witness: buildings and spaces. However, these sources must be examined critically too.

There are few written sources.

In the Anghiari of around 1400, Almerigo Brancaleoni, Count of Pobioco, brother-in-law of Agnolo Taglia, collected “old and public memories” (*memorie antiche e pubbliche*) from the origins of Anghiari up to the Florentine era. His work takes the form of 75 discourses (*discorsi*). Taglieschi thanks him for allowing him to look through his work, which was later lost. He remarks critically that people in those days lived very differently from in his day and age.²¹

Giusto di Giovanni di Giusto di Comuccio, known in short as Giusto Giusti, born on the last day of 1406²², wrote his memoirs from 1437 up to his death in 1483. His historical writing is in the military tradition. He wrote the usual diaries of a military man, being the chancellor of the mercenary leader

Agnolo Taglia, who was also a native of Anghiari. Taglieschi makes extensive use of his writings.²³

We may also say of his book: “As the testimonies were in any case incomplete, as historians did not collect them systematically, … we had to interpolate as well as we were able.” (Fernand Braudel)²⁴

Heritage as a matter of course, or as a stumbling block

How do people deal with the town they have inherited nowadays? At the private level, excellently. They alter very little. No-one throws an old door out and gets a new and completely different one from the DIY store. Nobody changes his windows. No-one would dream of lowering his ceiling. People value the ancient crafts. And if something needs renovating, they fetch a carpenter who knows his job – he performs his restoration work, no more, no less.

Even in Tuscany, one can no longer take that as a matter of course.

“But that's what this place is like. That's the people's mentality – they're almost famous for it. The preservers of historic buildings know them.”

In the public domain, the situation is more difficult – in fact, the authorities are ambivalent. No mayor or planning authority would make any alterations to buildings either. Roads are repaired to be just as they were.

But they do sin in one respect, and do a fair amount of harm to the town: there is hardly a town whose inhabitants are so shameless in the use of their cars – and the town hall closes its eyes and ears, and has not the slightest intention of doing anything about it. “No parking” signs are ignored: there is a ban on parking on Piazza Mameli (“*Estesa su tutta piazza*”), but of an evening it's full of cars.

They are bumper-to-bumper in parts of the old town. The series of fine squares is in some parts jammed full of cars parked by heedless drivers. The square below the piazza is a laughing stock with its projecting roof, street furniture and an orgy of traffic signs that no-one takes any notice of.

“Anghiari is a pearl – but in the western part of the town it's only a pearl for those who know where to find it underneath all those cars. In those areas, it exists mainly in their minds.”

Knowledgeable readers will note that this is a precise reflection of the relationship between the people and their government. Their assessments and symbols exactly mirror their mental attitudes, as a number of analysts have wisely pointed out.

Morphology: the drama of the landscape

The town planner Professor Martin Einsele was masterly in his observation of morphology.²⁵ He had a practised and searching eye for the drama in the landscape of Anghiari, which is among the most exciting in Tuscany. In a second step, he observed the amazing things people had made out of the morphology over the centuries.

Accents and breaks. A castle was built on the protruding end of a steep promontory jutting out far into the Tiber Valley. Later, a compact and densely constructed town was built on it.

The steep slopes were a protection against enemies. Increased protection was provided during the course of the centuries by fortress walls.

The difference in altitude is considerable: the Tiber Valley plain lies 300m above sea level, the promontory is 140m above the valley floor.

The promontory protrudes beyond the long ridge separating the Tiber and Sovara Valleys.

The scarp below the crest is where the most important urban area beyond the old city evolved. Extraordinary earth-moving efforts were required to convert the deep fold on the north side of the promontory into a long road. The valley basin appears to be crowned by the façade of the theatre. Many steep gardens cover the slopes.

A fortification for the *borgo* was built on a flat horizontal fold on the west side of the old town.

Once there was a difference between town and country – as we can tell from old maps and pictures. The country consisted of arable land and meadows, interspersed with strips of woodland. The town was enclosed by a long, high wall.²⁶

For centuries, the market town of Anghiari has been the focal point of the network of roads in the surrounding area. All roads lead to Anghiari. There are hardly any roads connecting one road to another.

The regional development of the 20th century passed Anghiari by. The main road from Arezzo to Sansepolcro runs several miles to the south of it.

The village. Anghiari is not built on a clearly laid out Roman-style grid. A *cardo* and *decumanus* are only to be found in a very small area at the top of the hill. All other areas came into being after Antiquity, spreading in accordance with their functions.

A second system evolved in the mediaeval town alongside its Roman origins: something like a village, based on a rural pattern. The settlement determined the way in which the structure of the countryside evolved. There is a parallel between the close-knit scale of the settlement and the closely knit parts of a village.

The parts are connected by paths and a sequence of squares.

The squares differ in character – enclosed, steep, in a rhythmic and taut progression. Most of them evolved from forks in the roads.

It only requires a house to be built at right angles to a street corner for an area like a square to be created.

All these squares serve a useful purpose (as markets), and they encourage people's natural idleness and their widespread propensity to linger in public – to general approval.

The ridge to the back of the town falls on two sides: into the Tiber Valley on the eastern side, and on the western side into the Sovara Valley.

The Sovara Valley. Unlike nowadays, it was the Sovara Valley, rather than that of the Tiber, that for centuries formed the heartland of the extensive area around Anghiari. The floodplain of the Sovara Valley is fairly narrow in its upper regions, but it widens lower down.

There are a number of tributaries that flow at right angles into the Sovara, which is a small river, from the west. This has led to the formation of folds with long valleys, alternating with a series of wooded mountain ranges. These rise to considerable heights as the Alpe di Poti. The city of Arezzo lies on the other side of these mountains, and beyond Arezzo lies the Arno Valley.

The Tiber Valley is an absolutely flat and extensive plain, somewhat over four miles wide. The limestone mountains of the Apennines on its far (eastern) side rise from 300m to great heights – to 1454m in the case of Monte dei Frati in the Alpe della Luna.

Contrasts. The surrounding areas are thus characterised by marked contrasts: plains (*pianure*), valleys (*valli*) and hills (*colli*). The town on the hill acts a beacon for a wide area.

Look at the scenery from all sides, and you will experience the significance of its situation at first hand.

Appreciation. These dramatic qualities must have been appreciated from time immemorial. Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote in 1614 that Anghiari lies in an “unbounded theatre” (*vaghissimo teatro*). Its position offers fine fresh air and security from robber bands, which is why its houses have been built on high. This was an important argument even in Antiquity.²⁷

The seasons. You only get a good view when a fierce wind is blowing. When the landscape is full of sunshine, it always looks slightly blurred, as though hidden behind a veil.

There are many days when a mist hangs over the wide plain of the Tiber Valley. “Autumn comes clothed in draperies:

First, a narrow ribbon rises from the Tiber in the early morning; a narrow ribbon hanging over the wide plain. Then it grows quickly, filling the entire plain and rising up to Anghiari. It mostly collapses between half past ten and noon. It falls on the meadows as dew and drips from the trees. An autumnal haze remains for the rest of the day.” (Knut Jacob/Gisela Jacob)

Scenery: nature and culture. The topographical differences are the origin of the richness of the scenery in the town. This scenery has been further shaped and enriched by the people over the years.

The differences separate the town into distinct parts. Each part has developed its own historical identity.

Surface area. The oldest upper town with the fortress comprises about one fifth of the present-day area of the old walled town. The enlargements that cover the hillside started as small, and then grew and grew. All in all, they are about twice the size of the upper town.

The *borghetto* at the foot of the upper town is three times the size of the upper town.

How extensive is the old part of the town outside the walls? In area, it is about one-and-a-half times the size of the entire walled section. However, not being confined by the fortress, it is clearly less densely built up.

The proportions between the different areas show that there was a considerable increase in trade and in population even before the industrial age.

Life has left its mark on all other forms of expression.

The society we encounter is full of contradictions. The oldest part of the town expanded along the promontory seen on the right-hand side. The long, straight road (1323/1324, *stradone*) runs to the north of it in a valley fold, beginning on the left-hand side of the ridge. The area of expansion beyond the walled town lies to the left and right of it (14th to 16th centuries).

Notes on:

Fundamentals (3.)

1 The source of the Tiber is on Monte Fumarolo, on Tuscan territory. As Mussolini wanted the source assigned to his home region, the province of Forlì, he ordered the commune of Verghereto to be transferred from Tuscany to Romagna. After 1945, Tuscany generously refused to re-claim it.

2 Vivoli, 1992.

3 Vivoli, 1992, Table XVII.

4 Van Waveren, 1986.

5 Braudel, 1, 334.

6 Braudel, 1, 332.

7 Quoted from Braudel, 1, 333.

- 8 Joachim Radkau, Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht (Leipzig) Issue 11, 2003.
- 9 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 262.
- 10 Profilo territoriale, 1984,11.
- 11 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 45, Leonardi (undated).
- 12 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, notably p. 342.
- 13 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, notably p. 343.
- 14 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 345.
- 15 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 154.
- 16 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, notably 265, 269.
- 17 On verification of sources cf. Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 79.
- 18 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 141.
- 19 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 98.
- 20 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 149.
- 21 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 117.
- 22 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 150.
- 23 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 164, 165, 216/217. On the subject of contemporary works on military history (taking Count Federico of Urbino by way of example) cf. Günter, 2003, 31.
- 24 Braudel, vol. 1, 1979, 31.
- 25 Details in Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcik, 1995.
- 26 Vivoli, 1992 Table.
- 27 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 41.

4. Features of urban development

Urban expansion and the town fortress

Open ground. For thousands of years, human beings lived on the land, on open ground. They took what they needed for survival from the fruits of the earth.

These people existed simply. Their life was marked by troubles of all kinds and the necessity to get on with one another. Their pleasures were few.

We can hardly imagine their kind of life. It is also difficult for historians to form any idea of it.

The fortress and density. When there was a chronic state of war, every village fortified itself. (Max Weber)¹ A fortification is the opposite of open ground.

It is hard to imagine what it was like, but the making of a town was a long process that originated in a very small space. This space, protected by fortifications, expanded over the centuries. More and more people wished to live in it, because they valued security so highly.

In the Middle Ages, it was not only the territorial lord and a few families who lived in the town, but a considerable proportion of the population. This was characteristic of the historic town in the second millennium.

However, at no point in time did the number of people living in a town exceed one fifth of the total population of any territory. It was a privilege to live in a town.

In many ways, the ring wall created circumstances that were completely different from those in the countryside. On the one hand, it reduced the number of optional ways of life, on the other, it created greater complexity. In what we refer to as “density”, specific forms of life arose over time, which found their expression in their own types of buildings.

They fascinate us now, and will doubtless continue to do so.

A contribution to the debate on urban life. Before the debate on urban life is obscured by empirically weak assertions about Paris and New York, it might be useful to consider a historic town in as much detail as possible, taking its urban structure as an example. The town of Anghiari is eminently suitable for this task.

Anghiari stands for the historic Tuscan medium-sized town (nowadays it's a small town). It enables us to experience widespread forms of living, thinking and building.

What makes Anghiari different from many other towns is the fact that we can still experience its history to an amazing degree.

The Etruscan Upper Town

Area of retreat. The many Etruscan peoples of Central Italy lived peaceably with one another. We know of no wars fought between them.

When the Cimbri and Teutones attacked from the north, the entire non-warlike population was forced to find itself a place to which it could at least retreat.

They chose a place where nature lent a helping hand, retreating to the promontory in Anghiari, and setting up barricades on the sides of the hill using stones, timber and brushwood. The slopes made it difficult for the attackers to reach them. The defenders had an advantage: they had a better view over the terrain and were able to hurl stones further and more effectively.

Thus, the people that sought protection there for themselves and their cattle were at least able to enjoy a degree of safety within a very small space.

The wall is therefore a signal against aggression – a symbol of fear, but also of safety.

Destruction of the surrounding area. However, for a long time the few people in the fortress had to look on helplessly, and with bated breath, as the foreigners around them made a living from plundering and, worse still, mostly put to waste anything that fell into their hands.

All the hordes that came later did the same, right into the 19th century. We know from television reports that even today's warmongers simply destroy as much as they can – without having a strategy for such destruction.

Expansion. Then, in a major effort, the people enlarged and strengthened the tip of the promontory, piling stones one on top of the other, and producing the walls of a strong fortress.

In uncertain times, people lived cheek by jowl, a completely new style of life, within the fortifications. These were the beginnings of the characteristic density that we later refer to as a town: life lived at close quarters within a confined space.

Settlement of the fortress. When times were particularly unstable, peasant farmers moved into the protective area of the fortress. Every family had its own house.

During the daytime, they left the walled area for their outlying fields and worked in the countryside. Their lives became a curious synthesis between two differently structured areas.

Traces of the wall. The Etruscan wall on the southern side of the promontory probably followed the same course as the present-day wall. We do not know where the wall of the Etruscan fortress was built on the northern and eastern sides.

It may have followed the same course as the wall that runs through the row of houses above the present-day wall (between the present Piazza del Popolo and Via Nenci).²

Porta degli Auspici. There once stood a gate to the fortress, somewhat to the east of today's Piazza

Mameli (on the eastern side of Palazzo del Marzocco).

The people felt this building was full of magic. They dedicated it to the god Janus and the observation of birds (the auspices).

The observation of birds belonged to the initial stages of the founding of towns on the Italian peninsula. Whenever a town was formally founded, the founding fathers held a ritual ceremony to discover whether the fates looked favourably on them and, above all, on their project. They believed this would be revealed to them through their observation of birds in flight.

The material the builders used for the gate was square-cut stone (*pietre quadrate*).

How did they control access? How did they organise their defence? Did it appear symbolically – in magic processes? What impact did it have on the way they perceived their world? Did it already structure civic life, as it did in the Middle Ages?

Survival and demolition. The gate continued to stand – under its original name – in the Middle Ages, even though it was technically no longer used for defence purposes. For thousands of years people retained their respect for what their predecessors had created – they recognised its magic power. They imagined they would be punished if they attempted to destroy it.

It was not until the age of de-mystification set in, which soon mutated into the age of the banal, that the administration demolished the gate in 1612, on the pretext that it was likely to collapse. They could, however, have solved the problem in a different way.³

Another entrance must have existed at the eastern end of the town (Via del Castello Antico) in Etruscan times. A winding S-shaped road probably led from the valley to the Upper Town.

The Upper Town under supreme rulers

Roman supremacy. The city-state of Rome expanded by conquering the Italian peninsula bit by bit. It established its supremacy over the peoples living there.

Roman supremacy made use of the Etruscan fortifications. It is likely that it integrated its sacred places into the Etruscan temple complex. This is because every regime assumes sacred attributes.

Convent and fortress. In the early Middle Ages, the temple area was split in two.

The magical aspect persisted in the eastern half: there was a Benedictine convent (in the eastern, left-hand wing of what was later to be the town hall) from the year 640.

The cloisters used to be where the present paved area of the square is. The town hall chapel was the former convent church. The convent garden may have lain behind the houses that now stand on the eastern side of Piazza del Popolo.

Military facilities came to be established in the western half. This fortress⁴ (*cassero*) – within the fortifications of the Upper Town – was first occupied by Lombard and then by Frankish military forces.

The only way to establish the course of the early mediaeval wall is by carrying out a topographical analysis of the cadastral map. The south wall of the town hall now stands where the southern fortress wall once stood.⁵ The south-western fortress wall is identical with the south-western wall of the *cassero*.

The path. People used to climb the hill by a sunken path⁶ (Via del Castello Antico). On the western side, they descended down what is now Via Garibaldi.

The settlement. There was a small square on the tip of the promontory (the present Piazza del Popolo), with some houses in which liegemen probably lived. They served in the fortress and were

rewarded with a smallholding.⁷

The uppermost settlement. We do not know why the northern side of the promontory was rebuilt. We can, however, discover some facts about its form.

We can reconstruct two paths: one giving access in the north, and the other on the perimeter wall (in two places).

Important clues were found in the centre of the first floor of house number 18, a house that was later built between Piazza del Popolo and Via Nenci.

In the middle of the ground floor there is a pebble wall that is presumed to be the oldest wall (*mura*) in the Upper Town. It dates from about the year 1000. In the upper storey, we discover there was once a path (*percorso*) on top of the fortress wall. It is hardly wide enough for more than one person.

The north wall of the house is a well constructed pebble wall. There is a very narrow window in it and an opening. The small size indicates that, whenever besiegers were hurling stones or incendiary devices, this was a vulnerable spot.

The remains show there was a small alleyway from the square that gave access to the path through the town wall. Remains of houses are still to be found on either side of the alleyway.

It was a steep alleyway. Either it was like a ramp of trampled earth, or it had steps.

There is no clue as to where this alleyway ended. Probably it led to the circular path on the wall.

The path on the wall. The path on the wall also served the population as a narrow walkway. Houses came to be built along it.

There is evidence of this in the two shallow recesses 2.5m apart at number 5 Vicolo della Piazzuola, on the continuation of the presumed path to the east. They were later blocked up, but are an indication of a previous alleyway on top of the fortress wall.

We may assume the pattern was repeated in all later phases of expansion. This enables us to infer from later building phases what the earliest ones must have looked like.

The walkway on the wall must have looked something like what we see on Via Garibaldi, being consistent with the later building that adjoins the superstructure.

Presumably this wall linked up with the mighty, winding walls of the *cassero* (the military fortress) in what is now a garden further to the west.

The houses. The threshold, door jambs and the wooden crossbeam about 2.1m above ground level belonging to an older dwelling (c. 1000) on the alleyway have been preserved at the entrance to house number 15 Via Nenci.

The walls of the house were built of pebbles and quarry stones. The corners were strengthened by means of hewn stones with a large surface area.

An outlet was built for a lavatory (*cesso*). People even say you can still see the lavatory bowl in the wall of the upper storey. The excrement simply flowed on to the street below, joining that of the animals.

There was therefore a certain distinction made between the various rooms. The house dwellers no longer answered the call of nature in the easiest way possible, out of doors or using a receptacle, but followed the traditions of urban Antiquity and put aside a specific room for it.

The state of the paths. The contents from the lavatory spilled on to the path outside. This is an indication of the fact that this path, like all the others, was quite dirty. People and animals used it for similar purposes.

This is what country villages all over continental Europe looked like, well into the 20th century.

Only under urban influence did the dunghill vanish from the fronts of the houses.

The piazzuola. There was once a small square in the northern section of Piazza del Popolo.

At this point the path widened to form a type of unplanned village green, such as was found all over Europe in earlier ages.

The principle of town planning is a simple one: a path over the hill, a widening of the path to form a kind of square. A solidly built house and a courtyard. Two rows of houses along the path. One or more paths between the houses to provide access. A protective wall behind the rows of houses.

The first phase of enlargement and construction of a second wall about 1048

The second wall. About the year 1048, many men were engaged in building a new wall into the hillside, a wall with a parapet some 30 metres below the foot of the old fortifications wall.

They filled the space behind it with the rocks they had hewn out of the hillside.

A path was created behind the parapet of the wall that could be used in times of conflict by the defenders of the town. They were able to hurl stones, shoot arrows or throw lances from this position. In times of peace, the path led up to the doors of the new houses.

These new houses were built on the levelled area. The old fortifications wall formed the rear walls of the houses. This is how a new row of buildings arose. At first, they can only have been two storeys high. A third or fourth floor was added to most of them at a later date.

This enlargement is clearly visible at 18 Via Nenci, where parts of two of the oldest houses are still standing.

Dating the wall. There is no clue as to when the first enlargement was built. One theory is that in 1048, finding the Upper Town in disrepair, the Counts of Galbino planned the enlargement in the context of renovation work.

Terracing. A look at Via Nenci shows that the town was planned as a series of terraces.

The street is not quite level, but the aim was obviously to make it as flat as possible.

There are many such terraced towns in Central Italy, for example Barga, Campiglia d'Orcia, Pescaglia and, above all, Siena.

The town dwellers seem to have agreed on this principle, right from the start.

The idea is as simple as it is impressive: comfort. We are dealing here with complex utilisation values: people's deep-rooted inclination to be able walk comfortably, especially when strolling out for their evening *passeggiata*. In addition, they needed to be able to walk carrying heavy loads, especially with loads on their backs. This meant paths had to follow the course of the contours of the hill as closely as possible.

Most of the paths built in the form of a terrace were connected by means of steep ramps.

Via Nenci is broad enough for two people to be able to pass. Two mules could also walk abreast, in which case the owners walked behind their beasts.

There's mostly a strong breeze blowing along the path, which can be unpleasant in winter. In summer, it can be very refreshing.

A number of enlargements

Population growth. When the economy was doing well, people left the country and moved to the

town. The population grew. The community improved the fortifications with the aim of improving security.

Several ring-shaped enlargements. The fortress to the north and east was enlarged four times over the years.

Each time, a new circular wall was added, together with a new path and a new row of houses.

The process was carried out several times, each enlargement being a near carbon copy of the previous one, until the northern slope was more or less built up.

Every new district offered people a secure way of life in times gone by. The new town dwellers along the new path gradually became close neighbours.

Network of paths. The walkway along the wall of the earliest Old Town may have been abandoned during the first enlargement. However, the paths of the later enlargements were always retained. This was how the interesting terraced network of paths round the semicircle of the hillside came into being.

Nowadays we are able to enjoy the characteristic rings that shape the structure of the Old Town: Via Nenci, then Via della Misericordia, below that Via delle Mura di Sopra and finally Via delle Mura.

Financing. How did they finance these costly building projects? Basically, if we are able to draw conclusions from a method used in the 15th century, it will have been as follows:

Every single family in the town had to carry up a certain number of stones from the river, either on their own backs or on the backs of mules.

Where did they get the limestone? Who paid the masons?

The second enlargement around 1181 with the third wall

In 1147, the town dwellers and the Abbey fought “over the *consolato* [local government] and several other matters”. The town succeeded in forcing the convent to invest one third of the earnings from its properties in the town.

Maybe they were facing the prospect of financing an enlargement of the Upper Town.

The second enlargement (about 1181) comprised the building of the row of houses on the present-day Via della Misericordia.

We cannot date it exactly, as we lack precise evidence. One hypothesis is that this enlargement may have been an initial measure to use the influx of population in the 12th century. For a long time people attached great significance to population increase in the town.

A second hypothesis concerns the destruction of the fortress walls by Arezzo in 1175. The population was allowed to rebuild them six years later (1181). In this context, people may have hit upon the idea of enlarging the town.

This enlargement encompassed a much larger area than the first one.

A section of this wall has been preserved in the cellar of the Istituto d'Arte (59 Via Garibaldi). It can be seen through the small right-hand window to the right of the gateway, when the lights are on indoors.

In 1181, the prior of the monastery signed a contract with some land-owning families, to cede to them (sell or exchange) plots of land within the town walls, on which they were permitted to build town houses.⁸ These may have been building plots offered for sale in connection with the enlargement. Right up into the 20th century, there were dwellings in this part of town belonging to landowners.

Crossways ramp. In Via della Misericordia, there is a former dwelling on the hill – later it became

a storehouse – with a very narrow window in its eastern wall that used to give on to an open space: a steep path leading from one terrace to another. It was not built as a continuation of the upper ramp, but was built to one side of it. At some later point, this open space was built over and is now the storehouse at 7 Via della Misericordia.

Drains. The crossways ramp had a drain for water, faeces and other waste. When it was given up and built over, the drainage system still had to be secured – in the form of a sewer. It can still be seen in the brick-built arch on the outer wall of the storehouse at number 7.

The large unwalled sector – the *borghetto* about the year 1200

The open, unwalled sector. So many people wanted to move into the town from the country in the 12th century that the walled area became overcrowded. This put a strain on the sector within the walls and led to many difficulties.

Where did a large number of the newcomers settle? Between the Old Town on the promontory and the western range of hills, in a depression formed by a small stream.

This is where the *borghetto*, a fairly large overspill area, was established. In a long process of town construction, Anghiari re-orientated itself towards the west.

This shows that the influence of the town and the protection it afforded extended beyond the confines of the military wall.

In the year 1200, monks from the monastic community of Camaldoli made land available in return for payment of a small annual tribute. This land was in the Sant'Agostino area, not far from the charcoal burners' kiln (*intorno alle carbonaie del castello*). Houses were built on these parcels of land for the many people moving in from Lombardy and from other parts of Tuscany.⁹

Who were these people who settled outside the fortress of the Upper Town? Craftsmen and traders, as well as land-owning aristocrats and leaders of mercenaries.

The term used to refer to this area – *borghetto* – is very old, an indication of its early status, when it was still small. As it grew, it retained its original name.

The economy and the construction sector. The 12th and 13th centuries were marked by considerable fluctuations in the economy.

It was mainly the broad spectrum of town dwellers who benefited from the economic situation, above all the craftsmen and traders.

This led to activity in the construction sector.

Guild of builders. We find mention of the fact that Anghiari had a guild of builders at this time. We know how important it must have been, as it is the only guild from this era that we know anything about.

If these “masters in stonework and woodwork”, as they were called, were the only craftsmen to be organised, we may assume they had a lot of work and an important position in society.

The hamlet. In 1614 Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote: “... to this day, the district is called *villa* [hamlet] of Sant'Agostino, on account of the new houses in the *borghetto*.¹⁰

Neighbourhoods. People lived their lives in small areas. This made them aware of belonging to a neighbourhood.

There are therefore two areas within the *borghetto*, a northern section (Via del Borgo di

Sant'Agostino) and a southern one (Via del Borgo di San Giovanni).

The network of paths. The oldest way was the main path that descended from the heights of the Upper Town: Via del Borghetto di Sotto. Today's road is called Via Garibaldi/Via Giordano Bruno. It runs westwards to Porta San Martino. The road that descends down the hillside to the north is called Via di Sotto. Via Chiòcana is its other name, which derives from "chioca" (*cloaca*). There must have been a roadside ditch here for all kinds of waste water.¹¹

There is a second path to the south of it, somewhat higher up. It forms part of the long path that, leading from hamlet to hamlet, runs the length of the long hillside bordering the Tiber Valley, half way up it. Where the path runs through the town district, people call it Via del Borghetto di Sopra (Via di Sopra; nowadays Via Taglieschi).

A third path runs diagonally, widening into Piazza del Borghetto (Piazza Mameli). Via della Torre is the continuation of this path.

There are small alleyways within this extensive network of paths, so narrow that one person, or one mule, could just about pass along them. They were later partly built over and obliterated. The impressive Vicolo del Poeta and the nameless alleyway that crosses Via della Torre at the half-way mark have been preserved.

Piazza. Tradesmen and merchants formed the nucleus of the *borghetto*. We also know how important they were from the fact that a new market was established: Piazza del Borghetto (now Piazza Mameli).

Opposing forces and conflicts. We can only guess at the many conflicts that accompanied this process. The convent and the larger landowners formed an active opposition.

Things happened in the Tuscan fashion: in a cautious and roundabout way, no-one was either humiliated or gained an out-and-out victory, there was a slow shift in the balance of power.

Enclosure of the two *borghetti* within walls. The influence of the "people" (*popolo*) increased with the rise of this new social class. Its strength was evident from the fact that it also demanded protection – in the form of a high wall.

After exerting much pressure, the people achieved their aim. It was an extremely expensive investment. The *borghetto* was now also enclosed within walls (as far as Via del Fosso, now Via Trieste).

As this happened around 1200, we can only surmise that the people of Anghiari were supported by the popular movement in Arezzo.

The high battlements of this wall are visible from the north, from the side of the valley facing it (in the substructures of what was to become Sant'Agostino monastery).

Access. The most important point of access to the *borghetto* was the Porta San Martino (1204) in the west (Via Giordano Bruno). This double gate was cleverly constructed: there was a chamber inside, in which enemy attackers could be locked up. A drawbridge, that the defenders would pull up, spanned the moat. You can still see an arrow slit used by archers.

Just as the streets can have more than one name, so too can the town gates: Porta di Sopra, Porta del Fosso (Moat Gate).

There was probably a second, presumably small, gate on the south side of the *borghetto* (Via Taglieschi).¹²

A third gate, the Porta Nuova (Via Garibaldi), was built in the Florentine era (15th Century), somewhat lower down, on the north-western side. It was also known as the Porta Fiorentina.

Patron. After 1200, the popular movement, with its interest in social matters, sought a symbolic figure as its guide. Thus, the most important gate was named after St. Martin of Tours (this is mentioned in the statutes around 1230/1240).

This is also an indication of the fact that there was now a local popular movement, which had *de facto* gained the upper hand.

It is a sign that the movement was mainly made up of tradesmen and merchants. This social class frequently found it hard to care for their sick, elderly and needy, unlike the peasants in the countryside, who had large close-knit families.

The countryside fortress. In Tuscany, the nobility was largely descended from the Lombards (Langobardi). The feudal lords in the area around Anghiari lived in fortress-like castles. They were constantly quarrelling, feuding and threatening the nearby towns.

The land-owning aristocracy stood between the Emperor, whose followers they were, and the town. Their position was ambivalent. The town forced them into submission, but they were not disinclined to move into it.

The citizens of Anghiari, like those in many parts of Tuscany, had a strategy to crush the might of the lords. In 1162 and on several later occasions, the town demanded that the nobility in the surrounding countryside leave their fortified homes, demolish them and move into the town.

The citizens were successful up to a point in their efforts to pacify, or rather civilise, the surrounding area (*contado*). The town ruled itself, and the *contado* belonged to the town. Anghiari is a good example of this. The town's social organism spread to the countryside – with far-reaching consequences.

In 1262, a statute of the city of Siena stated that a list of one hundred families from the *contado* would be issued per year, each of which would be required to build a house in the city.¹³ The countryside thus came to be ruled largely by the city.

Ambrogio Lorenzetti depicted the relations between the city and the countryside in his famous fresco in Siena City Hall.

Town fortress/tower house. It was a complex situation.

Maybe the country landowners also felt they could increase their influence in the town if they had a house there.

They had tower houses (*casa torre*) built.

It seems the family of the mercenary leader Guinta – they were immigrants from Lombardy – had a house (pre-1230) built on the corner of Via di Sotto/Piazza del Borghetto, opposite Sant'Agostino church.

It was built in the style of a fortified country house, but in this case it was a fortified town house.

This is what such fortified dwellings originally looked like: they were towers with a ground area of 6m x 8m. This was the standard size for modest Tuscan tower houses. In Florence, they were about 8m x 9m.

A large gate gave access to the piazza. There were large vaulted rooms on every floor. At one time, they may have been divided up into smaller rooms by means of timber frame walls.¹⁴

One extended family lived on several floors (evidence of this is provided by house no. 39, to the west of Sant'Agostino, where Via Garibaldi bends towards Porta Nuova).

Lopped towers. Politically, the popular movement was at its height at the end of the 13th century. Here and in other towns such as Sansepolcro, the populists lopped the “haughty” towers, including the

tower on the west side of Piazza del Borghetto (Piazza Mameli).

Merchants' houses (*casa-corte mercantile*). A second building stands on the south side of the tower house, between the piazza and an alleyway. It may have been built on the orders of Bartolomeo detto il Vecchietto.

The floor plan is narrow and deep.

The town expanded for two main reasons: poorer people moved in from the countryside and the rich were forced to leave the country and settle in town.

Tuscan towns started to think about radically organising town planning in the 13th century – long after the Roman era.

“The private sovereign territory of the barons, who had built fortresses with baileys and barbicans, as well as their own churches within the castle walls, became subject to public policy; areas belonging to monasteries were likewise structurally integrated in the whole. All building activities required planning permission.”(Wolfgang Braunfels)¹⁵

Essentially, the organisation was Roman.

The intervening centuries had not brought about a total rupture with the past. We find the influence of Antiquity then as now.

The town tower (13th century)

The town tower. Up to the 13th century, the gates had not yet topped the walls, but then a veritable craze for tower-building set in, above all in cities like Florence, Lucca, Siena and Arezzo.

In Anghiari, a new tower was built, in addition to the church tower and the tower house. This was the town tower. It is a symbol of the popular movement. Up to the present day, its bell has summoned the people and town councillors to meetings (the only exception being the Fascist era).

The town tower is a monument to democracy – and remains as such in the minds of the people.

It was built in the 13th century as part of the wall to enclose the *borghetto*. It was completed in 1323.

In 1502, the mercenary leader Vitellozzo Vitelli of Città di Castello laid siege to the town with his army. In order to demonstrate the power of his bombards, he seized the town tower and destroyed it. As a result, the town surrendered. This shows how important symbolic acts are in warfare.

Nearly a century passed before the town tower was rebuilt (1598). People then renamed it the clock tower, the “*campano*”. A simple belfry with pointed arch openings stands on a large structured block, obviously reconstructed in accordance with its original historical form. The square-cut and slightly protruding stones that form the corners of the belfry suggest the tower may have been covered with plaster. It is topped by a scarcely visible flat pavilion roof.

The bell seems to have come from Castello di Montauto.¹⁶

The third circular enlargement and the fourth wall c. 1200

The third circular enlargement was presumably built in the context of the enclosure of the *borghetto* around 1200.

Lorenzo Taglieschi (1614) provides us with a clue: the *borgo* wall wound its way in the south and west down from the fortress (*cassero*) to Porta San Martino, and then on to Porta di Sotto (Porta Sant'Angelo) in the east.¹⁷

Archaeologists have failed to find any traces of a western wall enclosing the third ring. This means that the *borghetto* was already walled, or was being walled in about this time.

This third enlargement took up more space than the second. It created the present-day Via della Mura di Sopra.¹⁸

The storage rooms under the houses show traces of the original topography of the hill. These cellars were once literally scraped out of the crumbly stone. Later, the scrapings were used to fill in the terrain behind the new fortress wall.

Such traces indicate that people were working the entire hill over the centuries, so that it is now completely artificial.

When we know what the beginnings were like, we can see what people have achieved by their joint efforts over the years.

The Porta di Sotto (Porta Sant'Angelo). For some years, there must have been a free-standing tower (*fortilizio quadrato*) outside the fortress, to the east of the town.¹⁹

It was a small outlying fortress, providing extra fortification for the most vulnerable gate to the main fortress.

At the time of the third enlargement, this tower with its pointed arches was incorporated into the wall. It is the present point of entry into the town, the Porta di Sotto. It was named Porta Sant'Angelo.

It is impossible to tell when it was given this name.

The name does give a clue as to who erected this previously free-standing small fortress. It was probably the Lombards.

The name suggests a warlike society rooted in magic. As was usual in such uncertain times of conflict, those who held supremacy over a territory prayed to a heavenly being to take up arms on their behalf: St. Michael the Archangel. Thus, the gate to the military complex was named after their heavenly ally: Porta Sant'Angelo.

This choice of name confirms the ideology of a certain part of the early Middle Ages. St. Michael, the leader of the heavenly hosts, is a symbol of Mankind's indefinable fear of evil. People imagined Heaven to be as militant as Earth.

Experience of life in a warrior culture produced this world-view. One of their sacred places was the Sanctuary of Monte Sant'Angelo sul Gargagno²⁰, a shrine visited most frequently by the Lombards.

Expansion of the cities. Cities were expanding everywhere in the 13th century. Florence built its third wall between 1284 and 1330, the largest construction the city has ever known. It was linked to the movement from the countryside and the rise of the guilds. The first half of the 14th century in Tuscany was the age of the great walls.

In Anghiari, two solutions were found to this development, which was similar in principle though on a smaller scale: the first phase produced the walled *borghetto* and the second a new but unwalled outer district.

The outer district beyond the gates: the *stradone* and the large market square, the Mercatale

The lord of the town (*signore*). The era of the “free town” was brief. After 1309, Anghiari shared the experience of many other Tuscan towns: democracy had trouble in organising itself on a permanent basis.

The call for a “strong man” was loud and clear in Anghiari too. For over 60 years, from about 1322

to 1385, the lords of the town came from the Tarlati di Pietramala family. This form of government, with its written statutes, was a mixture of princely rule and democracy.

Guido Tarlati was Bishop of Arezzo from 1312-1337 and simultaneously lord of the town of Arezzo for life. His brother Pier Saccone ruled with him.

The Tarlati preferred living in Anghiari to any other of their other seats of residence.²¹ This is why they made many improvements there too.

In 1612, Lorenzo Taglieschi described the improvements they made in the form of fortifications, additional comfort (*comodità*) as well as decoration (*ornamento*) aimed at enhancing their prestige.

Resources and money therefore flowed into this small residential seat from the surrounding area.

Beyond the Old Town. A new perspective opened up: the Tarlati developed the town beyond fortress and *borghetto*, building a third area west of the gate, outside the existing town.

The great road (*stradone*; 1323). Guido Tarlati's priority was clearly to organise the road network from a military point of view. The most important link, established in 1323, was a long, straight road, a "great road" (*stradone*), leading down into the valley and across the valley plain until it reached the Tiber.

Workmen started building the road in the fold (*ruga*) of the hill and the moat that gets its name from the gate it passes (*fosso di San Martino*).²²

The old road led to the distant town gate of Borgo San Sepolcro. Some say the path of the new road was designed to prevent people in Borgo from seeing a rider approaching. But that's a myth.

The mighty project was completed very quickly. Two hundred workmen are said to have been employed on it day and night, even working by torchlight. It is said they stretched a rope from one end of the road to the other, to ensure it was straight. Quite possibly they did.

The roadworks demanded major earth-moving and reinforcement work, as there was a stream beside the ridge of the hill on which the Old Town stood. A channel had to be dug for this stream, which flowed down a steep slope into the hollow of the valley.

Arrangements had to be made with the owners of the land. It would be fascinating to learn how the lord managed to acquire their property. Did he pay them compensation? What conflicts arose? How did he deal with them?

He may have had a plan to build houses too.

It was not easy to finance a major investment of this kind.

The "great road" linked Anghiari with the Tiber plain to the east not only in a functional sense, but also graphically and symbolically. This impressive construction is a rare achievement by an early absolute ruler.

The *stradone* fell sharply to the valley floor and crossed it in a perfectly straight line. Its destination was the Tiber. The only bend in the road was just before the Tiber, as the bridge had to be at right-angles to the river. (This bridge is now in ruins.) A drawing gives us an idea of the situation after the floods of 1624.²³ The road ended 100m to the west of Sansepolcro.

The road was originally named Mercatale Street, after the cattle market. In 1353, it was renamed St. Martin's Fold (*ruga di San Martino*).²⁴

Where the idea sprang from. The long, straight road is more or less unique in Central Italy. We have no written sources and no explanations.

What was the idea behind a road like this?

Valerio Dell'Omarino, a well-informed local architect, assumes the great road must have had a previous existence in some form or other. In his view, its significance was far-reaching as well as symbolic. Lying between two seas, it had links with the fortress in Arezzo, the Bocca Trabaria Apennine pass and the city of Pesaro on the Adriatic. It is thus steeped in memories. Dell'Omarino assumes it was constructed by the Etruscans rather than the Romans, whom we normally associate with such extensive projects.

The mediaeval lord (*signore*) of Anghiari was also lord of Arezzo. Although there may have been a previous road, it was directly copied from its bigger sister Arezzo.

A reminder of Arezzo.

A comparison with Arezzo.

Identification with Arezzo.

Arezzo is an old Etruscan town. Its *cardo* was a long, straight street up a hill. The path of the *decumanus* ran along a terrace. The town was enlarged towards the west in the Middle Ages along a similarly long road (pre-1323), built on the site of an old Roman road. This new town was so striking that the focus shifted away from the Old Town to the new Borgo Maestro.

The heart of the new town was the long, straight street (*corso*). It led from the ridge of the hill and the meadows (*prato*), past the parish church and down the slope to the plain. This road formed an axis that gave the new town a kind of spine.

Its importance is emphasised by the fact that the tower of Santa Maria della Pieve was designed as cross-rectangular, so that it forms a kind of broad façade at the head of the street.

It was a prestigious street by its very width.

Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), a writer on architectural theory, will have had it in mind when, around 1460, he described this type of road in his textbook “Ten books on architecture”.²⁵

Awe is the word that comes to mind when we characterise people's reaction to the axial road in Anghiari throughout the ages. It runs from one mountain range to another. Above all, it emphasises the width of the plain.

In 1498, Luca Signorella painted a very steep street in his narrative painting “The martyrdom of St. Sebastian” for the Dominican church in Città di Castello (it now hangs in the Pinacoteca Comunale), presumably with the *stradone* in mind.

The Franciscan church (Chiesa della Croce) contains a view of Anghiari with its long street in a picture painted by Anton Maria Susini in 1649.

Francesco Salmi depicted Anghiari, the *stradone* and Chiesa della Croce in an engraving dated 1821.²⁶

Reaching into the countryside. These long axial roads in Arezzo and Anghiari were modelled on Roman projects that had never fallen into oblivion in Central Italy. There are long, straight roads criss-crossing the Arezzo area, from Quarate to Porta San Clemente in Arezzo, for instance. Five straight roads, mainly from the Casentino, cut across the countryside to the hill on which Arezzo stands.²⁷

The idea of an axial road was adopted and supported by the middle classes. The road is so wide that it is like an elongated town square.

Further development. It is quite possible that the lord was so impressed by the idea of an axial road that, like other early absolute rulers, he used it as a tool to develop his territory. Under the Tarlati brothers, the two most important towns in the Tiber Valley, Anghiari and Sansepolcro, were linked by a road that was built for rational reasons, to save time and effort. The road was a *tour de force*. The lord

gained control of the plain.

The road constituted a symbolic intervention in the territory from above. It was both a bond and a link.

In reaching out beyond Anghiari into the countryside, the lord was making a sweeping gesture in urban development.

The view from on high. Before this road was built, it was possible to get a view over the territory from a tower that had been built to a certain height. The towers of the City Halls of Florence (built in 1299 by Arnolfo di Cambio) and Siena (built in 1297) are vivid examples of such towers.

The great road of Anghiari, reaching out into the countryside, is a tangible continuation of this.

However, the above examples are exceptions. They allow no more than an occasional glance at, or intervention in, the landscape. Take a look at the panoramic views in the Siena City Hall frescoes painted in 1338 by Ambroggio Lorenzetti.

The grand square (Mercatale), 1323/1324. Having built the long road, Guido Tarlati and, more particularly, his brother Pier Saccone turned their hands to further improvements in infrastructure: they had a broad square built between the road and Porta San Martino – the Mercatale.

The early historian Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote in 1612: “[The *piazzuola* was moved] out of Anghiari because of the influx of people and cattle; it was called Piazza del Mercatale. At this time, people also began building houses there ...”²⁸

This type of square had been familiar since the days of Antiquity. Towns refused to allow cattle trading within their confines, as the animals created dirt, but allowed it outside the walls. Examples of this can be found in Pompeii, Lucca and Urbino.

This is why the square is so large. In Anghiari, it used to stretch even further eastwards.

The relocation of the main market was the reflection of an economic boom. The development of the town also reflected the improved economic situation. This market was larger than all previous marketplaces in town, even Piazza del Borghetto (Piazza Mameli).

For years, the Mercatale was very simple in appearance. The ground was trodden earth.

The outer town. Over time, an increasingly attractive district known as the *borgo* developed around the Mercatale and along the great street. The Mercatale gradually improved too.

The Tarlati built a terrace, or rather a level paved surface where people could comfortably walk, stand, sit, sell their wares and do their shopping.

Shops in the substructure. This terrace was constructed on very expensive foundations. The stone substructure was used to house more shops along the street.

The rent from these shops went to the upkeep of the site, which was a widespread system of funding. The follow-up funding derived from the property itself.

Well. There must have been an original well at the foot of the substructure, which was very important for the market. The superstructure was rebuilt (in the 19th century it was extended to the arcades).

The Mercatale arcades (1324). In 1324, the lord of the town had arcades built on the grand square. They were constructed on top of the high foundation wall (substructure) on the northern and eastern sides of the square.²⁹ (They were pulled down in 1824. It would be easy to rebuild them nowadays.)

These arcades formed a broad colonnade, covering a good part of the square and protecting it from rain and the heat of the sun.

The construction method was simple but spatially very effective. The portico was built of brick

pillars, wooden beams and a flat tiled roof. It was about 5.5m broad, and therefore afforded room to breathe and plenty of space for moving around. People usually enjoy this type of spatial effect.

The façades on the square. At first, there were only a few houses on the south side of the cattle market. They formed a typical hamlet, such as we still see in many parts of the area nowadays.

Irregularities in the floor plans of the houses prove that this was once a hamlet.

Back gardens. Unlike the houses in the rest of the Old Town, those on the *stradone* and the Mercatale had gardens, often very large ones. People could grow a lot of their own food, or employ their servants as gardeners. They were privileged, but on the other hand powerless against plundering soldiers.

Perceptions. How have people perceived the town and the surrounding area throughout history?

Was the town of Anghiari with its farming community a rule unto itself within its own walls?

How did the farmers regard the town as they left it for their fields?

People were challenged by the long road to take a look at the valley. The road was built at a time when their eyes were being opened. Petrarch is said to have ascended Mount Ventoux, though this was nothing new on his part, and he was not the first to climb a mountain. Boccaccio's tales were told in a villa on a hill.

Was the piazza a viewing terrace?

Did people use the walkways on the walls?

Posthumous fame. Pier Saccone was an important Tuscan "master builder". Little known nowadays, he is worth rediscovering.

The following bizarre story points to the reputation he had for many years: marriage with a daughter of the noble Pietramala family was a prestigious match for the textile merchant Giubileo di Niccolò Carsidoni (born before 1340, died 1432) in Sansepolcro. He called his second son Pier Saccone, and named his fifth son after Pier Saccone's son Ludovico.³⁰

The fortress (*cassero*) of 1334

Residence of counts. The lords of Galbino resided in the fortress area of the Upper Town from about 900 to 1104.

Their residence – probably a tower house – presumably stood in the western part (now the Middle School). The necessary outbuildings were arranged round a courtyard, including those belonging to the *cascine*, or dairy of sorts: an office, stables and storerooms, workshops and servants' quarters. There was a cistern (on the square, below the picture of the Madonna on the present-day Town Hall) .

The retainers lived in the houses on the north side of the Upper Town.

Religious houses in the fortress. In 640, a convent for Benedictine nuns was built on the site of the ancient temple area. It must have closed down in the 11th century. What dramatic events led to its closure?

When Count Bernardino di Galbino left all his worldly goods to the monks of Camaldoli in 1104, he made them promise to build a monastery in part of the fortress.³¹

Count Bernardino left the monks estates, in order to give them a regular income and ensure their means of livelihood.

The new monastery stood on the site of the old convent. It is likely that the rooms of the convent still existed in one form or another around the year 1104. The new monastery could thus be made ready

within a short space of time.

The General Chapter of the Order, meeting in Volterra in 1351, described the monastery as “medium-sized” (*mediocria monasteria*).³²

The Camaldoiese fortress. Once the Camaldoiese monks became the new lords, they took over the residence next door, the fortress. They used the Count's houses, without any alterations.

The Great Tower (*torrione*) in the *castello*. The early history of the Great Tower is quite a mystery. The historian, Lorenzo Taglieschi, who was familiar with the sources available in his day, wrote in the year 1614 that many noble persons had fled from Arezzo to Anghiari in 1234.

They began constructing a tower there (*la torre*, which was not enlarged until 100 years later) as well as further fortifications that were finished later by Bishop Guido [Tarlati] of Arezzo [the lord of the town of Anghiari].³³

It was probably fear that drove these people to collaborate on this project with the Camaldoiese monks. We do not know how, having made themselves lords of the town, the Tarlati managed to gain control of the west part of the Upper Town. They probably argued that they should enjoy the Count's former rights.

Enlargement of the tower (1334). In 1334, Bishop Guido of Arezzo, the lord of the town, had the mighty tower enlarged. The best way to get an idea of its vast size is to view it from the other side of the southern valley (Campo alla Fiera) and the northern valley (Via della Circonvallazione).

The ground floor walls were made of mighty squared-off rustic, surmounted in turn by smooth walls of squared-off stone. In 1614, Lorenzo Taglieschi called it a sizeable fortress.

The tower owed its powerful appearance mainly to its height.³⁴

The keeper of the tower probably sent and received light signals.³⁵

The tower house, with its wide girth, was a multi-storey building.

On the south side, two large balconies were supported by – in one case seven, and in the other five – massive stone brackets. The tower dwellers passed through high doorways with rounded arches to enter their balconies. The balconies are evidence of people's interest in the view over the countryside.

This was the time when the Tuscan poet Petrarch (1304-1374) described the view over the countryside from Mount Ventoux near Avignon.

The *rocca*, or fortress, used to be crenellated.

The tower was originally 16m higher.³⁶ The top collapsed in the earthquake of 1917 and has never been rebuilt.

The ground floor of the tower was built as a high transverse rectangular hall, with walls of ashlar. People used to enter this hall from the east (now from the south). The entrance was steep and narrow. The ceiling was altered in the 16th century. The original plain beams were covered with plasterwork in the shape of shallow cloister vaults.

Nowadays, if we proceed from this first hall to a second very long one, we enter a hall that is several times the length of the first one. The ceiling of this very large room used to be beamed.

In the 16th century, cloister vaulting was considered to be elegant, and it was added to the ceiling of this hall too. It is light, almost floating.

After the earthquake of 1917, the room was secured by means of safety arches erected one behind the other.

At some point in time, a loggia was built on the east side (now walled in). It belonged to the convent of San Martino.

A building with early 15th century colonnades in front of its entrance stands to the west of the tower.

State of the fort in 1385. A commission of experts from Florence took stock when Anghiari was handed over to Florence in July 1385, reporting that the garrison comprised thirty persons at that time.

They listed several, but not costly, improvements that needed to be made. A castellan and fifteen to twenty soldiers (*compagni*) equipped with weapons, bows and arrows (*balestre*) and bombards would be sufficient to defend the fort.³⁷

In the transitional treaty of 1385, it was agreed that the fort of Anghiari and the surrounding castles should be guarded in perpetuity day and night “for the honour and glory of Florence”. Anghiari was obliged to provide military personnel for Florence. The fort was to stock permanent provisions of food. Construction work was to be carried out by Florence in future, with the exception of roofs, cisterns and stoves.³⁸

Relocation of the Abbey (1359); its surrounding district

The Abbey relocates (1359). The entire district behind the eastern end of the *piazzuola* (Piazza del Popolo) belonged to the Abbey.

In November 1337, lightning struck the Abbey. Eight neighbouring houses collapsed as a result. The campanile was destroyed.³⁹ Twenty years later, there was such a strong earthquake that part of the neighbouring town of Sansepolcro was destroyed. These two disasters severely damaged the monastery.

Magio da Pietramala, then lord of the town, cleverly seized the opportunity to achieve what would normally not have been possible: he planned to enlarge the fort, and for this he needed the land on which the Abbey stood. In return, he offered to bear the cost of moving the Abbey to a new site. He may have been partly motivated by his wish to be buried in the Abbey church. When he died in 1380, this was where he was buried.

The abbot of the Camaldolesian monks, Simone Testi, agreed. The Prior General in Camaldoli was uneasy about the reduction in available space. He made his agreement subject to certain conditions: a number of workshops (*officine*) would have to be rebuilt as well as a large granary (*granario*) for storing the tithes contributed by tenant farmers; a dwelling place would also be needed for the count's deputy, who exercised the rights of the Abbey.

Approval came from Cardinal Albornoz in Rome.⁴⁰ The agreement was signed in 1359, but the construction work lasted a long time. The abbot and his monks cannot have been overjoyed at the cramped arrangements, either during the transitional period or later.⁴¹

The new Abbey church. The monks already had, or were to acquire, the block of houses on the present-day corner of 1 Via del Castello/Vicolo della Piazzuola. It may have been the pilgrims' guest-house (*cenobio*), together with a chapel donated by Queen Theodolinda of the Lombards following her conversion.⁴²

This house lay on the ancient way over the hill. It was just about connected to the square, where a large gate served as the main entrance (1 Via del Castello Antico). Two very plain entrance halls lay behind the gate.

Another building stood on Vicolo della Piazzuola, which had been erected on the site of the enlargement of the town prior to the building of the second town wall (later to be the sacristy).⁴³

The church. On Via del Castello, some houses on the site of the third enlargement were presumably

demolished to make room for the church. The reason they were able to close the old path at this point (the continuation of Via della Misericordia) may have been that the Abbey owned all the plots of land by this time.

The shape of the church was determined by the existing buildings and the other paths (Vicolo della Piazzuola, Via del Castello), which could not be altered.

This explains the curiously irregular shape of the interior. The chancel, choir and space for the congregation are all small and polygonal in form.

The monastery. The paths, being main routes, had to remain. This meant the monastery was restricted in its development by the extremely small space available, which explains the following *tour de force*.

The monastery grew upwards, above the church. The abbot simply added a storey, wherever possible. The building owes its compact appearance to this development.

Expansion (about 1400). The two ordinary buildings on the south side of the path (numbers 8/10) either already belonged to, or were acquired by, the Abbey. They could only be connected by a bridge-like building over the street itself.

The Abbey wanted to expand, maybe around 1400. In order to do so, it again had to take unusual steps. On the east side, where the gradient was very steep, it had the foundations laid for a whole row of houses (Via del Castello Antico 14/24).⁴⁴ The east walls had to be built up from a very low level, with the result that a vast building complex arose on the hillside. It is easily visible from Via delle Mura di Sopra. This was not a fortification, even though the pebbled substructures with their broad columns might suggest it was.

The mighty substructure was not the only large-scale project in Anghiari. A little earlier, they had constructed the fortress wall and the foundations for Sant'Agostino, whose apse looks like a fortress tower.

There were gardens to the left and right (plots numbered 327, 466 and 305 in the cadastral records). The garden (326) to the north was probably also owned by the Abbey.⁴⁵

A second phase of building involved connecting the church to the abbot's house (plot 330; Via del Castello Antico 20/22).

The abbot and the well-bred clergy lived in the new buildings. Later, the cardinal's deputy lived in the abbot's house.⁴⁶

The fourth circular enlargement and the fifth wall c. 1420

The fourth enlargement was the final one. It created the present-day Via delle Mura di Sotto, being the fifth – and now the outer – ring-wall.

Driving force. Whereas town planning was the main driving force behind the previous circular fortifications, it was now the new techniques of warfare that galvanised the town into action. The old fortifications were called into question. In this context, they debated a possible further enlargement.

They made a time-honoured decision. Enlargement was to take place on two levels: the town was to cover a larger area, and new fortifications were to be built, at least at certain important points, to match the new military technology.

This fifth ring of fortification was probably built around 1420.

Size of the parcels of land. Each enlargement involved ever lower-lying parcels of land. The

inhabitants demanded ever higher standards of comfort. Very large houses thus came to be built. Many houses were also split up into apartments. Some of them opened on to the upper path (Via delle Mura di Sopra) and some on to the lower one (Via delle Mura di Sotto).

Not all the land was built on. In the north, one strip of land remained free. We do not know why.

The walkway on the wall widened with every new circular enlargement.

It broadened considerably in the fourth enlargement. The reason for this lay in the fact that the new technology employed by besiegers called for improvements in the technology employed by the besieged.

Machines were used to catapult stones in the 13th and 14th centuries.

The first cannons appeared in Flanders in about 1319, in Metz in 1324, in Florence in 1326, and in England in 1327. It took a long time before their use was widespread. It was not until 1420 that suitable gunpowder for immediate and perfect detonation was invented.⁴⁷

All these weapons were the result of considerable scientific endeavour, calculation and highly productive handiwork. Armies therefore included engineers⁴⁸ and craftsmen.

The first bombards were employed in 1388 during the war between Florence and Siena.⁴⁹ Stone balls for the firearms had to be transported on carts which needed sufficiently wide paths.

The citizens of Anghiari have been going for their evening walks along these paths on the fortress walls right up to the present day, especially in summer, when it is more likely to be cool there. “We go out a bit in the evenings (*la sera se esce*) and walk between the walls (*si va tra le mura*)”, says Lina Bozi.

The modernisation of the fortress

We can distinguish between new buildings, reconstructed buildings and modernised buildings.

Reconstruction in 1290. After a three-month siege during one of the many wars between Florence and Arezzo, part of the Anghiari fortress wall was destroyed.

The population rebuilt it as quickly as they could. They were prepared to invest huge sums immediately after the end of the war, as they felt the fortifications were so important for their common security.

Can we imagine the far-reaching impact this had on the lives of the families? Where did they have to save money? What conflicts did this lead to?

Stability of the house walls. In times of warfare, enemy arrows, and above all incendiary projectiles, were a growing menace. It was therefore decreed in 1387 that anyone building, or replacing, a house backing on to the fortress wall was no longer allowed to build a timber-frame construction. It had to be of stonework and lime, the windows had to be barred with iron and the roof crenellated.⁵⁰

The walls of the houses built in 1420 were made of stones from the river.

Examples of this are nearly all the houses on Via Mura di Sotto, starting with no. 2, (numberless), 4, 5, 6/7/8 (particularly striking), 10 (particularly striking), 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

Fortification warfare. For a long time, most wars were fought in fortified places. One party barricaded itself behind its walls and the other tried to “bust their stone tanks”. Attackers required ever greater skills to overcome such mighty walls. In most 15th century conflicts, every army's military engineers were accorded a decisive rôle.

Wars were hardly ever fought on a battlefield. It took a long time for this to become the norm.

Everyone had a duty to help out. From earliest times, all inhabitants had a duty to participate in public works, particularly those connected with the fortress wall. This was similar to neighbourly help in the building of houses. Every house had to appoint one man to do this work.⁵¹ Peripatetic specialists were brought in from outside to take on complicated jobs.

Expense. Military expenditure was immense – not because they had to pay their mercenaries, but because of the wall. Braunfels believes the building of a wall in the 14th century would swallow up about one quarter of a town's total income.⁵²

Prestige. The walls gave prestige to the town, adding to its grandeur and attractiveness (*decorum*). People saw and admired their size and dignity.

Modernisation under the Tarlati (1381). In about 1381, the Tarlati brothers, Bartolomeo and Marco, ordered the modernisation of the town fortifications. Moats were dug around the outside, and subterranean secret rooms built under the fortress tower.

Many families moved into town from outlying areas because they felt less and less secure. The population grew considerably as a result.⁵³

Doubts and debates. The completion of the fourth ring, i.e. the fifth wall, marked the end of the urban development of the town fortress for civilian purposes.

All later building measures in connection with the town walls were linked to military technology. Their aim was the upgrading of security in the fortress.

Even shortly after 1420, considerable doubts arose as to whether the fortifications were strong enough. This was a time of escalating violence, while warfare was simultaneously turning into a science. Thus, adversaries were waging fierce wars, using increasingly sophisticated technology. Engineers were creating machines for siege warfare as well as terrible forms of ordnance.

A wall had to be massive if it was to withstand the huge stone balls shot by the bombards.

In 1444, the population was extremely worried.

Lengthy debates ensued.

Calculations were made.

The figures looked disastrous.

Anghiari could not afford it. Florence had only limited means at its disposal.

North wall (about 1444). They therefore had a new idea, which was to keep the existing walls and upgrade them. Experts ingeniously suggested that the inner walls should be strengthened. The general council thus resolved to upgrade the circular wall.

The only place where a new wall was to be built was behind Sant'Agostino. At the same time, it was to act as a foundation for the planned reconstruction of the church and its tower.

A second measure was the building of a projecting bastion at the north-western corner of the fortress wall (visible from Via del Destino).⁵⁴

A tax was levied to finance the undertaking, which was nevertheless still very costly. The tax was levied until 1459, thus burdening nearly one whole generation.⁵⁵

The southern double wall (about 1444). They worked steadfastly on the fortifications. This is a complex story, which is almost impossible for us to unravel.

Under the peace treaty of 1181, Arezzo had been awarded property in the *borghetto* (south of the present-day Via della Torre). In 1445, Anghiari bought this row of houses, which had been part of the enlargement of the town at that time, from Arezzo. In 1444, the houses were pulled down in order to

provide better protection for the *borghetto* inside the fortress wall.

An engineer from the neighbouring town, Francesco Cantagallina dal Borgo, designed a new type of fortification, beginning with a huge first wall, followed by a narrow strip of open ground – a bailey – and ending with a second wall.⁵⁶

The double wall remains to this day at the end of Via della Torre, behind the tower, on the south and west sides. It is clearly visible in the tunnel between Via della Torre and Via di Circonvallazione, as well as from 19 Via della Torre, at a crossroads to the south.

On the west side, we can follow the double wall over its entire length on the cadastral map. We can see that plots of land were either not built on, or were built on more or less in the space between the two walls.

Remaining doubts. The improvements were hotly debated. Above all, the many mercenary leaders who lived in Anghiari all held different opinions. The mercenary leader Niccolò Giusti felt the design was useless and insecure from the point of view of military technology.⁵⁷

Porta Fiorentina. On the west side, St. Martin's Gate (Porta Vecchia) was modernised in line with the arms technology of the time. A second gate – a bastion (*baluardo*) – was built on the far side of the moat, on today's piazza. The two gates were connected by a drawbridge.

This plan was drafted by a local mercenary leader, Matteo Cane.⁵⁸

The building materials came from Castello di Valialle, which was razed to the ground by Florence in 1491.

The Porta Nuova (Porta Fiorentina) was built of the same materials in 1460.⁵⁹

At night, the gates could be shut with mighty locks forged by locksmiths. One such 15th-century lock (from Porta del Ponte) can be seen in Museo Taglieschi.

Repairs. Expenditure on armaments technology rose constantly. In 1467, the fortress was repaired because of threats of war. Porta di Sotto and Porta Fiorentina were topped with battlements (*merli*). The drawbridge was fitted with chains.

The necessary funds came in part from the town treasury, in part from fines imposed by the *vicario*.⁶⁰

Montedoglio Castle. At the same time, the Florentine Republic ordered Countess Orlandina to have the fortifications of Montedoglio Castle upgraded. The Republic merely provided her with ammunition and arms.⁶¹

The tower at Porta Fiorentina. A tower, which has been preserved, was built in 1480 next to Porta Fiorentina (now 5 Via Giordano Bruno). It was useful from the point of view of military technology and was a symbol of prestige.⁶² Its walls were of brick, and it was topped by a flat pavilion roof. (It was later moved to the garden of Palazzo Testi and used as a summerhouse.) An arrow-slit can still be seen in a recess of the town gate.

In 1537, in order to step up security, the *capitano* had a small gate and a fortified guard house (*casamatta*) built in the middle of the wall.⁶³

Bastione del vicario. In 1470, building work was completed on the bastion of the *vicario* in the east of the town. The engineer Giovanni Camerini of Bibbiena was responsible for the design. A garden was laid out on top of it.⁶⁴

Arms race (1553). The increase in military conflicts among the great absolutist princedoms of the time triggered an arms race throughout Europe. This proved very costly for their peoples. “ ... gunpowder for the defence of Venice [around 1580] cost 1,800,000 ducats, more than the annual

revenue of the Venetian state; this is a striking example of the spiralling expenditure on armaments, even in times of peace.”⁶⁵

In 1553, Cosimo Medici of Florence kept his duchy under arms as far as possible. He declared war on Siena. The French cavalry swept across his territory and plundered.

Giardino del vicario. In 1553, the Duke and the six-man Commission for War ordered the military engineer Girolamo Magi, a native of Anghiari, to upgrade the military fortifications in Anghiari as part of their strategy to expand the system of military bases throughout Tuscany.

Girolamo Magi was born in Anghiari in 1528 and died in Constantinople in 1571. At the age of 16, Magi wrote his first five cantos of eight-line verses (*ottava rima*) on the Flemish wars. This work, edited by Pietro Aretino, appeared in Venice in 1550. He studied law at the University of Perugia, finishing off his studies with a doctorate from Pisa. In 1551, he was in Florence as an envoy of Cosimo I. While there, he made the acquaintance of the fortifications architect, Varchi, and collaborated with him. Varchi charged him with designing the fortifications for his native town of Anghiari. He did not stay there long, but made his way to Venice, where he entered the service of the Venetian Republic as a military engineer. Together with the forces of Venice, he took part in the unsuccessful defence of Famagusta against the Turkish army. Magi was taken prisoner and taken to Constantinople, where he died. He was the author of several books.⁶⁶

In Anghiari, two mighty bastions were erected in accordance with his design, one in the north and one in the south. It was a long time before they were finished in 1571 by Filippo Spina.

The south wall had battlements (*merlatura*) decorated with the Ghibelline swallow's tail badge (*coda di rondine*).

Bastion. The fortress wall was strengthened and extended. The bastion between Porta di Sotto and Sant'Agostino, which they had started to construct before the foundations many years earlier, was brought forward. The wall of the *vicario*'s bastion was also built higher.⁶⁷ However, they failed to finish the jobs properly.

Girolamo Magi drafted plans and gave advice (*disegno e consiglio*). He described the project in his “Book on fortifications” (*Della fortificazione delle città*): “In tempo di guerra si può anco voltar le cortine in tal modo che non siano scoperti i difensori da quei di fuori, benchè a ciò si possa provedere con spesse traverse di trinciera, come fece io l'anno 1553 in Anghiari, quando insieme con alcuni altri, allora l'esercito francese si avvicinava a Valdichiana, essendomi stato dato la cura della fortificatione di tal luogo.”⁶⁸

The impact of the fortress on people's minds

How did the high-lying fortress affect the minds of its citizens and the surrounding farming community?

Did it give rise to differences in prestige between those who were living in the fortress and the defenceless persons of the surrounding areas?

Those who had their own fortress were aware of what was happening elsewhere in the outside world, in times of peace and in the many wars.

People from many families were involved.

The recruiting of mercenaries. Almost every other page written by the historian Lorenzo Taglieschi in 1614 contains a reference to the mercenary leaders who were natives of Anghiari and who

made their money from waging war.

They recruited their infantry (*fanti*) from the local population, both from among farming families with too many sons and from unemployed town dwellers.

Relatives. The soldiers had their extended families in the town. This meant the thoughts of many families were with the young men.

We can imagine them coming home, ceaselessly telling their tales of war, in front of their houses, on the squares, or while seated round the stove. There were tales of violence, murder and plunder. In order to justify what they had done, many of their acts were deceptively dressed up as heroism – part truth and part error. The result was a tangle of news and illusion that is now impossible to unravel, tales told for their entertainment value and to satisfy people's curiosity.

Was it so very different from the sixty television channels we have nowadays?

We can imagine many of the mercenaries returning to their families sick and wounded. They received no compensation for being ill, invalided or unable to work. Many had to be cared for to the end of their days.

We can imagine a messenger bringing news that a son had died. The relatives were profoundly affected. Death was always a matter of the salvation of a soul.

The town therefore bore the marks of war in many different ways.

Historical writings. People were so absorbed with thoughts of cruel warfare that the writers of chronicles and histories could not get enough tales of fighting. Two-thirds of all pages written were devoted to wars.

Armies on the march. From time to time, an army would suddenly turn up. It would march through the Tiber Valley, which was one of the most important traffic routes in the Peninsula.

Armies on the march often behaved as though they were in the midst of a war. They had no supplies, but had to obtain provisions on the way, so they plundered the farms in the surrounding district, slitting the peasant farmers' throats and slaughtering their cattle, or taking the beasts with them.

Sometimes they threatened a hill-town. The townspeople would see them coming, only an hour or two's march away. Property was in danger, as well as life and limb. If such towns were not well protected by a fortress wall, they would be besieged, captured and plundered, like the peasants on the land.

Time and effort. Townspeople and country dwellers alike, living in a perpetual state of existential anxiety, and needing a place of refuge, had to invest huge amounts of time and effort in building fortresses and towers. They worked as labourers, acquired building materials and paid their taxes.

They did this not just once, but over a period of many years, unswervingly.

There was always something that needed mending, or something that experience taught them needed improving.

Anxieties. The function of the fortress wall was thus to protect the people's very existence.

On the other hand, the town wall became a symbol of their permanent everyday anxieties.

Significance for the area. At a different level, the fortified town defined the area. It differentiated between the people whose property outside its confines was exposed to plunder and those whose property was more or less secure.

It also meant that those who enjoyed its protection were able to accumulate property over time, with the result that towns gradually became more and more affluent.

Rituals, symbols and images. At yet another level, all these things could be transferred to their

ritual equivalents.

The fortress wall was the face of the town, not only graphically but also symbolically. The wall was the ritual representation of the place.

The wall could stand for many things, such as local pride or deterrence of one's foes. It could be identified with the place itself. It could be a badge testifying to the size of the town in the never-ending competition between itself and its rivals.

The fortress ring was therefore the symbol of the town on maps and on pictures.

This tradition has existed since the days of Antiquity. The town deity wore a crown in her hair representing the fortress. On mediaeval maps, the ring-wall was the symbol of the town.

Rights. Herein lies the origin of the rights enjoyed by its citizens and groups of citizens.

Those who lived under the shelter of the town fortress wall were "free". Of course they were not free in every way, but they were freer than the peasants on the land.

When times were good from an economic point of view, the town wooed labourers from the countryside with the promise of this same freedom.

The rulers of Antiquity had appropriated the right to decide who was allowed to build a fortress, because a fortress was always a mixed blessing. Well-constructed fortresses were impregnable for many centuries, but they also paved the way for open, or more subtle, rebellion against the rulers themselves.

Paradox. In the Middle Ages, the Holy Roman Emperors did not come from towns. Their origins lay in a country-based feudal nobility, who had a different mindset, a different legal system and experience of a different kind. The Emperors therefore had trouble in dealing with towns, especially the Italian ones with their highly developed civilisations.

For the Italian towns, a fortress was always a sign of their relative independence. Rulers were thus suspicious of their comparative self-confidence.

If the towns were self-confident, their individual citizens became so too. The seed of individualism was being sown and constantly nurtured.

This gave rise to a paradox that still troubles us, and will certainly continue to do so: a town demands a sense of community from its citizens, but at the same time fosters their individuality.

In the economic ups and downs of the Middle Ages, a fortified town was where the most highly developed productivity and trade were to be found. This meant rich towns provided the dues the rulers needed.

It was hard to keep the balance between the two, especially since the rulers were scarcely able to show they put the dues to good use.

This gave rise to numerous conflicts and brutal wars of subjugation.

In the twelfth century, the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa tried to force the rich Upper Italian towns to finance his wars. On the one hand, he hated the towns; on the other, he transferred the notion of the Upper Italian town to his territory north of the Alps, in order to use its financial resources for his own ends.

The structure of the conflict, if not its form, is still with us today. It can easily be detected in the conflict between the individual and the "wise men" in our communities.

Liberation through demolition. The long history of deeply rooted fears is the reason so many fortresses were demolished in the 19th century. Many people wanted to free themselves from daily confrontation with their fears in the shape of the walls. For such people, demolition was a form of

liberation.

Preservation of ancient monuments. Why did fortresses become a target for conservationists and tourists in the 20th century?

First, fortresses became separated from the existential fears and barbaric wars that went with their origins.

Furthermore, they were multifaceted.

They created a dense form of social life, which fascinates us to this day, and will continue to do so.

A fortress is a source of great pleasure. We only need to think of an evening stroll along the walls, and the views.

Views of the town

The fortress wall. In Anghiari, the hillside wall rises to gigantic heights. The most difficult parts are on the southern and the entire western sides. The wall was additionally fortified on the northern side, because bombards aimed at the town could be positioned on the hill opposite.

For centuries, battlements were to be found on every part of the fortress, like the long wall of the Via delle Mura di Sotto. The only crenellation that is still visible is on the south side.

Views. The apse of Sant'Agostino is like a mighty bastion. In our time, it has been compared with the staircase tower and the apse of the Duomo (1460) in Urbino, which were built in the same era. The mass of the tower adds to this effect.

Large five-storey cube-shaped houses stand to the right of Sant'Agostino. The effect produced by these houses was intensified when a similarly shaped building complex was built on to the corner of the fortress wall in the 19th century.

However, this means there is no longer a break between the fortified town and the open marketplace.

The town climbs to the top of the hill, layer by layer.

There is a lively contrast between the seemingly large bulk of the houses and the apparent movement of the fairly flat tiled roofs.

Towers. The once crenellated fortress tower (*cassero*; 1334) is dominant. The tall and lengthy complex built on to it intensifies this effect.

The tower of the Abbey church (*Badia*; 1436) is closest to the valley floor. The mass of its tower contrasts with that of the fortress tower: the bell tower, topped by a pavilion roof, is open.

The tower of Sant'Agostino (1464) is particularly distinctive. A steep pyramid of stone stands on the bell chamber atop the bulk of the plain building. The neighbouring town of Sansepolcro has similar towers. The artist Piero della Francesca painted this type of tower in a number of his pictures.

The west side of the town tower (13th century to 1598) is the counterpart to the Abbey tower.

The tower next to Porta Fiorentina (1480) once produced an imposing effect, especially when viewed from the Mercatale, but that was before the completion of the town walls.

Paintings. The Florentine artist Matteo Rosselli (1578-1651) painted a picture of the crucifixion for the Franciscan church of Santa Croce (now hanging in the Museo Taglieschi in Anghiari), showing the *castello*, that is to say, the walled Old Town.

The unwalled Croce district

Three times the focal point of the town shifted dramatically. If we read the map with the eyes of a town planner, what stands out, from a spatial and topographical perspective, is economic development in the Middle Ages.

In early mediaeval times, little trading went on in the upper town, which was peopled by farmers. In about the year 1000, trading mostly took place in the oldest square, the *piazzuola* (Piazza del Popolo).

In the 13th century, artisans and traders thrived in the burghers' district outside the main town, the *borghetto* (around Piazza Mameli). Production and trading thus shifted lower down the hill. In the year 1200, the Count officially moved the market from the *piazzuola* of the upper town to Piazza del Borghetto in the lower town.⁶⁹

In the 14th century, artisans and traders enjoyed a further period of growth, and the economic centre shifted once more, this time leaving the walled town for the area of the Mercatale, today's Piazza Baldaccio Bruni (around 1330).

Shops. At the height of the Middle Ages, shop entrances were walled in stone, which gave them a certain prestige. For us, a stone entrance is an indication of an historic shop.

Borgo della Croce. Planning to the west of the fortified town started early. The unwalled Borgo della Croce was built at the same time as the long road (1323).

There was a burgeoning of resources in the 16th century, despite disasters and taxation.

This is clearly visible in the many houses that were renovated and in the many and various new buildings. A large number of houses were built in this century, especially outside the fortress area.

At this time, it was not only property that spread and increased in value, but also the good taste that had produced an *avantgarde* of clients and artists in Florence in the middle of the 15th century.

We must not be surprised at the time lag. People hold on to their way of life, so that, for a long time, new ways hardly have a chance.

New ways do get a chance, however, if the metropolis acts as a kind of model. This takes time, but it is how the *avantgarde* finally reaches the provinces.

After 1512, during the rule of the princes, the rich moved out of the narrow confines of the Old Town and into Borgo della Croce. The houses built here look like rich Florentine palaces.

With this new district, Anghiari grew by one third. Writing in 1614, the historian Lorenzo Taglieschi considered it to be very big. He found it very urban in character – as though it were inside the fortress wall.⁷⁰

The new 18th century district along the town wall

The first time the Old Town fell out of favour was in the 16th century. A second such wave took place in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

In the words of Zuccagni Orlandini, the author of an early 19th century geographical map of the Grand Duchy: "The roadways are narrow in the enclosed space of the Old Town ... You descend from the fortress to the marketplace, and it is here that the new town begins – a pleasant place, with a smile on its face."⁷¹

The Corsi district. The Corsis converted old houses on the northern side of the long road, turning them into a palazzo.

Extensive north-facing gardens were laid out (1777/1791). The impressive view is now the familiar

façade of the theatre (1777/1790). The family's ambition was to become part of the nobility. They had a chapel (Cappella Corsi) built in honour of their patron saint, St. Thomas of Villanova.

This was urban planning on a large scale. Another measure of this kind was taking place more or less parallel to it.

The 18th century area. An area with its own distinctive structure was added to the town in the 18th century, cutting a swathe right through it.

This century saw the end of a thousand years of military technology: the fortress became redundant. In future, wars would be fought between the vast territorial states in other places, with ghastlier weapons and on a greater scale.

Thus, the existence of the town wall was called into question.

The response was the same as during the building of the fourth ring-wall: a wave of house-building, a fifth one. The town wall became the back walls of the houses. There had never been any water in the moat, in any case.

A long row of houses (Via Trieste) was built from north to south. Further houses were built to face these terraced houses, to the west of the Mercatale.

The fringes of the Old Town lost their long-time mark of defiance. Instead, a kind of avenue was built, ending in a rising flight of steps leading to a new church, the Madonna del Fosso (1740/1788; the architect was Michele Jacopo Ciocchi).

Apart from the long road and Via del Terrato (16th century, now Via Mazzini), Anghiari has had no straight roads; this was a matter of regret for Lorenzo Taglieschi, writing in 1614. However, it was always the topography that determined the look of this hillside town, and the use to which it could be put with a minimum of resources.

The north-west side of the fortress was the site of an adventurous building project. Houses were built from the very bottom right to the very top. The resulting scene is thrilling.

The Abbey moves a second time (1639/1788). The focal point shifted away from the Old Town, as demonstrated by the fact that the Abbey moved out in the 17th century.

The cramped rooms with their eccentric floor plan were not in tune with the exuberant triumphalism of the Counter-Reformation, despite attempts at re-decoration.

In 1639, on the south side of the town, opposite the town tower, the Abbey began digging the foundations for a new church dedicated to the Madonna delle Grazie. The new church was to be the place of reverence for an old picture of this name from the *borghetto*.

The new Chiesa del Fosso was to become the largest interior space in the town.

Why did one and half centuries pass before the building was finished in 1788?

A fierce debate then broke out between traditionalists and reformers, even within the clergy, regarding the building.

The point of controversy was that the clergy refused to reserve family graves, requiring the dead to be buried in the new graveyard outside the town.

The Augustinian canons were furious, because their church's income came from burials. Fierce arguments went back and forth.⁷²

The only break in the structure (1932) and the move away from the Old Town (1960 onwards)

The break in the structure. To this day, Anghiari is quite unique in having retained its structure, even

among Central Italian towns that make few changes to their historic structure.

There is one exception: in 1932, a street called Via dell'Impero was built into the structure of the Old Town. After 1945, it was renamed Via XXV Luglio.

A third wave of people turned their backs on the Old Town in the 1960s.

Restoration. The fact that the Old Town is so well preserved nowadays is due to the systematic town planning policies of the 1970s and 1980s, under the direction of the then mayor, Franco Talozzi.

A change of perspective

What we experience is determined by our state of mind, and our experience determines the way we look at things. Conversely, our view of things structures our spatial perception.⁷³

In the mediaeval town our gaze is fixed on the narrow pathways; our view is restricted.

What kind of outlook is there? Probably it doesn't matter. If we can see into the far distance, we are afraid of losing ourselves. Via Nenci, in the oldest part of the Upper Town, stands for the restricted view.

Nowhere is there a view that is the product of a design.

If you go for a walk on the town wall, your view of the outside world is random.

The long road was not thought of in spatial terms, but as the symbol of a ruler's reaching out into his territory. It had very little to do with the view; it was a matter of prestige. For a long time, this road had no recognisable markings at either end.

Its form did not alter until the 16th century, when the arcades were built in 1565.

When we now take a first look at the long road, we perceive it to be a Renaissance street.

The Renaissance widens our view. Via del Terrato (Via Mazzini) stands for this broader perspective.

A roof loggia was added to the monastery beside the palace of the *vicario*, similar to the one on the Taglieschi house (Codice Taglieschi, 1624). The view is thus the product of design.

Via Trieste follows this tradition; this is the street that was built in the 18th century, when houses were built in front of the town wall.

In the era of industrialisation the view became subject to movement, as a result of faster means of transport. The newly built Via Nova on the northern slope stands for such movement.

"The structuring of the view depends entirely on the speed at which the observer is travelling. Space replaces time, so to speak. It's like a film production." (Enno Fritsch)

The theatre terrace (1934) offers onlookers a view like a film: we might be floating over the rooftops.

In the post-war years our sweeping vision has blurred. The new housing estates with their scattered planning stand for this kind of view. The spaces that are created are inconsistent, so an observer cannot have a consistent view.

Nowadays we can enjoy the whole historic spectrum of mental view structures.

Notes on:

Fundamentals (4.)

- 1 The source of the Tiber is on Monte Fumarolo, on Tuscan territory. As Mussolini wanted the source assigned to his home region, the province of Forlì, he ordered the commune of Verghereto to be transferred from Tuscany to Romagna. After 1945, Tuscany generously refused to re-claim it.
- 2 Vivoli, 1992.
- 3 Vivoli, 1992, Table XVII.
- 4 Van Waveren, 1986.
- 5 Braudel, 1, 334.
- 6 Braudel, 1, 332.
- 7 Quoted from Braudel, 1, 333.
- 8 Joachim Radkau, Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht (Leipzig) Issue 11, 2003.
- 9 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 262.
- 10 Profilo territoriale, 1984,11.
- 11 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 45, Leonardi (undated).
- 12 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, notably p. 342.
- 13 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, notably p. 343.
- 14 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 345.
- 15 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 154.
- 16 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, notably 265, 269.
- 17 On verification of sources cf. Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 79.
- 18 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 141.
- 19 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 98.
- 20 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 149.
- 21 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 117.
- 22 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 150.
- 23 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 164, 165, 216/217. On the subject of contemporary works on military history (taking Count Federico of Urbino by way of example) cf. Günter, 2003, 31.
- 24 Braudel, vol. 1, 1979, 31.
- 25 Details in Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcik, 1995.
- 26 Vivoli, 1992 Table.
- 27 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 41.

5. Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages

Etruscan and Roman Anghiari

Nothing stands on virgin land.

Migration movements. In early times, there were village-like settlements, but they were short lived. The settlers did not know how to make good use of the land, which was rapidly exhausted. Being unable to remain in one place for generations, they had to move on.

One example of such migration remains today: Sardinian shepherds leave their island for Central Italy, where they move from pasture to pasture with their flocks.

There was a village of huts from the Villanovan culture in Arezzo. We know what the huts looked like from their cinerary urns, which took the form of clay replicas of huts. The ground plan was mostly roundish, and the roofs were steep and thatched with straw or reeds.

This form had a long tradition, with French scholars of the history of the human mind pointing to its “*longue durée*”. From time to time, we find such huts in remote locations, newly built, but in the old style. The shepherds use them as sheep stalls and dwellings.¹

The Etruscans² were not just a passing episode. The land was theirs for 500 years – from the 8th to

the 3rd century BC Etruria was the western part of Central Italy. It rose to prominence on account of its deposits of iron ore, mainly in the region of what was later to become Siena, and on the island of Elba. The artisans processing the iron ore formed an important industry.

The Monti Rognosi to the north of Anghiari are rich in iron ore.

Politics. The city state (*città stato*) was largely independent. City states existed side by side, linked in a kind of federal organisation.

Within the states, there were bitter tensions between the people and the patricians, similar to those that rocked Rome for centuries.³

The people in this area were Etruscans; neighbouring Arezzo was an important Etruscan town. Most Etruscans were farmers.

Artisans with highly developed skills – greatly admired in times of Antiquity, too – lived in the towns. There are good reasons for regarding this as the start of a continuing tradition that formed part of the structure of Central Italy from the Middle Ages right up to the rapid industrialisation of the post-war years.

Our assumption that this was a long-term feature (*"longue durée"*) is chiefly based on the methodology employed by French historians of the human mind.

The life of at least some of the Etruscans is depicted in the pictures we find, for instance in Tarquinia, which show their happy belief that the dead live on in a very human way.

There are many traces of this epoch in Anghiari, but they have not yet been properly brought to light.

Overlords. Neither a people nor its culture disappears when a new wave of migration sweeps over them and new overlords take control.

Bit by bit, as part of a long process, Rome conquered the vast Etruscan lands, which stretched from Campania to Trentino. In 310 BC, this process of – mostly voluntary – subjugation was completed.⁴ The indigenous upper class came to an arrangement with Rome, although this did not always happen without a fight. In Arezzo, the population apparently rebelled against the ruling Cilnia family, who were “collaborating” (around 302/301 BC).

For the most part, Rome allowed the peoples they conquered to keep their customs and administration.

In a way, the Romans must have been like Italian Prussians. How many people did the Romans send? Where did they come from? Some came as administrators, others as traders.

Why did they need anyone else? How did the indigenous populations and the newcomers get on? How did the locals feel about the strangers? What did “strange” mean to them? How did they deal with “strangeness”? What conflicts arose, and how were they solved? Or did they suppress their feelings?

Did the indigenous population mix with the newcomers? In what way? In which generation? What disappeared? What remained?

How did the locals change? Mostly, hardly at all.

We know more or less nothing about all this. The remoter the history, the fewer the answers, the more we have to rely – cautiously – on conjecture, guesswork, intuition, analogy. Above all, we have to be as knowledgeable as possible about comparable situations.

We only know the basic outlines of the history of the following centuries, we hardly know how a place like Anghiari was affected by them. It is safe to say that the short texts we find in publications of all kinds conjure up a false image. Political conflict must have shaken the areas around the political

hubs. Anghiari is not far from Arezzo, and Arezzo was one of the most important towns in Italy.

Maecenas. A famous Roman, Maecenas (he died in 8 BC), was a son of the wealthiest old Etruscan family, the house of the Cilnii, who were from Arezzo. He symbolises the important rôle played by Etruria in Roman society. Maecenas held a series of offices and was a friend and counsellor of the Emperor Augustus; he is remembered as an exceptionally generous man, one who spent a lot of money on works of culture and prestige.

Farming culture. Farmers have always lived in the Upper Tiber Valley. They are referred to as “the people”. One indication of this is the fact that, in the Middle Ages, the legal term “*pieve*”, derived from the Latin *plebs* (people), came to be used for a church in the countryside. A *pieve*, as in Pieve San Stefano near Anghiari, was meant for the people.

What did the farmers produce? What did they barter? What did they eat? What were their families like? How did they live? What did they think?

Before the Roman conquest, Anghiari was part of the *hinterland* of Arezzo and bordered the lands of the Piceni⁵, a border formed by the Central Apennines.

Name. People are still puzzling over the origin of the name “Anghiari”. One theory is that it originates from the god of wine, Janus,⁶ to whom a place of worship was dedicated on the hill.

In his Smaller Classical Dictionary (1898), G.E. Marindin referred to him as the god of all public and private beginnings, such as the birth of a child and the start of each new year (January). He was the god of entrances (*ianua*), the watchman who observed all comings and goings, and therefore looked in both directions. He approved the opening and closing of a door. He was the god of city gates, and was generally agreed to be the god associated with the Janiculum, which traders passed through on their way to and from Etruria. It was also a fortified place, which guarded the landing places on the Tiber.⁷

In 1614, Taglieschi wrote that the name of the god of wine, Janus, was present throughout the area in the form of place names, citing Albiano as an example. He claimed the name derived from Alba Jani, while Anghiari came from Ara Jani (the altar of Janus)⁸.

A second, more likely, theory is that the Upper Town was called “Castrum angulare” (the polyangular fort) in Roman times.

The names may have altered as the language of the Romans mutated into the Italian vernacular. In a society that relies mainly on the spoken word, in which speech is not fixed by the written form, words are free to change in accordance with the pronunciation of the local dialect. This is how the word Anghiari may have come into being.

Sacred sites. It seems amazing to us that there were so many sacred sites in the area around Anghiari. What does this tell us about the people who once built and used them? We may assume that there was continuity between the Etruscan and the following Roman and Christian eras.

Layers of names. The Roman overlords added names of their own to those of the Etruscan divinities, giving them second names.

Christian overlords replaced these names, but they were often substantially the same. At the level of popular belief, the content remained, but under a new name.

For centuries, the wider population lived off their popular beliefs. Theology, as we know it from the 20th century, has been debated among a small number of theologians, and for a long time it failed to spread beyond the confines of their profession. The people heard very little of it.

Scholars teaching in the 19th and 20th centuries embroidered the difference between Antiquity and Christianity with their own additions. They were reductive in their approach and unhistorical in their

methods; they set up a propaganda-style construct that did not depict the real world, a construct that was intended as a second reality for the retrospective mind of modern Man.

Places of worship. The old place name – “Le Carbonarie” – points to the fact that there was once a place of worship at the place where Sant'Agostino's church now stands, before the gate. It was there that cremations took place.

A further place of worship was on Via del Destino, the alleyway by the western transept of Sant'Agostino.

A third is likely to have been the most ancient and most important. The name “Mammalucco” (between Via Garibaldi and Via del Destino) is derived from *Mamma-lucus*, the place of the mother. It was a place sacred to Camena, the great mother.⁹

Worship of the great mother continues in the worship of the Mother Mary with her child.

Where the Misericordia hospital later stood, there was a small temple in Roman times, the “Pantoleus” dedicated to all the divinities.¹⁰

The many and various names for different areas appeared in the Christian era in the form of numerous saints. We shall return to this later.

Between the town and the present-day cemetery, a large Etruscan graveyard stretched along the length of the road (Via della Tomba). For a start, this is proof that the hilltop was a place where many people lived like town dwellers. The general belief was that people lived on in the town of the dead. The mausoleum for an important family took the place of a bastion.¹¹

Etruscan remains. It is impossible to detect many traces of the Etruscans in Anghiari.

We must assume that the Etruscans preserved a certain degree of autonomy in the face of the incoming Roman and Greek-Hellenistic traditions.

An Etruscan urn (in the Museo Archeologico di Firenze¹²) in the form of a grand building shows four fluted columns (or pilasters). Their appearance, the way they were used, and the context in which they were used, all suggest they did not follow the classical Greek system. In one case, the beams were low and not high; in another, they were exceptionally high. The plinths also departed substantially from the norm.

This shows that people in the regions had a different way of dealing with columns – which were a sign of distinction – and that they followed different, non-classical systems. It explains why there were very great deviations from so-called classical style in the Roman provinces.

Mediaeval design had its origins in such variations or regional transformations. One might even go so far as to say they were the source of the 15th and 16th centuries' treatment of Antiquity.¹³ Art historians have so far more or less failed to notice this differentiation and the *longue durée* a historian of the human mind might see.

History of the human mind. The Etruscan mind and spirit can be re-discovered centuries later in the ways in which the Tuscans shaped their towns.

The Roman era. The Romans worshipped their household gods, the *lares* and the *penates*.¹⁴

A family's prime concern was to have enough to eat. The store cupboard in a house represented this concern both materially and symbolically. A group of gods – the *penates* – watched over this cupboard, and took their name from it. They protected the family and ritualised it – the family came to be sacred through their *penates*.

The later cult of the mother with her child ties in with this.

Place sacred to the god Janus. On an exposed spot on the hill, there once stood a place for worship

of the god Janus. Its ground-floor construction still exists beneath the floor of the present-day town hall.

What is the significance of this place of myths?

If what the historian Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote in 1614 is true, Anghiari was a wine-growing region in times of Antiquity.¹⁵ Wine was linked to magic, and the god Janus was the patron deity of wine, and said to be its creator.

Other sacred places. On the present alleyway between the Convento della Croce and the theatre (number 15 of the former Via della Bozia) there once stood a shrine of the priestess serving the deity Jupiter ("Bozia" is the local pronunciation for "pozio", or potion).¹⁶

For a long time there were ancient Etruscan sacred places where the road forks at the foot of the hill in the Tiber Valley. They were enlarged in Roman times and additional names tagged on: the shrines of Jupiter-Juno-Minerva, Ceres and Mithras¹⁷ (now Santo Stefano).

Roman infrastructure. For centuries, a mixture of cultures was present, from the native Etruscan that had evolved over time, to the Roman that came to be absorbed. In this case too, we shall have to wait until someone can interpret the many finds and put them in their right context.

Above all, Rome gave the impetus to the building of infrastructure, first military and then civilian, often both at the same time.

Two arches of the Roman bridge over the Sovara, near Castello di Sorci, are still visible (from the SS 73 road to Arezzo, before you reach the present-day Sovara bridge).

Pliny's villa. Did Pliny the Younger – Plinius Caecilius Secundus, who lived from 61 to about 114 AD – have a summer residence near Anghiari?¹⁸

Pliny was a lawyer in Rome who held public office, even becoming a Consul and imperial governor (*legatus*) under the Emperor Trajan (98-117 AD). His writings included speeches and propaganda on behalf of the Emperor. His letters were intended for publication, as literature, and depicted the life of his times.

The architecture of his times is also described in them, his villa on Lake Como (which he inherited from his uncle), and villas of his in Tuscany and Laurentum.

In a dramatic letter to the historian Tacitus (before 60 A.D. to 117 A.D.), he described the disastrous eruption of Mount Vesuvius in the year 79, in which his uncle, Pliny the Elder (23-79 A.D.), died. Pliny the Elder, a naval commander in Stabiae, was the author of the encyclopaedic work *Naturalis Historia*, a classic set text for schools in Mediaeval and Renaissance times.

Pliny's villa is said to have stood on a hill to the south of Anghiari, with views across the Tiber Valley to the Apennines. Pliny describes the landscape around his villa as "the loveliest amphitheatre nature could ever have invented".¹⁹

The best place for us to experience this landscape is from the quiet street (Via delle Mura di Sotto) on the old town wall of Anghiari.

From Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages: the Ostrogoths

Niccolò Machiavelli. A great deal was destroyed in the time between the reigns of the Emperors Arcadius and Honorius and that of Theoderic. "From these changes proceeded the ruin as well as the origin and growth of many cities. Among those which were ruined were Aquileia, Luni, Chiusi, Popolonia, Fiesole and many others. The new cities included Venice, Siena, Ferrara, Aquila and

numerous others ... The small towns that grew into large ones were Florence, Genoa, Pisa, Milan, Naples and Bologna.”²⁰

“The people who inhabit the northern parts beyond the Rhine and the Danube, living in a healthy and prolific region, frequently increase to such multitudes that some of them are compelled to abandon their native soil and seek a habitation in other countries. ... It was these migrating masses who destroyed the Roman Empire by the facilities for settlement which the country offered when the emperors abandoned Rome, the ancient seat of their dominion, and fixed their residence at Constantinople; for by this step they exposed the western empire to the rapine of both their ministers and their enemies, the remoteness of their position preventing them either from seeing or providing for its necessities. To suffer the overthrow of such an extensive empire ... showed no less folly in the princes themselves than infidelity in their ministers ... For not one nation alone contributed to its ruin, but many.”²¹ After the Roman Empire was weakened, there was much misery among many of the rulers, and the political structures were altered.²²

Coexistence. In about 490, the Ostrogoths, allies of the army of the Eastern Roman Empire, conquered the Italian Peninsula.

Their leader Theoderic had been educated in Constantinople; he assumed the title of King of Italy and set up his capital on the lagoon island of Ravenna (493-526), in a position excellently suited for defence purposes. “He distributed the Ostrogoths over the country , each district under its leader, that he might more conveniently command them in war, and govern them in peace. ... With the exception of military discipline, he conferred upon the Romans every honour [even in the field of culture]. He kept within their proper bounds, wholly by the influence of his character, all the barbarian kings who occupied the Empire; he built towns and fortresses between the point of the Adriatic and the Alps, in order, with the greater facility, to impede the passage of any new hordes of barbarians who might design to assail Italy.” (Niccolò Machiavelli)²³

The Ostrogoth rulers, like most of their counterparts in pluralistic Antiquity, were realists. Their small band of immigrants, they argued, had to come to an arrangement with the large number of persons dwelling on the Italian Peninsula, and avoid conflict wherever possible. Their politics involved practical coexistence between the peoples and cultures. They remained sovereign at the military and political levels, but mostly respected established structures, partly because they recognised that the existing ones were more highly developed than those they had brought with them.

History is not only conservation; strange to say, the past can disappear. The town of Anghiari has more or less no traces of its sixty years under the Ostrogoths.

The end. In 522, the army of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian conquered the Ostrogoths, and put an end to their reign over the Italian Peninsula in 523.

The battle, in which Totila was slain, is said to have been fought in Tagina (now Gualdo Tadino, in the province of Perugia, Umbria). Another oral tradition points to Caprese Michelangelo (north of Anghiari) in the Upper Tiber Valley.

Destruction and survival in Antiquity

After 400, the emperors withdrew their support for pagan worship, priests and sacred places. Aided and abetted by their bishops, including St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom, Christians in many places resorted to the violent destruction of temples.

At the same time, enmity towards the Jews increased. The Christian Church became more intolerant. Without the support of the emperors, Christianity could hardly have become the predominant religion.

In the early 5th century, the Roman aristocracy converted to Christianity. Numerous churches were built. The heritage of Antiquity was gradually being rejected. However, there was little that was truly Christian – a religious pluralism prevailed. Neoplatonism still had many followers.

There are no traces of all this in Anghiari, but its inhabitants were not untouched by it. It shaped them too, after a period of time.

Destruction and survival. The sacred places of Antiquity were destroyed, but the old gods survived.

In Italy, a violent form of Christian ideology was probably the continuation of the world-view of a radical group that had already existed in ancient times. It was contrary to the word spread by Jesus of Nazareth, and used his teachings for its own purposes. It made the invading peoples hugely intolerant once it had “converted” them.

It called on, and used, the structure of the violence it applied in a social context; it is said that pre-541, under their King Totila, forces of the Goths, whose code of behaviour divided the world into friend (comrades) and foe, destroyed the sanctuary of Janus in Anghiari, which stood on the site of the present-day town hall (its ground floor structure remains below floor level).

The destroying forces were afraid of a religious cult, which is why they did not just suspend it. The new rulers got others to occupy the site.

What does that mean? Was it in fact possible to erase the site of a cult in a society structured according to magical beliefs? Did the people not always see it in their imagination, whatever form it took? Was its appropriation a concession to the town dwellers? Were the new rulers maybe just not interested in taking control of the site?

Survival of the old deities. In 1994, Nello Scimia said “People wanting to cross the river between six and eight o'clock of a winter's evening were often afraid of the dark. They called out, ‘Hercules, light my way!’ A light appeared in the rock, and they were able to cross the river Sovara. The gods of Antiquity have survived alongside the Christian faith.”

The poet Tonino Guerra said in 1995, “The Earth is our great Mother.” (*E la terra è nostra grande madre.*)

“Where is God?” was the question put by the old anarchist Vittorio to the churchgoer Vicenzo on the Piazza del Mercatale in the year 1990. Answering the question himself, he said, “OK, there's always a god in charge. For instance, to regulate the eating of pork.” (*Dappertutto e un dio che regola le cose. Per esempio il mangiare del maiale.*) Vicenzo replied triumphantly, “You see, you are Catholic after all!”

Franco, an educated man, shook his head. “My dear Vicenzo, this region is older than your Catholic beliefs. If you think about it, it's obvious that Vittorio hasn't given you an explanation for God, but for the deities of Antiquity.”

Benedictine convent. A convent for Benedictine nuns was set up in the ruins (in the eastern (left) wing of the present-day town hall). The cloisters were where the square now is. The town hall chapel was once the church.

There was once a site with a priestess dedicated to “Giove Pozio” at number 15 of the old Via della Bozia on the present-day alleyway between the Convento della Croce and the theatre (“Bozia” is the

local pronunciation).

Later, it seems a hostel for pilgrims was built on the site (*ospizio mini-conventua le per opere di bene*).²⁴

A Christian place of worship has also been built on top of a site used for cult purposes at the foot of the hill in the Tiber Valley. Where there is now a fork in the road, there used to be ancient Etruscan sanctuaries, which were extended in Roman times and given further names, such as Jupiter-Juno-Minerva, Ceres and Mithras.²⁵ Around 650, San Stefano's church was built on the site. It was modelled on the architecture of Ravenna.

Deities turned into saints. In fact, the many Etruscan and Roman cults were retained, because the people had not forgotten them. Christianity had neither the administrative facilities nor the personnel to remove the cults from their minds. For this reason, Christian saints were merely superimposed on the old deities, and some new ones added.

The “Panteolus” of Antiquity, the temple to all the gods, (on the site of the *Misericordia* hospital) became the Christian chapel of San Giovanni.²⁶

The Great Mother became Mary. The cult of the Great Mother is still to be found in Sant'Agostino in Anghiari. In Siena, Mary is a kind of municipal goddess. This is borne out by a number of dedications – in Anghiari it is the triptych over the altar painted by Matteo di Giovanni (Sansepolcro 1430 – Siena 1495) showing the Mother with her Child and two saints on either side of them (now in the Chiesa della Propositura).

Rule from Byzantium (the Eastern Roman Empire)

The following years of rule from Byzantium lasted for two generations (553 to 588). Within a short time, the rulers came to be hated mainly for the taxation policies which enabled them to finance their wars.

Fortresses. A new wave of conquest loomed from the north – the Lombard threat. However, this did not happen over night. There was time to prepare counter-measures. Byzantine forces tried to stop the Lombards in the Upper Tiber Valley, setting up points of defence in strategic locations along the roads.²⁷

These bear Latin names, which point to their time of origin: Mons Herculis (Monterchi), Cisterna (Citerna), Mons Aureus (Montedoglio), Castiglione, Caprese, Pieve San Stefano. In Byzantine times, Città di Castello was the most important fortress between Ravenna and Rome. The walled Upper Town of Anghiari, being a fortress, also formed part of the defences.

Nevertheless, the Lombards were able to overcome this defence system.

How did they do it? We cannot solve the riddle.

Two centuries of Lombard rule and the start of a long process of re-stratification

Multiculturalism. Italy is the most important European model for multiculturalism, but it is only just beginning to realise this.²⁸ Multiculturalism is an issue that crops up in most epochs. The idea of Italian purity did not arise until the idea of a unified Italy was born, as part of nationalist ideology. The entire history of the peninsula is, however, the history of migrations. Thus, no-one can say a territory is theirs, that it was allocated to them from the start, for all eternity.

What is more, the question changes after three generations have lived in a place. The migrants may have become assimilated in that time. They may not assimilate even after centuries.

They will, however, have been there for centuries. It would be absurd to go on calling them foreigners.

Why should we be interested in this question? This is not an obscure question about the purity of Italian origins and German migration.

The question of migration, dealt with intelligently, is a very modern and controversial one. A historical example can call into question our own attitude to so-called foreigners, yielding productive answers to critical questions. Let us suppose that, for students of multiculturalism, the Italian peninsula is the most exciting example in Europe, ranging in experience from the most difficult to the most productive.

The most important question is: how do people of different origins and cultural backgrounds, wielding greater or lesser power, organise their mutual relationships?

There are violent groups. What happens when warriors invade? What power structures emerge? How long is it before memories heal? How do processes change? How long do feelings of superiority persist? What do the spokespersons of the various groups do? Do they perpetuate the conflict? On what levels? Or do they resolve it? By what means? How successful are they? How long do the processes last?

The range of experience we gain from studying Italian history can broaden our outlook.

Lack of agricultural technology. There had always been great waves of migration in northern Europe, for the reason that people were unfamiliar with the practice of fertilising the land or letting it go fallow. Within a few years, the land that had fed them became depleted, and they were driven by hunger to look for new territories. They migrated as long as they lacked the agricultural technology that would enable them to settle.

For a long time, in fact, the only people that could settle were those within the Roman Empire, where land management had been developed.

One of the great civilising achievements of the Early Middle Ages after 800 was the application of knowledge about soil cultivation and the technology involved. This happened in Central, Eastern and Northern Europe as well.

Another significant factor was the fact that the Roman rulers of the Western and Eastern Empires took advantage of the migrations of the northern peoples, employing them as mobile auxiliaries. The ambivalence of this situation is obvious: such peoples can also go it alone.

The Lombards wandered throughout Europe. According to their own (uncertain) tradition, their roots lay in Scandinavia. The earliest evidence we have of them is in the Lüneburg area, in the year 5 AD. In about 400, they migrated south-eastwards, occupying the territory of the Rugii in Lower Austria. In 568, invading Gepids and Avars forced them to flee the Danubian Plain between the rivers Tisza and Drava. Under the leadership of King Albuin, they moved into Italy.²⁹

Roman civilisation was not completely alien to them, as they had rubbed shoulders with it in Pannonia, where many of them had been recruited as mercenaries in the East, or for the campaigns against the Goths under the command of Narses.

There was little support for the Byzantine administration among the population, so it was easy for the Lombards to cross Veneto and enter the Po Valley in 588. Within a short space of time, they came to rule over Upper Italy and Tuscany, and later over a large part of the Italian peninsula.

The conquering forces were helped by the fact that the population in many parts, especially in Liguria and Veneto, had been decimated by the plague. After this, an unusual drought laid Italy waste.³⁰

The seizure of land by the Lombards, above all in those parts from which the population had fled, was the first instance of the non-incorporation of a Germanic people into the Roman Empire; they were sovereign, acting in their own name.

The conquerors were viewed as being uncivilised. They plundered in order to feed themselves during their migrations – which often resulted in murder and killings.

Stories circulated of great cruelty perpetrated during their rule. In his History of the Lombards (about 790), Paulus Diaconus (Paolo Varnefrido, 720/730-799)³¹ wrote: “They even plunder the churches and strangle the priests.” King Albuin (568-573) killed the father of his wife Rosamund and forced her to drink from her father's skull, which had been made into a chalice. In response to this, the Queen had the King murdered. The next king was also murdered.

To avoid being killed, large landowners had to give up one third of their lands.

Some of the conquerors were believers in Arianism, some were pagans.

The name Lombardy indicates that this was Lombard territory. Some Lombards remained in the Po Valley. Some went to Tuscany and lived in the area around Lucca, which, together with Pavia, was their capital. Lombards went as far as Calabria.

Lombard rule was much more than an episode – it lasted for about 200 years (588-774). Thirty-six dukes or kings were the rulers.³²

The immigrant Lombards were the Germans of that time. They came as conquerors and acquired considerable possessions. They used space that had gone into decline. What precisely did they do? How were they different? What did the native peoples do? How did they relate to each other? In what way did the two cultures change? How did they profit from each other?

The Lombards were not numerous. The number of Lombard inhabitants is estimated at about 60,000. In Central Italy, therefore, persons of German origin were mainly found among the upper classes.

Status of the Lombards. The Lombards entered the scene as warriors. They did not conquer the territory in one fell swoop, but over a period that lasted nearly one generation. They thus remained warriors during this time, unable and unwilling to do any farm work. A warrior could not be distracted; he was not used to farming. Having a monopoly on force, however, he had no trouble in supporting himself through the work of others.

It seems that a considerable number of the landowners from the times of Antiquity fled. Others were probably killed. During this process, there was a changeover in the ruling landowning class.

Feudal system. The land was portioned out; in fact all landed property was bestowed on dukes by the king; the dukes then transferred land (the fief) to third parties, who were later to bear the titles of knights and nobles; the latter then passed possession on to the peasants.

Former Roman times. “There was a rise in the number of tenants (*coloni*) farming parcels of land on the increasingly large estates of the Roman nobility. The lord equipped them with stock and kept an eye on how they managed the land. After every crisis, they sank deeper into debt. Their successors remained where they were *de facto* but not *de iure*, and they were completely dependent on their lord. In civil wars, they were called up for military service by the leaders of the factions (just as clients were called up by the commanders in the Numantine wars).”(Max Weber)³³

Landowners and peasants. The Lombards did not set themselves up to farm the territory nor did

they colonise; rather, they appointed themselves as landowners. Like the former owners of Antiquity, they each owned a number of farms, probably no more than one or two dozen. The peasant farmers had to pay their dues.³⁴ The Lombards thus became the new patrons of the old social structure known as the *villa* (village), and took charge of its economic activity.

Like their predecessors who wore the Roman toga, they considered themselves as full citizens. Often, or for the most part, they owned a house in the town. There is good evidence of this in Lucca, where there are many town houses which belonged to Lombard landowners.³⁵ The situation may have been similar in Anghiari.

The extent and characteristics of the properties varied.

The landowner's country seat. Every Lombard landowner held "court" at his country seat. A number of servants worked there, carrying out all kinds of functions. Many of them were slaves that were picked up during the migrations, from the Hungarian steppes, for instance. They put the horses to graze and took care of them. Many of them had been the slaves of the previous Roman landowner.

The Lombard population grew considerably in times of peace. At such times they had to set about taking care of the old-established peasants who formed the foundation of their own lives.

In the towns, things remained as before: there were artisans and traders, whose products and goods were taxed.

Continuity. Fedor Schneider argues that the Lombards did not ruin Italy, or Tuscany in particular. Nor did they destroy the old world. He believes they maintained a highly developed culture. The area did not become depopulated. Its people retained their sense of freedom and the individual. Apart from in the coastal towns, they showed no special feeling for commerce.³⁶

Language. Their language was an upper German dialect. In the 8th century, it was superseded by Middle Latin as the standard language. The dialects of Lombardy and Venetia came to be widely used in colloquial speech around the year 1000. The ruling class, if no-one else, was therefore bilingual over a longer period of time.

The original language gradually disappeared during this process, presumably dying out in the 8th century.³⁷

However, many words were absorbed into Latin and the later Italian language. Some examples are: *klasko* = *fiasco* (bottle); *krampa* = *zampa* (paw); *nastilo* = *nastro* (ribbon or band); *rich* = *ricco* (rich); *stral* = *strale* (arrow); *spruzzjan* = *spruzzare* (splash); *strunz* = *sterco, stronzo* (dung, son of a bitch); *trincan* = *trincare* (drink).

The political system. In principle, the Lombards adopted the social and economic structures of Antiquity. They themselves replaced the old lords.

The hierarchy was new. All land was derived from the king, who enfeoffed his vassals. In their turn, they enfeoffed those beneath them.

This feudal system was no longer bound up with the legal system of a state, but was firmly based on persons and their wishes. Unlike the Ostrogoths, who fell in with the old system, the numerically small Lombard ruling class ruled according to the formula they had brought with them. Their way of life, as well as their modes of thinking and acting, were very different from those of the natives.

This does not mean the Lombard person-based system was completely arbitrary. The Lombards brought a legal system with them, and even a ruler could not risk disregarding its laws. Over time, it gained permanence, as the need for legal certainty increased – for reliability, calculability, laws on inheritance.

Longue durée. This feudal system presumably also took hold with lasting effect in the countryside, since the ruling Lombard landowning families failed to mingle with the native population. The Lombards kept themselves to themselves, marrying among their kind.

Thus, family genealogies can be identified as Lombard, even centuries later.

In the Anghiari area, the Lombard Barbolani family ruled for many years. In 1070, they took their name from Castello di Galbino, later they identified themselves as *signori*, and since 1105, they have been called counts of Montauto. Their territory comprised Galbino, Anghiari, Montedoglio, Citerna, Viaio, the parishes of Sovara and Micciano as well as parts of Caprese (Michelangelo).

The family still exists. Count Fabrizio Barbolani di Montauto was profoundly conscious of his Lombard origins. In order to trace their long history, the family befriended the important historian Fedor Schneider (1879-1932), who had examined this subject particularly closely, and they invited him to stay as their guest.³⁸

Reversal of the precedence of town over country. First of all, the Germanic feudal system fundamentally changed the precedence of town over country. In Antiquity, towns ruled over the country. When the Lombard landowning and warrior class ruled, the country ruled over the towns.

The Lombards failed to understand the towns, not only because the townspeople were strangers to them, but because of the differences in their ways of life. The Lombards were accompanied by a limited number of followers and settled in prominent places, on hilltops, where they were well able to defend themselves.

The Germanic system favoured lords ruling from the countryside.³⁹

Later on, this gave rise to a centuries-long conflict.

Nevertheless, the Lombards did found a number of new towns in Tuscany: San Gimignano, San Miniato and Fucecchio, for example.

Cultural layers. For centuries, two cultures existed alongside each other⁴⁰, each with a certain degree of independence, but with close economic ties. The fusion of the two cultures was a slow process. No-one has yet examined how this happened.

Survival of the town life of Antiquity. Given the two distinct layers of cultural traditions – how did it all end? Where did open conflict break out? Where did the unchanged culture of the subject people live on, hidden from view? Where did their own socio-cultural system survive?

The relative independence of the two layers meant the townspeople remained mindful of their ancient roots. Over the years, this factor contributed greatly to the development of town life, both its socio-cultural structure and the trend towards greater autonomy.

Troubles. Opposition to the Lombards came from Byzantium and the Franks; from about 600, it was Byzantium alone. Not until a century had passed (in about 680) did Byzantium acknowledge the fact of Lombard rule.

The Lombard kings failed to establish a stable regime in Italy. This was partly due to the fact that other tribes had migrated to Italy at the same time, and these were not prepared to subject themselves to Lombard rule. Furthermore, there were great differences among their own people – some were of the Arian faith, some were Catholics. The political opponents of the rulers allied themselves with Franks and Avars. Other conflicts broke out with Romans and Byzantines. Regional differences also played a rôle.

In the 8th century, King Luitprando reorganised Lombard rule, which threatened to fall apart.

Traces of a myth. For centuries, Germanic ways (*costumi germanici*) lived on in Pratomagno,

Casentino, La Verna and Camaldoli.

In Central Italy, many names have preserved their Lombard origin. One example of this is the hamlet of Germagnano in the mountains east of Sansepolcro.

In the diocese of Arezzo, which Anghiari belonged to for many years, the bishops were nearly always Lombards from the *contado*. They were appointed on the basis of direct elections. The bishops had Lombard names: Cunemundo (753?-782?); Elemperto (986-1010); Guglielmo (1010-1013); Adalberto (1014-1023); Teodaldo (1023-1036).

A wealth of oral tradition was handed down. The characteristics of the Goths and Lombards were preserved in myths, the “misterio della verità” (Vittorio Dini). Goths and Lombards came down from the mountains, which appeared at night as the mere shadow of a sharp ridge. Their companies presaged danger, like swarms of locusts.

How did such multitudes of people feed themselves in the open country? Whom did they lose? Where did they bury their dead?

The Lombards identified St. Michael the Archangel with their notion of the god Wodan. St. Michael conquered the dragon. It was this cult that the Lombards spread above all others, particularly in connection with their victory over the Saracens (663).

St. Michael's significance as a warrior has its socio-cultural aspect: he is the protector of the weak, those unable to defend themselves. Nowadays some hold St. Michael to be the patron saint of children at risk, coming to their aid when they are lost in the forest. They believe he appears with his trumpet to collect the children. According to some traditions, he also protects children who have run away from their frequently cruel parents. Furthermore, St. Michael is the saviour of the harvest and the protector of animals from fever. Finally, as a warrior leader on the move, he is the patron saint of travellers. Many churches in the Arezzo area have been dedicated to St. Michael.

Mixing. One must not compare the situation with that of the nation states as they developed in the 19th and 20th centuries. History has always produced mixtures, chiefly through overlapping dynastic rule and corresponding shifts. At present, it is the European project that is producing many mixtures.

Interaction between peoples north and south of the Alps, Italians and Germans, is a thread that runs through the whole of Italian history. On both sides, historians with a nationalist bent have played it down and overlooked it.

Imperial rule. There was in fact a common ruling class from the time of the Frankish overlords, and then under the German emperors. The title of the “Holy Roman [!] Empire of the German Nation” expresses this interconnection in words.

The history of relations with the sovereign rulers is a chequered one. Characteristically, there were many movements that sought autonomy, but there were also many cries for help from groups whose interests were more strongly linked.

In the Middle Ages, the Camaldoleses monks, and later the people of Anghiari, tried to rid themselves of their intermediate rulers and attain their independence. They turned to the German Emperor for help. In the year 1111, the Emperor Henry V removed the Camaldoleses order from the authority of the bishop of Arezzo. In 1163, the people of Anghiari were successful in their plea to the chancellor of the German emperor for but one lord, the emperor. From 1156, Rainald von Dassel was the chancellor of Emperor Frederick I (Barbarossa), as well as Archbishop of Cologne from 1159 to 1167. For several years, therefore, Anghiari was ruled and administered from Cologne.

Italy was tied to Germany politically. From 1494, the conflict between France and the Habsburgs

was played out on Italian soil – until France was forced to withdraw in 1559. After the division of the Habsburg lands, it was Spain that played the dominant rôle in Italy. From 1737, Tuscany was ruled by the Habsburg-Lorraine line of the Habsburgs (Lorena). It was not until Italian unification in 1861, or indeed 1870, that the close political ties were broken. We must not forget the terrible aftermath of *Italia irredenta* (from 1877) either.

The entanglements of history. Thus, Italian history cannot be written separately from German history. Furthermore, history is not merely that of the ruling class, but also social and cultural history.

To avoid any misunderstandings, it must be added that this is not a case of misappropriation – the history of the countries north of the Alps, that of France, Germany and others, cannot be written separately from Italian history either. This is yet another instance of – mostly covert but also overt – nationalism, an ideology that has rendered many threads invisible; however, they are there as facts, still waiting to be laid bare.

Similarly, the author has pointed out that the civilisation of the ancient world was brought to the River Elbe during the colonisation of Slav areas in present-day Saxony-Anhalt, with long-term consequences for those areas.⁴¹ Moreover, he has stated that the Reformation in Wittenberg had its roots in 15th century Central Italian culture.⁴²

Religion as a power base

Schism. After the Council of Nicaea in 325, the diverging religious views – Arian and anti-Arian – brought about a division in religious rule, a schism.

The Bishop of Città di Castello retained his orthodox church structure, which included Pieve di Sovara, west of Anghiari.

The Lombards added a structure of their own: Arian churches, reflecting their non-belief in the Trinity. The Council of Nicaea, under the Emperor Constantine, had condemned those who denied the existence of the Trinity. However, both Goths and Lombards continued to believe in what they thought was obvious: Jesus was simply a man.

Churches of their own. The Lombard churches were all owned by the person who built them or his family, which is why we say the Lombards had their own churches.

Disputed area. Gino Francheschini⁴³ developed the theory that the old Catholic church employed many monks who had fled from the east to act as missionaries to the Lombards.

One place in which this happened at the close of the 7th century was Pieve di Sovara. The first basilica structure was built with three apses before the transept, to symbolise the Holy Trinity.

The church of Santo Stefano (7th to 8th centuries), situated in the Tiber Valley, at the bottom of the hill, on what was later to be the *stradone*, is an expression of anti-Arian policy.

The two churches in the Anghiari fortress are anti-Arian as well, as is San Gerolamo at the bottom of the hill and the churches of San Martino and Santa Croce, both situated on the valley floor, near the River Tiber.

All these were in the hands of the Bishop of Città di Castello.⁴⁴

Rule by the Frankish kings

Conquest. The Lombards came into fierce conflict with the Pope over the Byzantine territory. On

several occasions, the Pope called on the Franks to wage war on the Lombards. In 773/774, Charlemagne, while king of the Franks, finally conquered the Lombard kingdom. It retained a certain degree of independence: Charlemagne became king of the two kingdoms. When Otto I came to the throne, the Lombard kingdom was united with the German crown, as the Kingdom of Italy and part of the Holy Roman Empire.

Some people say the Lombards died out, but in fact they merely lost overall power. A look at the families of the nobility, who in many cases are still there and have retained their possessions, will show that this widespread popular view of history does not correspond to the facts. It is above all Vittorio Dini's research, based on oral records, that has provided evidence of this continuity.⁴⁵

A new leadership. Frankish counts now took the place of the Lombard dukes. The ruling class was replaced by Frankish, Alemannic and Bavarian families. The second tier of the ruling class remained in place, apparently partly because they proved to be loyal to their new rulers.

The lords of Galbino. The Frankish king Charles (Charlemagne) appointed the nobleman Rainiero di Galbino, the descendent of a Salian family from north of the Alps, as count of the land of Anghiari.

In the feudal system, with the Holy Roman Emperor at the top of the pyramid, the counts of Anghiari received tenure from the Bishop of Arezzo. He, in turn, received tenure of the "county" from the Emperor and passed the fief on to the lords of Galbino.

The main castle of the Galbino family lies several kilometres to the west of the present Via Libbia. Another of their fortified seats is the fortress in the Upper Town of Anghiari.

In a document of Louis the Pious, signed in Aachen in 814, Anghiari appears as "Castello Angulario".⁴⁶

The Franks and the Lombards managed to get along with each other down the centuries. Evidence of this is found in a document dated 1087, in which a member of the Galbino family, Enrico di Bernardo, wrote "*ex natione mea lege vivere langobardorum*".⁴⁷ The text indicates that such persons were conscious of their origin, and it was a source of their self-confidence. This was made possible by the tolerance exercised by the ruling class towards the various ethnic groups.

Designations. The presence of the Lombards and Franks was also expressed in many names that have lasted over the centuries.⁴⁸

It is likely that some important designations can be traced back to the Frankish king Charles: walled locations were called towns, unwalled ones *borgo*, *casale* and *castello*. The latter three may merely be protected by earthworks and a ditch.

The social system and the chain of fortresses.

The origins of lordly seats. Taglieschi was probably right when he wrote in 1614 that the proximity to the frontier of the Frankish King Charles after the conquest of 773 was the reason for the establishment of an especially large number of fortified locations (*castelli*) in this area.

The lords he appointed were foreigners, above all Franks. They were rewarded by Charles, or to be more precise, they received booty from him for services rendered during the conquest of Lombard territory.

The historian Taglieschi wrote in 1614 that a large number of these families were still in possession of their estates.

He mentioned the following as examples of fortified lordly seats (*castelli*): Monterchi, Caprese,

Chiusi Nuovo, Pianetole, Toppole, Carciano, Montagutello, Montaguto, Monte Santa Maria, Bivignano, Ranco, Pietramala.

The lords were warriors. They lived on the fees paid by their tenant farmers.

Subsistence farming. The peasants were not in a position to pay large fees, as they produced little. They produced just enough to feed themselves (subsistence farming).

The roads were also poor, and travelling therefore difficult.

Rivalries. The rulers at the centre, therefore, who were in any case losing their hold on power at a rapid rate during the post-Carolingian era, were hardly in a position to reach the people below them. These people were to a large extent left to their own resources. Their lives were in their own hands – with many resulting advantages, but also disadvantages.

Since those above them were unable to interfere to any significant degree, the minor feudal landowners, who often owned no more than a few farms, became rivals, and there was no-one to stop them from picking random quarrels with each other, often for no particular reason, as the mood took them, out of fear and/or feelings of aggression. An archaic type of warrior culture developed among the landowning upper classes.

Robbery. If a person wanted to get richer, the only way open to him was robbery. This meant he had to plunder other farmers and seize other castles.

Refuge. It was the same all over Europe: the peasants had an ancient right of refuge in the fortified seats of their local lords. They were to some extent safe behind these walls. For the most part, they took their few possessions and some food with them.

This right of refuge was actionable.

Let us try to imagine what life was like behind the castle walls. Between ten and twenty families lived, cooked, talked and slept in an extremely confined area.

Such peasants had to work in exchange for the guarantee of their survival, both with their own hands and by setting their draught animals to work. They built, repaired and maintained the fortifications and took their turns at keeping watch.

Pietro Luigi Menechetti investigated one particular case near Gubbio, to find out how such military buildings were organised. The situation around Anghiari must have been similar.

The various designations for military fortresses point to different functions and meanings, which have yet to be examined in detail. They are called *castello*, *castellare*, *fortilizio*, *palazzo fortificato*, *torre*, *rocca*.

Many of their names are recognisable as being of northern European origin despite their having been “Italianicised”, for example: Berta, Alberico, Ermano. They indicate that a class of persons who were followers of the German rulers established itself as a lower ruling class. As they were military men, they constructed “immovable tanks” out of stone in a conflict zone.

Towers. Walls and towers are for defence purposes, and for keeping watch. Safety depends on the fortress.

Since the early Middle Ages, a tower had been a symbol of jurisdiction and of a lord's seat. The safest place to hoard treasure in the form of money was in the tower. It was also the place where weapons were stored.

Tower house. A fortified tower house (*cassero*) was the residence of a landowner.

In the 11th century, many landowners deliberately chose to build their castles on the top of a hill.

All these lesser lords were self-subsistent. Their extended families worked as arable and livestock

farmers; stables were built for the animals (*scuderia*).

Right of disposal. From the 11th to the 13th centuries, fortresses were almost exclusively in the hands of feudal lords, bishops, monasteries and the members of a cathedral chapter.

Many towns with an increasingly self-confident and independent civilian population were now tenaciously fighting a hard battle against the landowners of their surrounding countryside. They forced them to submit to rule by the town, compelled them to move into the town and expelled any intractable lords.

The town authorities frequently offered grants for construction measures, thus ensuring they had the right of disposal over military facilities.

Galbino territory. In a world of untamed and ever more rampant aggression, it was hard for both lords and those under them to sustain their position. The counts of Galbino therefore consolidated their territory in stages.

All the strategic points in the valley were turned into fortresses like the one near Gubbio. Thus, a chain of strongholds was created: Toppole, Pianettone, Valialle, Upacchi, Sorci and Pantaneto.⁵¹

They were the Count of Galbino's subsidiary castles. The Count was constantly on the move within his territory. He behaved like an early manager, organising his affairs here and there, holding discussions with various people, spending the night in one place and then another, moving from one place to the next in order to fulfil his ceremonial duties.

He ordered yet another reconstruction of the tip (*rocca* – rock) of the hill in Anghiari, to the west of the town hall that today houses the middle school. It was first mentioned in documents in 1048. Family members and servants lived in the new building.

The strength of the feudal ties varied from time to time. When the overall rulers were weak, the centrifugal principle became more important.

The counts of Galbino busied themselves with the things that were closest to home, the bishop of Arezzo being that much farther away. In this way, the Galbinos managed to reduce the bishop of Arezzo's authority over the territory to a considerable degree.⁵²

Life in the fortress. Servants, peasants and artisans settled outside the fortress.

What was their life like? Was it different from that of country dwellers? Was it something like the present-day life of some villagers deep in the Abruzzi?

Did people living at close quarters in the fortress meet more frequently than country folk? Probably. In what way did the subtle relationships between the dwellers develop? What impact did people's various occupations have on their social standing? How did outsiders deal with this?

Few people could write in times like these, and those who could, have told us more or less nothing about so-called ordinary folk. We have to rely therefore on a few traces in buildings and the names they gave them. We can search like detectives beneath the wealth of things from later ages.

The people's assembly as an early form of participation

The process of participation. Social history is much less easily accessible than church, political or cultural history. Nevertheless, these fields are all interdependent, which enables us to draw conclusions from information gained in other areas.

There were not only social classes with various interests, but also various layers within these classes.

The changes in this intermeshing were gradual.

Breaches occurred.

Participation is the most fascinating field. There were subtle changes, ambivalence and ups and downs. We can observe dialectical shifts and changes in mutual dependence.

People's assemblies. It seems a people's assembly was held on various occasions long before the new millennium.

Even now, it is called a *comizio*, a word deriving from the Latin *comitium*, a “gathering”. This points to the fact that such assemblies were held as early as the Roman era, if not earlier. They probably existed even in Etruscan times.

Multifunctional churches. In the Early Middle Ages, these assemblies were held in churches.

This shows that, for a long time, churches were used for many different purposes. They were weatherproof meeting places. It was not until secularisation came with the 19th century, when the world was split into the two spheres of the sacred and the profane, that churches were confined to the purely religious. This new “purity” was not in line with historical circumstances.

Initially, people's assemblies often arose – as they do nowadays – spontaneously. For the most part, they were an expression of conflict. People gathered in order to discuss and formulate their complaints against the political and ecclesiastical ruling classes.

Thus, they soon became attempts to check the powers-that-be, gain influence and struggle for participation.

Frequently, however, they were summoned by the rulers when there were difficulties that had to be solved, or when they needed the co-operation of the populace.

Ritualisation. When these people's assemblies were held in churches, they immediately became ritualised to a certain degree. The decisions taken were sanctified, blessed. People took them more seriously, or regarded them as a challenge.

There was another dimension to such ritualisation: an element of control. In Florence and Anghiari there were many examples of one side or the other making use of a preacher's skills in its attempts to achieve its ends.

However, we must not exaggerate this, or measure it by the yardstick of our present-day secularised societies north of the Alps. In Italy, the sacred and profane are interwoven, even now.

The foundation on which people's assemblies are built is open-air living, which is highly developed in Tuscany, partly due to the climate. Street, square and people's assemblies form the backbone of the influence the people have always wanted to exercise.

Structure. A rough description of democracy might be: the people's attempt at power-sharing and the distribution of power.

Up to the present day, people's assemblies have played an important rôle in political life. One custom has survived in rudimentary form, namely the *comizio*, which any citizen is free to organise on the *piazza*.

Television has largely put paid to this, but the parties frequently threaten to call a people's assembly where important local matters are on the agenda.

Party political meetings during elections often resemble a people's assembly, even nowadays.

Among other things, politicians are often judged according to how well they perform at a *comizio*. Their public performance skills are rated by the people and are a source of enjoyment.

Self-government (1075)

Early self-government (1075). In 1075, Count Rainiero Sidonio believed the people of Anghiari would be more loyal if he gave them self-government.⁵³ The only thing that interested him was his income – that is to say, the taxes he raised. He was also keen to monitor the judgements handed down by the courts.

Selection procedure. All the important families were to participate in self-government, with no differentiation between parties (*parti*). Every six months, the Count had all their names thrown into a bag (*bolsa*) and four names pulled out. The choice was thus by lot, and anyone might be chosen.

The four men chosen bore the title of “community leaders” (*priori della comunità*). The count retained a right of veto.

At first, and for a long time, this seemed to be in the overlord's best interest, but later the system turned against him. Initially, he was able to bind the people to his person; later it became their means of breaking away from him.

In 1978, Count Alberigo introduced a second process for drawing lots – for councillors to take charge of the food supply (*consiglieri di credenza*); they formed a close circle of advisers. One name from every household was put in the bag, and eight names were drawn from it. The chosen men held office for eight months. They were supposed to work in secret, developing proposals that were then put before the *priori*. The *priori* then had to bring the proposals before the general council.

Conflicts (1080). These freedoms were soon used to further other aims. Count Alberigo reacted angrily, furiously. He took the offensive and, starting in 1080, he chased a number of the old families out of his territory.

The Count then made changes in the ruling élite, settling new families on the old families' land.

It was not long before his rule aroused deep mistrust and he was perceived to be a tyrant. This hatred increased, with the result that his life was in danger.

Resignation and sale. The Count resigned and retired to Arezzo. It was here, in 1082, that he sold his part of the territory to his brother Bernardo Sidonio di Raniere di Galbino.

The territory consisted of many fortresses, farm houses, churches, monasteries and convents with cultivated land attached. It included Anghiari and Pieve di Santa Maria a Micciano, together with its dependent network of churches.

The selling price was 300 Luccan pounds, the Luccan currency being a safe lead currency.

Alberigo decided to sell not merely because he was disappointed and angry; he had another reason too. After the lengthy crisis in the post-Antiquity era, a new money-based economy was slowly coming into being. Alberigo was able to set a number of things in motion with the money from the sale. Money meant he was not tied down geographically. He bought houses in Arezzo.

Grand Council (1086). The new count, Bernardo Sidonio di Raniere di Galbino, decided in 1086 that the Grand Council should be newly formed once a year.

City secretary. The count then created an institution that gave rise to increased legal security. He decided the community should have authentic (*autentico*) documents on its files. Thus, he devolved to the General Council the right to elect a secretary (*secretario*) or clerk (*scrivano*). In order to invest the person chosen with particular authority, he was to be regarded as an imperial notary (*notaio imperiale*).⁵⁴

The supremacy of the Camaldoleses

Fear of hell. Twenty-one years later, and we meet Count Bernardo's son, Count Bernardino, who was a rapacious and wily man, always caught up in conflicts. He was a typical product of a warrior society.

The warrior count was vexed by the fact that he had no son and heir to carry on his dynasty. In a warrior society this is a terrible misfortune.

At the end of his life, the dying man was seized with a fear such as he had experienced in life in the face of his enemies. This fear – the fear of hell – grew to extraordinary proportions.

What influence does religion have in such cases? In the first place, religion is magic. But it has many layers, and can deliver an enlightened impetus. From time to time, it can deliver an admonishment to a warrior obsessed by his passions. It can calm his restless activity and soften his aggressions.

In 1104, it was this impetus that drove the dying count to a surprise decision. In his will, he left his territory with all its estates to the Camaldoleses, giving them supremacy over the territory.⁵⁵

It was not a simple bequest; it could be challenged by his relatives. Nevertheless, they swore during an assembly held in 1105 that they and their heirs would not touch the gift.

The Pope also had to give his consent, which he did in 1105, in St. John Lateran.

The Camaldoleses. Deep cracks were apparent within the society of the time. In the year 1012, a number of men joined forces under the leadership of Romualdo of Ravenna. They formed a community of “drop-outs” from the towns, and retired to live as hermits in the beech woods of the Casentino.

Their structured, communal, monastic life gave rise to a concentration of energy. For a long time, the community's capacity to act was greater than that of other groups.

The hermit brothers based their community in the Apennines, near Camaldoli. They chose this location because it was deep in the countryside, and therefore far from any wars.

The rural surroundings reinforced the religiosity of the Camaldoleses, and vice versa. This was a mechanical, reciprocal process.

The Camaldoleses were of necessity, and by inclination, practical people. In order to ensure their survival, they lived an outdoor, rural life, concentrating from the start on certain kinds of husbandry, above all forestry. They carried out afforestation and tree felling, maintained and used timber, and went in for pig fattening.

Around 1197, they developed water management in the marshy Tiber Valley. They moved the course of the river to the east, drained the swamps and gained fertile land.

Endowments. After 1104, Anghiari Abbey received a series of substantial endowments from a number of nobles in the area, in the form of the economically most valuable and safest land.

Not a territorial state. Since the Camaldoleses order came into geographically scattered properties – mostly as the result of bequests – it was never in a position to form a large unbroken piece of territory, a state covering a considerable area, such as the prince-bishops and cities were seeking to establish. There were hardly any weapons in the Camaldoleses' feudal system, although some of the vassals, who acted a kind of police force, did carry arms. As a result, the power exerted by the order remained comparatively weak.

This meant that the population as a whole was able to create space for its own political activities. We can see that in nearby Sansepolcro too, where the Camaldoleses also built an abbey.⁵⁶

Historiography. The history of this time was recorded in the context of a society where all communication was by word of mouth. We only have written records that register existing and acquired property for purposes of legal security. Our written evidence comes from the files of the chancelleries.

The monastery. Under the terms of the count's bequest, the Camaldoleses monks were obliged to build a monastery on the territory bequeathed to them on the hill in Anghiari. They did this in the very same year that he died. They probably used existing buildings.

The count wished to be buried in the Abbey church (*Badia*); he stipulated that the monks were to perform daily rites for Bernardino's soul, to improve his none-too-good prospects in the after-life. A cult of death, and the overcoming of death, was established.

Bernardino's widow retired to a Camaldoleses monastery in 1105.

Accompanying figure. The monks, or Bernardino, chose a figure to accompany and protect him through the terrible process of dying – St. Bartholomew, the Apostle.

This was an ancient concept, borrowed by Christianity from the days of Antiquity.⁵⁷

The count's rights and the republic. The abbot of Camaldoli now exercised the rights that had hitherto been the count's.

There was an apparent consensus with the population. The abbot trusted them to exercise a considerable degree of self-regulation.⁵⁸ The people regarded their home town as a kind of republic. Documents from the years between 1109 and 1187 show that the abbot of Anghiari gave his consent to the council's orders.

The first free citizens

The gift of freedom. Bernardino also stipulated in his will that the vassals in the fortress garrison, who were also peasant farmers, should receive their personal freedom. This decision was to be of far-reaching consequence later on.

From this time on, however, such families would have to pay the monastery rent for the tenancy of their land. Nevertheless, their freedom had a certain material basis – they received one third of their land as their own property.

Mixed status. This example also shows that there were people whose lives were a mixture from the legal and social point of view. When investigating history, we must not ignore such mixed legal situations and their dynamics. A person with a mixed status and a mixture of professions – a soldier, administrator and farmer – can provide society with an impetus for change.

The beginnings of a free community. Apart from the lord, these were the first free citizens of Anghiari. They were the foundation of the later *comune libero*, the free community.

Vassals. Others retained their status as vassals.

Every single one of them, however, was affected by the change from secular to ecclesiastical feudalism. This was also to have consequences later on.

Classification. Thus, the population could be classified according to the following social strata:

- the military (*maiores*);
- free peasant farmers (*mediocres*);
- free artisans (*mediocres*), small landowners of rural and urban property;
- villeins (*masnaderii*);

- day labourers (*minores*).

The Latin terms differentiate not only according to social status and prestige, but also to legal status.

Freedom for the Camaldoleses. Seven years after Bernardino's will (1104), the degree of dependency underwent another change.

This time, it was the Camaldoleses order that won its freedom. In the year 1111, Emperor Henry V exempted the order from the authority of the Bishop of Arezzo.

The Bishop of Arezzo and the Camaldoleses order. Nevertheless, the conflict between the Bishop of Arezzo and the Camaldoleses smouldered on for a long time. It was not until 1199 that they came to an arrangement: the bishop confirmed all the monks' property and privileges. The monks, in their turn, proved to be accommodating. They made a declaration in front of a notary to the effect that, should the bishop get into difficulties, they would help him with contributions out of the income from their properties.⁵⁹

More freedom for Anghiari. This meant that Anghiari too was subject to fewer levels of dependency. One nearby intermediate level of potential intervention was removed. The Emperor was much farther away than the bishop, so the town enjoyed greater freedom.

It would be interesting to find out what subtle changes resulted from this.

Steps towards democracy. The number of conflicts apparently increased. People's assemblies took place more frequently, and became more important. The abbot, wishing to take charge, decreed that he would preside over them.

The abbot called the resolutions they passed "statutes" – a sign that he now regarded them as weighty and binding.

He wanted to enforce a rule that they required his endorsement. Perhaps this had always been the case, but the fact that he expressly stated this may be interpreted as an attempt by the people to evade the abbot's influence.

A conflict was hidden behind this news in brief. The way the rulers and the population dealt with each other was changing.

Consular constitution. A further step was taken in the development of democracy: the consular constitution.

It originated in the larger cities⁶⁰ as a reaction against the Lombard military system. It also revived an ancient republican tradition that had survived at a lower level from the days of the Roman Empire.

Until now, historians have paid too little attention to such undercurrents.

The consular constitution is typical of Tuscan conflict management. Power is shared out between the representatives of the various power groupings.

It is a sophisticated procedure for consensus building. It assumes that a command structure no longer works, and decisions can only be reached if the different groups participate and take each other seriously. The result must be a compromise that all parties can live with.

The principle of leadership by two consuls is a balancing of the interests of conflicting parties. It still plays an important rôle in our times.

We can find it at the non-political level too, in many people's behaviour. It is a way of managing conflicts in everyday situations. We may therefore conclude that an everyday phenomenon advanced to the political level, later to become codified in law.

The initial steps towards democracy are not taken to satisfy the interests of a particular class; they have their origins in disagreements, breaches and other types of behaviour.

Consensus. Land-owning families started to set up a peaceful form of consensus among themselves on the basis of a move towards equality. Under the consular constitution, each power group appointed one consul.

This can be interpreted as an improvement in the process of civilisation: conflicts were carried out in the public gaze, and there was a balance of power in the form of power-sharing.

Conflicts and steps towards emancipation

Camaldoiese feudalism was rather mild in character, as the order had property and political might, but no military force. It was therefore easier to fight it.

Furthermore, the monks lacked administrative skills. During the famines of 1119 and 1126, they failed as organisers. There was a saying: “*mal governo de' monaci*”.⁶¹

The conflict intensified as a result. At least one group of the populace became more self-assured. Conflicts with the town rulers and the landed nobility were aggravated.

Relations with the monastery worsened. In 1147, the people were involved in a serious dispute with the prior of the Abbey “over the consulate and some other matters”.⁶²

In 1147, Camaldoli was forced against its will to grant Anghiari a statute recognising it as a rural local authority (*comune rurale*) – the first of its kind in the Arezzo area. It clearly imitated the structure of urban municipal authorities, and was therefore autonomous in character.⁶³

Early infrastructure. This group managed to ensure that one third of the income from monastic property should be invested in the town, for administrative purposes. This meant that the local community went ahead with infrastructure projects that cost money.

It would be interesting to know which ones. They might have included funding for the enlargement of the Upper Town.

Trend towards independence. The administration now had a certain degree of financial independence. On the other hand, this also meant it was easier to embark on a project without first reaching a consensus. It was no longer always necessary to seek approval.

External policies. At this stage, the *comune* also pursued an external policy. It concluded treaties, first with the lord of Valialle and then with other places (Pianettone, for instance). Anghiari and Sansepolcro agreed to join forces in defending the independence of Sansepolcro against any claims of the nobility.

Military technology. Changes in military technology destabilised the centuries-old balance of power. When the infantry were equipped with bows and arrows, they had a chance against the “tanks” – that is to say the horses – of the nobility.

Towns and nobility. In the late years of Antiquity, the ancient towns had fallen into decline. After various economic ups and downs, they began to prosper again. New towns developed in other places.

In the Middle Ages, the towns were more like commercial centres for the landed nobility, in contrast to military organisations and the royal administrative offices. Towns were able to thrive mainly due to commercial activities (Max Weber).⁶⁴

A bitter conflict arose, however, between the towns and the militant landowning nobility in the area, the descendants of Lombard warriors.

Some nobles moved to Sansepolcro in 1162 and 1163. They wanted to prevent the citizens, who intended to build walls around the town, from evading their control and becoming the dominant force.

But the townsfolk gained the upper hand. Max Weber commented thus: the *popolo* won because they were primarily business orientated and more advanced in economic matters.⁶⁵

Emancipation (1163). The people of Anghiari became more self-assured; bit by bit they managed to weaken the ruling classes and emancipate themselves.

Through skilful political moves, they were successful in sealing this legally in 1163, by persuading Rainald von Dassel, the Archbishop of Cologne and chancellor to Emperor Frederick I (Barbarossa), to issue a decree stating that the people of Anghiari would only have one lord in future – the emperor. This meant formal independence from Camaldoli.

The feudal lords of the region also backed independence, playing the citizens of Anghiari off against Camaldoli.

The negotiations with the imperial chancellery showed that at least some of the population had progressed in their political thinking beyond that of self-sufficient villagers. They had dared to make the conventions of politics at the highest level their own.

Townsfolk are free. The imperial authority went one step further, decreeing that serfs on feudal estates who wished to loose their bonds and move to Anghiari would be given their freedom.

This was a great victory for the town, and for other towns too. There is a saying in Germany: “A breath of town air will make you free”.

The victory legalised a process that had been going on for a long time. Artisans and tradesmen were in the ascendency, and the economic balance had shifted.

Rapid loss of independence. But independence was an illusion. Anghiari was under ever greater pressure. As early as 1174, Rainald's successor had to ban the Marchesi family from imposing lordly burdens on the people of Anghiari. The situation for the people worsened rapidly. They became involved in the next layer of mediaeval political conflicts.

Arezzo was striving for hegemony. Its first targets were the local lords in their castles. It then attacked the Camaldoiese order. Thirdly, it set its sights on independent towns like Anghiari. In 1175, it destroyed the town walls of Anghiari, because it felt threatened by its neighbour.

The entangled relationship with Arezzo. Arezzo did not destroy the entire fortress, but only parts of it. This action was probably not directed against the population of the town, but against the power of the *cassero*, the monastery-owned castle.

It is clear that the relations between dependency, influence and power were very complex.

Arezzo did not simply bring Anghiari under its rule, but under its influence – a more subtle status.

This is also reflected in buildings. The interests in property holdings were anything but straightforward. Arezzo received real property: part of the monastery-owned castle (*cassero*), and other plots of land in the *borghetto* (to the south of the present-day Via della Torre). On the other hand, Anghiari bought twenty houses in Arezzo.

At the same time, Arezzo did not object to the population's rebuilding the parts of the town wall that had been destroyed.

However, Arezzo refused to reinstate Anghiari's independence on account of its strategic location. In 1187, Arezzo gave it as a fief to several of the local lords, including the lords of Galbino.

The castle was a useful strategic location. Castle and town needed each other, but only about 80 families lived in the town around 1180.

Flight to the Emperor. In the neighbouring territory, Count Matteo da Montaguto (Montauto) placed all his fortified country seats and villages under the protection of Emperor Otto IV in the year

1210.

The regional structure was complex, but the parties cultivated a system that was in their mutual interests. The protection of the emperor provided the count with security against his neighbours and the neighbouring towns. In this power-hungry age, many minor territorial lords were making the same decision.

In return, the count was given important rights. Above all, he was allowed to impose tolls, hold markets and raise market taxes (*gabella*) in his territory.⁶⁶

End of rule by the counts. The lords of the surrounding countryside lost the battle of Campaldino (1299). The Republic of Arezzo issued a law against all the noble families and deprived them of all their power.

Free town. From the time of the battle of Campaldino, Anghiari was able to call itself a “free land under the suzerainty of Arezzo” (*terre libere del dominio aretino*)⁶⁷ – a complex legal form.

Sociology of the burgher association. Max Weber writes: “The real home of the *coniuratio*, however, is obviously to be found in Italy. In the overwhelming majority of cases the city constitution was here formed in the “spontaneous” way, by *coniuratio*. It is in Italy, therefore, that in spite of the ambiguity of many sources the sociological meaning of the burgher association can best be determined.

Its general precondition was the partly feudal, partly prebendal appropriation of powers of domination characteristic for the Occident. ...

Numerous claims to authority stand side by side, overlapping and often conflicting with each other. Episcopal powers of seigneurial and political nature; appropriated vicontiel and other political office powers resting partly on chartered privileges and partly on usurpation; powers of great urban feudatories or freed *ministeriales* of the king or the bishops (*capitanei*); those of rural or urban subfeudatories (*valvassores*) of the *capitanei*; allodial clan properties of most varied origin; countless owners of castles fortified on their own authority or that of some other power; a privileged estate wielding authority over a broad stratum of *clientes*, either bound or free; occupational unions of the urban economic classes; judicial powers based on manorial law, on feudal law, on territorial law and on ecclesiastic law – all these are found in the same city.

Temporary treaties ... interrupted the feuds of the armed interests within and outside the city walls.

Officially the legitimate lord of the city was either an imperial vassal or – as in most cases – the local bishop; by virtue of his combination of secular and religious instruments of power, the latter usually stood the best chance of imposing an effective rulership.

The type of *coniuratio* which under the name of a *compagna communis* or some similar designation prepared the way for the political association of the later “city” was likewise concluded for a concrete purpose, and usually for a definite time period or until further notice; it could thus be dissolved again.

At times, during the early period, several such “companies” can be found within the same city walls, but permanent significance was reached only by the sworn association of the “whole” community – i.e. of all those groups which at the given time effectively claimed and held military power within the city.

In Genoa this association was at first renewed every four years. The opponent varied with the conditions of the locality. In Milan the *coniuratio* of the arms-bearing townsmen of AD 980 was directed against the bishop, while in Genoa the bishop and the vicontiel families (who had appropriated the secular seigneurial rights – later on transformed into tax claims) seem initially to have been members of the urban *coniuratio*. But here, too, the later *compagna communis* was directed against the

power claims of the bishop and the Visconti.

The immediate positive aim of the sworn confraternity was the unification of the local landowners for protective and defensive purposes, for the peaceable settlement of internal disputes, and for the securing of an administration of justice in correspondence with the interests of the townsmen. But there were further goals. One was the monopolisation of the economic opportunities offered by the city: only the members of the sworn association were to be permitted to share in the commerce of the city. In Genoa, for example, membership was a prerequisite for permission to invest capital in overseas trade in *commenda* partnerships. Another aim was the delimitation of the obligations owed to the city lord: the replacement of arbitrary taxation by fixed sum payments or by high (but determinate) annual payments. Finally, the city association took in hand the military organisation for the purpose of expanding the political and economic power sphere of the commune against the outside.”⁶⁸

“Hence we find only a short time after the formation of the *coniuraciones*, the beginning of the wars of the communes against each other, which by the eleventh century had already become a chronic phenomenon.

Within the city, the mass of the burghers was forced to join the sworn confraternisation. The noble and patrician families which had founded the association would administer an oath to all inhabitants qualified by landownership; those who did not agree to take it were forced into exile. This was not always immediately accompanied by a formal change in the existing organisation of offices. The bishop or secular city lord often retained his position as head of an urban district which continued to be administered through his *ministeriales*; the great transformation was felt only in the existence of the burgher assembly.

But this did not continue for long. In the last decades of the eleventh century annually elected *consules* appear everywhere, often numbering up to a dozen or more; officially they were elected by the citizenry directly or by an electoral college of *honoratores* ... which probably usurped the right to nominate the officials ...

The consuls, salaried and entitled to take fees, completed the revolutionary usurpation by seizing all or the major part of judicial powers and the supreme command in wartime; they administered all affairs of the commune. ...

A college of *sapientes* (sages), often called the *credenza*, strictly controlled the consuls; it was formed at times by the ... *scabini*, at times by *honoratores* appointed by the consuls themselves In practice it usually consisted of the heads of the economically and politically most powerful families, who divided these positions among themselves.

The initial *coniuraciones* still observed the status separation into vassals (*capitanei*), subvassals, *ministeriales*, castle lords (*castellani*) and *cives meliores* – that is, persons economically qualified for military service

However, very soon the anti-feudal character of the movement came to the fore

The razing of the imperial, episcopal and seigneurial castles within the city, their removal to a place without the walls (this is found especially in the city privileges granted by the Salic emperors), the establishment of the principle that no castles could be built within a specified area around the city and that the emperor or other city lords should not have the right to be quartered within the city walls – these were among the first *political* achievements of the new regime, obtained either by force or by extorted or purchased grant from the emperor or the bishop.”⁶⁹

A permanent political federation was created out of a purely personal short-term confederacy set up

between comrades under oath.

Notes on:

Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (5.)

- 1 Vacano, 1957, 66.
- 2 On the subject of the Etruscans: Vacano, 1957, Keller, 1970. – Heurgon, 1972. – Torelli, 1981. – Pallottino, 1984. – Staccioli, 1984. – Staccioli, 1994. – Grant, 1997.
- 3 Vacano, 1957, 158.
- 4 On the subject of economic decline: Vacano, 1957, 160/161.
- 5 Benevolo, 1980, Fig. 220.
- 6 Janus, it. Giano. The god of all beginnings. All invocations and sacrifices began with his name. One myth refers to him as the first king of the Latins. Ovid claimed he was the equivalent of the Greek divinity Chaos, identifying him with the beginning of the world. The god of doors (*ianua*), of roads (*rector viarum*) and of certain passages of access to public roads (*iani*). During the transition from peace to war, the doors of his temple were opened on the Roman Forum. He is two-faced, one face looking into the past, and the other into the future. (Grande Enciclopedia. Novara 1974).
- 7 G. E. Marindin, A Smaller Classical Dictionary, 1898.
- 8 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 39.
- 9 Ceppodomo, 1987, 19/21. Camenae are female divine spirits of wells and fountains, on a par with Greek nymphs, and also with the muses. A sacred grove was dedicated to them in Rome. They share the gift of prophesy with other water divinities. (Grande Enciclopedia. Novara 1974).
- 10 Ceppodomo, 1987, 24. A stone with the inscription PANTOLEVS that serves as the lintel to a window in the abbey (2 Vico della Piazzuola) is further evidence of this.
- 11 Ceppodomo, 1987, 28.
- 12 Benevolo, 1980, Fig. 225.
- 13 For more on the subject of the Etruscans in Central Italy : Kaschnitz-Weinberg, 1961. Günter, 2003, 243 ff., 279, 285 ff.
- 14 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 37 contains many references to findings from Antiquity.
- 15 Lorenzo Taglieschi makes several references to the fact that Anghiari has always produced excellent wine (Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 38/39).
- 16 Ceppodomo, 1987, 13/14. House no. 15.
- 17 Ceppodomo, 1987, 33/34.
- 18 Plinius C. Caecilius Secundus, Epistularium. Lipsiae 1952, Libro V, Epistola 6. However, Lama (which forms part of San Giustino) is the main other claimant to this villa in the Upper Tiber Valley. – Cf. Ascani, 1973, 6/7. – Pichi, 1892. Ceppodomo, 1990. For an imaginary reconstruction of the Villa di Plinio see Tusci, p. 13/57; texts by Taglieschi p. 48.
- 19 Pliny the Elder wrote to Domitius Apollinaris: “You would be charmed by taking a view of this country from the top of one of our neighbouring mountains, and would fancy that not a real, but some imaginary landscape, painted by the most exquisite pencil, lay before you, such an harmonious variety of beautiful objects meets the eye, whichever way it turns ... And may the gods continue that happiness to me, and that honour to my villa.”
- 20 Machiavelli, 1520/1987, 22/23.
- 21 Machiavelli, 1520/1987, 15.
- 22 Machiavelli, 1996, 7.
- 23 Machiavelli, 1520/1987, 21/22.
- 24 Ceppodomo, 1987, 13/14. House no. 15.
- 25 Ceppodomo, 1987, 33/34.
- 26 Ceppodomo, 1987, 24. There is a stone lintel above one of the windows in the abbey (Vico della Piazzuola) with the word PANTOLEVS engraved in it. The stone is so placed that the letters are upside down, suggesting this was not its original location.
- 27 Gino Franceschini investigated this in Pieve di Sovara, a church to the west of Anghiari in the Sovara Valley. Franceschini, 1975.

- 28 Dini/Günter, gone to press.
- 29 Tarducci, 1914. Melucco Vaccaro, 1988. Menis, 1990. Delogu, Guillo/Ortalli, 1991. Menestò, 1999.
- 30 Paolo Diacono, *Historia Langobardorum*, II, 29. Paolo Diacono, *Storia dei Longobardi*. T. Albasani (ed.). Milan, 1994.
- 31 Paolo Diacono. Paul the Deacon came from a noble Lombard family, and received his education at the court of the Lombard king in Pavia. He entered the Benedictine monastery of Civate. When the kingdom of Lombardy fell in 774, he took refuge at the court of Benevento. In 779, he retired to the monastery of Monte Cassino. Paul became acquainted with Charles, and wrote to him to plead for mercy on behalf of his incarcerated brother. Charles summoned him to Aix-la-Chapelle, where he lived from 782 to 786, later returning to Monte Cassino. He wrote the six books of his History of the Lombards (c. 790) using sources that have since largely disappeared. Paul edited this work of nostalgia in Monte Cassino, taking care in his documentation, however, and showing restraint in his judgement.
- 32 Paulus Diaconus [a Benedictine monk]. History of the Lombards (c. 790). In *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores*.
- 33 Weber, 1922, 599.
- 34 Schneider, 1975, 165.
- 35 Schneider, 1975, 168.
- 36 Schneider, 1975, 174/175.
- 37 Schneider, 1975, 169.
- 38 Schneider, 1975. Schneider, 1924. Schneider, 1980, 166/167. On the subject of Anghiari: pp. 214, 216, 217, 222, 253, 290.
- 39 Braunfels, 1966, 21.
- 40 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 33.
- 41 Günter, 1998, 47ff.
- 42 Günter, 1998, 452ff.
- 43 Franceschini, 1975.
- 44 Franceschini, 1975, here p. 10.
- 45 Dini/Günter, gone to press.
- 46 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 50.
- 47 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 27.
- 48 On this subject, see Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 31. Etruscan: Motina. Latin: Albiano, Galbino, Trafiume. Lombard: Sorci and Cafaggio. Frankish: Ugo.
- 49 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 50.
- 50 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 49.
- 51 Franceschini, 1975, 20.
- 52 Franceschini, 1975, 20.
- 53 The following passages are taken from Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 53/54.
- 54 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 66.
- 55 On the following: Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 55. – Camaldolesian monasteries in the area: Sansepolcro; Tifi; Diccciano; Subcastelli.
- 56 Coleschi, 1886.
- 57 The connection between the two was made particularly clear by Dante Alighieri in the symbolism of the journey he made in the company of Virgil through Hell and Purgatory on his way to Heaven.
- 58 The Republic of Arezzo acted as the court of appeal in civil lawsuits and criminal proceedings.
- 59 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 66.
- 60 “Dai contrasti fra l'autorità del Vescovo e i signori feudali, il popolo sentì nascere in sé un desiderio irrefrenabile di emanciparsi da ogni autorità e di governarsi a regime popolare, creando così le premesse del libero comune; per cui, dove prima, dove dopo, si arrivò alla istituzione ed elezione dei consoli. Per Arezzo ne abbiamo trovato uno, Ranieri, fin dal 1098; quasi contemporaneamente se ne trovano in Firenze e in altre città toscane e italiane. Per Città di Castello si ha la memoria di un Cässolo console nel 1167. ... Per Anghiari invece il primo accenno risale al 1147, per una discordia nata appunto tra Arezzo priore di Camaldoli e gli Anghiari circi il consolato” (Ascani, 1973, 54).
- 61 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 56.
- 62 Ascani, 1973, 54ff.

- 63 Wickham, 1990, 24. Modigliani, 1880, 225/261.
- 64 Weber, 1922, 589/590.
- 65 Weber, 1922, 590.
- 66 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 67/68.
- 67 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 78.
- 68 Weber, 1922, 536/537.
- 69 Weber, 1922, 537.

6. The Middle Ages

General political climate and micro-structure

The emperor and the town. At the end of the twelfth century, Anghiari's independence, even from the emperor, was such that his chancellery sent officials (*balitori*) to re-establish his influence.

The indirect return of the count. The Camaldolesse order possessed a number of villages and country seats, resulting from the many substantial donations they had received. In each of these they now established a deputy (*visconte*).

Thus, in 1187, the abbot appointed a nobleman from Arezzo as the *visconte* of Anghiari, or to be more precise, of that part of Anghiari that belonged to the monastery. This nobleman was Ranieri di Galbino, a descendant of Count Bernardino. He established his seat in the castle grounds, next to the monastery, and exercised jurisdiction.

But this was not enough for him. He asked Emperor Henry IV to grant him the title of count, Henry complied and the pope confirmed the title. After a space of 83 years, the new count had managed to reinstall his family in the territory, albeit as dependants of Camaldoli.¹

The appointment of the new count seems to have triggered major conflicts. It seems likely that memories of the old counts weighed heavily against him. We know nothing about the way the conflicts played out, but one way or another the Galbino family were forced to resign.

A compromise was worked out. The imperial officials assumed the judicial rôle of the *visconte* and took charge of the court.

The political power structure was very fragile, so the people seized their advantage. After the death of Emperor Henry VI in 1197, the town was run by rectors, consuls, the town council and the *podestà*.

The alliance of the people's movement. The fact that the balance of power was now shifting from the consuls to the *podestà* indicates that the people's movement was growing stronger and stronger.

By about 1240/50, the *podestà* was ruling alone.

What can we read into the abolition of such well-established offices as that of the consul? We shall have to imagine the long-lasting conflicts that formed the undercurrent of such changes.

It would not be true to say that Anghiari simply became a dependency of Arezzo. If we are told that between 1227 and 1231 the city of Arezzo appointed the *podestà*, who was usually a citizen of Arezzo, we must put this into its proper context. The facts are complex. Arezzo brought about a decline in the influence of the prior of the Abbey, an influence that he exercised on the basis of his office. The *podestà* acted as a kind of mediator between the various power groupings.

This is the reason why the *podestà* was brought in from outside, and why he only held office for one year in each case. The idea was to reduce the risk of corruption in the form of nepotism or string-pulling.

This constellation essentially meant that Anghiari entered an alliance with the politically like-minded Arezzo.

The institution of the *podestà* came into being, according to Max Weber, during the arduous struggles between the municipalities and the emperors from the House of Hohenstaufen. There was a growing need for the municipalities to join forces among themselves and consolidate. The heyday of the institution of the *podestà* was the first half of the 13th century. The *podestà*, usually a nobleman, was appointed from a different municipality. His term of office was short, in order to avoid the risk of corruption. He held the highest judicial office – a university education in jurisprudence was held to be an advantage – and received a high salary. For the most part, the *podestà* was selected by a council. The appointing municipality negotiated with the appointee's home municipality. Those who were appointed were expected to be capable of taking action. The *podestà* mostly brought his own staff with him. His main tasks lay in the following areas: public safety and public order, the maintaining of peace within the town, military command and the law. The council was responsible for supervising the *podestà*. The civil service originated in the office of the *podestà*. The institution gave rise to a tendency to make comparisons between the cities' legal systems, which in turn fostered a rational codification of the law and a wider use of Roman law.²

Politics and administration. Another municipal office, beside that of the judge, was that of the chamberlain. The rôle played by the mayor (*sindaco*) is indicative of the extremely sensitive balance of power in the town.

The mayor was also seen to be a kind of arbitrator, even being in a position to check and rectify the activities of the *podestà*. Complainants could turn to him as a sort of ombudsman. Even nowadays, centuries later, Italians still expect their mayors to play the same rôle.

There was now a council with six members known as “wise men” (*boni homines*). The structure and name of this body are a reflection of the fact that the town was relatively small. A second council was the people's council.

The internal interplay of social forces. The balance of power was played out at many levels in the 12th century. Factions were formed as the result of long-running disputes. Initially, this took place at the informal level. Later, it was institutionalised in the form of the people's council.

The people's council gathered at the signal of a bell or the call of the town crier. It was made up of three groups, which was a reflection of the social situation.

The upper class (*maiores*) comprised the knights, nobles and judges. The middle class (*mediocres*) were property owners below the rank of nobility, tenants, small traders and self-employed artisans. The lower class (*minores*) were the day labourers in towns and the peasant farmers.³

In this interplay of forces, there was a gradual shift in relative strength, and thus in the balance of power. In line with the example set by the “free municipality” of Arezzo, a people's movement developed in Anghiari as well. It demanded – and got – ever more rights, presumably in the true Tuscan manner of little by little.

Conflicts. A piece of news from the year 1200 is a sign of conflict. Certain consuls were elected against the wishes of the prior.

What are we to read into the following news? – Arezzo had to leave jurisdiction in the hands of the

prior. However, in 1232 the population refused to fund this office.

The vicario. After the abdication of the count, from the year 1291, the citizens of Anghiari appointed a *vicario*. His term of office lasted one year, and he came with his own staff. The first *vicario* was a nobleman from Padua.

The next appointee was from the ancient noble family of the counts of Montaguto, as were those appointed in the next 19 years in succession. The family had lived in Arezzo since 1289.

Town rulers from the Tarlati family (1322 onwards)

Formation of parties. Niccolò Machiavelli wrote: “However, as papal might was in the ascendancy in Italy, the power of the emperor declined; thus, obedience to princely rule in all parts of the province diminished considerably. Under Emperor Henry III, the country as a whole was divided into two parties: the papal and the imperial.”⁴

Backlash. The victory of the people's movement throughout Tuscany was quickly followed by a backlash. In many areas, former powerful parties re-grouped and created “tyrants”. The best known of these were Uguccione della Faggiola (Pisa), Castruccio Castracani (Lucca) and Gualtiero di Brienne (Florence).

The Tarlati era in Anghiari is closely linked to that of the Tarlati in Arezzo.⁵

The family was of Lombard origin and was one of the most influential in the area. Its family seat was Castello di Pietramala, in the narrow valley between the Alpe di Poti, Passo della Scheggia and the summit of the Capriano. The now ruined castle is hardly accessible, but for many years a mule track from Arezzo to Anghiari ran past it.⁶

Rulers in Arezzo. In Arezzo, the power grouping around the Tarlati family, led by the Ghibelline Count Guido Raltari of Pietramala, drove the Ubaldini family and their supporters out of the town. In their turn, the Tarlati were driven out by a power grouping around the Verdi family. As was often the case, the victors destroyed the houses of the vanquished.

In 1309, Uguccione della Faggiola became the *capitano del popolo* (the people's captain), and forged new alliances. The Tarlati, his allies, turned up before the gates of Arezzo, the gates opened and a bloody civil war ensued. Battles were fought from house to house, people were slaughtered without mercy. The Tarlati won. Verdi supporters were hung, some were banished, the town quarters where they lived were destroyed. Uguccione now held the office of *podestà* in addition to that of *capitano del popolo*.

One year later, in 1310, the Tarlati “liberated themselves” from their ally Uguccione. He withdrew without a fight, to make his plans elsewhere. Later, he became the *signore* of Pisa and Lucca.

Governance in Arezzo. The pope and the bishop persuaded Guido Tarlati to make peace. The *Pace di Civitella* was a wise and pragmatic move, bringing an end to the madness of confrontation. The Albergotti, Bostoli, Ubertini, Tarlati and Secchi families forswore all future enmity. The peace confirmed the supremacy of the Tarlati.

Guido Tarlati – of all the rulers he was the most intelligent and the most far-sighted – deployed his two brothers Piero, known as Pier Saccone, and Tarlato Tarlati to rule with him.

Guido Tarlati was in several ways a highly gifted organiser. He overhauled the finances and filled the empty public purse. Above all, his policy was one of consensus, which prompted him to form a grand coalition with those long-time enemies, the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. Guido drew their

leaders into his entourage, entrusting them with all sorts of tasks.

In 1312, Guido Tarlati had himself appointed to succeed the bishop. Previously, he had held the office – a sinecure – of arch-priest (*arciprete*) in Pieve di San Antonio near Monterchi; later he was *arciprete* in Pieve Santa Maria in Arezzo. A bishop did not have to be pious, but he did need riches, family connections and real political power.

Military network. Between 1316 and 1325, Guido Tarlati consolidated the military installations. In the years following 1319, he had the town fortress enlarged, and built the most extensive wall in its history. The citadel was developed in line with state-of-the-art military technology.

Tarlati re-conquered a large number of fortified places: Lucignano, Monte San Savino, Torrita and Sinalunga in the Val di Chiana and, among others, Caprese (Caprese Michelangelo) in the Upper Tiber Valley as well. This provided him with a network of military bases.

Between two powers. The territory of Arezzo lay between two great powers: Florence and the Papal States. Whoever ruled Arezzo had to fight for survival. Its rulers had to be on their guard against being swallowed up by their mighty neighbours, as was likely in those times. The smaller powers therefore had to forge alliances and greedily strive for expansion themselves.

For some time, Arezzo profited from the fact that Florence was tied down in the west, fighting battles with Lucca and Pisa. Arezzo secured its western borders by entering into an alliance with Siena.

It wanted to expand, but in which direction? To the south, the Papal States seemed vulnerable. This was because Pope Clement V (pope from 1305 to 1314) had moved his residence to Avignon in 1309, in order to escape the civil war raging between the factions in Rome. (The popes resided in Avignon until 1377.) Seven French popes succeeded him. Thus, Guido Tarlati began to wage war on the papal city of Perugia. In 1323, he conquered the papal town of Città di Castello.

In response to this, Pope John XXII (pope from 1316 to 1334, and at that time in Avignon) excommunicated Bishop Guido. Guido, being a power-hungry politician, was unmoved by this. He joined forces with the Holy Roman Emperor Louis IV, known as Louis the Bavarian (1312 – 1346). Guido further provoked the pope by breaking a taboo. Taking the place of the pope, he crowned the Holy Roman Emperor in Sant'Ambrogio in Milan. The pope angrily declared Guido to be a “heretic” (*eretico*).

In 1321, Bishop Guido got the Council of 400 to appoint him ruler of the city (*signore*) for life.

Anghiari conquered. In the night of 11th November 1309, a troop of Tarlati mercenaries tried to seize Anghiari by surprise, but the attempt failed. The fact that they had repelled the invaders was held by the people of Anghiari to be a miracle, which they attributed to St. Martin, on whose feast day this happened. St. Martin is also venerated as the patron saint of soldiers.

Half a generation later, Guido Tarlati conquered the papal fortress of Citerna, then Borgo San Sepolcro; in 1322 he conquered Anghiari, and in 1323 Città di Castello. The death of the Ghibelline Count of Montefeltro opened up the Via della Massa Trabaria for him, and the route to the east.

Signore on the Tiber. Bishop Guido ceded the small territory, including Anghiari, in the Upper Tiber Valley to his brother and co-regent Pier Saccone.

Pier Saccone appointed a representative (*vicario*) in Anghiari, a notary from Arezzo named Ser Rainuccio di Ristoro, and commissioned him to take charge of the administration.

Death. Bishop Guido Tarlati died suddenly on Monte Amiata the age of 45. The cause of death may have been malaria or the plague. The state of Arezzo erected a huge funerary monument to him in the Cathedral.

His successors were the long-time regents Pier Saccone and Tarlato Tarlati. Until 1337, they were able to prevent any enemy of the Tarlati championed by the pope from taking over the bishopric.

Infrastructure. Pier Saccone was particularly interested in infrastructure.

In Arezzo, he carried out improvements to the walls (1332), and built the Palazzo dei Priori (1333; Palazzo Communale/Palazzo Cavallo). He ordered many roads to be paved, and established criteria for the maintenance of public buildings and the cleanliness of the city (1327 – 1334).

He also turned his attention to social infrastructure: arrangements for the provision of food and disaster control. When the Tiber flooded in 1328 and famine ensued, he had grain distributed on the marketplace in Anghiari. He deployed armed men to put an end to the stockpiling of grain, forcing speculators to hand over their supplies, and ensuring it was sold at a reasonable price.

His outstanding achievements in urban development were the building of the long road in Anghiari, the extensive Mercatale square and the arcades.

The rulers and the ruled. We must not imagine Pier Saccone to have been an omnipotent and dictatorial ruler. The early prince-like usurpers were hardly able to change conditions. For the most part, they recognised the existing political and social practices.

In one way, they remained aloof. The Romans and the Lombards were the same, and the Medici and Cortona (Lorraine) families were later to follow suit. Even nowadays, relations with the central government in Rome are similar.

The inhabitants have the confidence to be themselves, first and foremost. Only afterwards are they members of an overarching organisation.

The Camaldolesi were the losers.

The Tarlati developed the town, moving the centre of gravity out of the *borghetto* and creating a unique form of public infrastructure, which fascinates us and remains distinctive to this day.

The town rulers fail. Florence and Perugia entered into a pact against Arezzo. In 1335, their armies stood below the walls of Arezzo.

Many of the townspeople, suffering from stress brought on by the siege, became unhappy, particularly on account of the economic slump. Some conspirators plotted to hand the city over to the Florentines, but the Tarlati had them hanged. Hatred and intrigues abounded.

Pier Saccone responded, not by being tough or by giving in, but by opening secret negotiations with Florence. (Nowadays we would say he negotiated a merger.) The result was that Pier Saccone got a loan of 18,000 florins, which for the most part he used to pay his soldiers – who had not been paid for a long time – and subjected Arezzo to ten years' rule by Florence.

The people welcomed the Florentine soldiers with cheers.

However, Florence immediately built two fortresses.

Nowadays the Tarlati's residence in the mountains, not far from San Antimo, can be reached by jeep or motor bicycle. It is in ruins; only walls and some vaulting remain.

Once, this area could be reached by horse and mule, and was just as naturally accessible to people in those days as the nearby Scheggia pass is to us when we travel by car.

Regulatory measures and infrastructure in medium-sized towns

Decline of the regulative. Town regulations provide us with clues regarding the extent to which towns had been in decline since late Antiquity. The rules that the sophisticated societies of Antiquity had

imposed on themselves frequently no longer applied, because urban society itself had lost its sophistication.

Regulatory measures were thus forgotten. The institutions that had preserved and underwritten them had shrunk or vanished.

The second and third social systems (the church, the nobility and migrant tribes), who were by origin governed by very different regulations, prevailed in these shrunken towns.

From an economic perspective, the early Middle Ages, being a time of poverty, did not need many regulations.

New developments in regulatory measures. At the height of the Middle Ages, the towns began to grow again in times of economic prosperity. Anghiari is a case in point.

Inevitably, society in the town changed. In the course of this process, which created many conflicts, something like a public sector slowly began to emerge.

The public sector developed rules to govern the conflicts, a regulative.

Property ownership and the rules governing succession (inheritance), whose origins lay in Antiquity, retained their continuity.

To a considerable extent, the ancient regulations governing trades and their groupings remained in force.

The most important area in which regulations gradually came to be developed was the exchange of goods, the market.

The entire town was a market.

The development of public infrastructure. One of the motors driving the development of society was a dialectic: privilege based on property and rank simultaneously gave rise to obligations for defence (wall building, maintenance, guard duties) and road building (streets and squares).

As Tuscan towns expanded, and particularly as the popular movement grew, there was ever greater need for infrastructure, and the demands for it became louder.

Sequence of mills. See the chapter on Water.

Town hall. Many areas of Tuscany, including towns, had long lacked a place for holding local authority or council meetings. Meetings took place in a church, in Anghiari mostly in Sant'Agostino.

This meeting place was not fixed, it could change in accordance with the residence of the *priore* (the leader of the local authority).⁷

In 1202, Count Gugliermo gave the community (*comunità*) a house in the civilian quarter of the town next to (*continua a*) Sant'Agostino. It was newly built (*fabricata di fresco*). This was the residence of the *priore*.⁸

The house was used as an archive (*archivo*) for public documents (*publiche scritture*), especially for legal files.⁹

Under Perugian rule (1339 to 1359), the Perugian administration began enlarging one wing of the palace of the *vicario* (the deputy, the vice-regent) in the castle – this was a sign of increased bureaucratic activity.¹⁰

The chancellery (*cancelleria*) was based a little further downhill from Porta degli Auspici.

The town ruler's building projects. Around 1323, Pier Saccone, the *signore* of Anghiari, instituted a number of infrastructure projects within a relatively short space of time:¹¹

- the long, straight road;
- a deep well on the piazza (Piazza Mameli) in the *borghetto* (1323);

- an aqueduct and the well under the Mercatale arcades;
- the levelling of the large square, which had largely consisted of natural terrain, with the help of substructure and pavement;
- extensive arcades on the square;
- a large column (commonly known as “Pietrone”) built at the entrance to the arcades; announcements were affixed to it and miscreants put on display;
- the beginnings of the building of the great castle tower.

His aims were twofold: infrastructure was useful, and its grand design reflected well on the town ruler. He had his coat of arms affixed to each piece of infrastructure, a symbol to remind the people of his deeds. This is a ritual that has its origins in Antiquity. Lorenzo Taglieschi, the historian, interprets it as a sign of truth.

Inspectors. In 1475, the General Council deployed inspectors (*provveditori*) to search the whole area for damage, particularly damage caused by war. They were to inspect the soil and water, houses left vacant and many other things, and were to put things to rights.¹²

Grain supply. There were frequent famines. The poor could no longer afford to buy bread because the price of grain was inflated, mostly through the fault of speculators. This led to serious clashes, countered by early welfare-state measures.

Every town stored grain and supplied it in cases of emergency, like siege and famine. In the event of a famine, it was sold exclusively to the poor, at a price they could easily afford. In 1379, grain officers (*abondantieri*) were deployed in Anghiari for this purpose.

However, the grain officers frequently miscalculated, so supplies were quickly used up. In such disastrous cases, the officers had to pay a fine.¹³

In the Late Middle Ages, a temporary shop was set up for grain distribution.

In the famine of 1474, an uprising of the poor resulted in the local authority buying grain and wine from the rich, storing it, and selling it on to the poor in times of disaster. The rich grumbled, plotted and schemed to such an extent that the measure was abandoned two years later.¹⁴

Health service. In 1339, a doctor's bill was paid out of the public purse.¹⁵

Piety, socio-cultural networks, welfare for the poor

Socio-cultural structure. Social networking was based in the churches. With their forecourts and halls like covered piazzas, they formed the location for weddings, baptisms and funerals. They were the beginning and the end of processions held on the many minor and major feast days, and they formed the meeting place for the confraternities.

This added up to considerable activity, and gave structure to the years. It ensured the people were not bored, but entertained. Throughout the year, the church was the centre of their socio-cultural life.

This functioned so well, that in fact other centres had no chance of success. At any rate, it took a very long time before a social culture developed outside the church.

Competition only existed between the ecclesiastical centres, and it increased with the emancipation of society. The reformed orders arose in this context: the Augustinian canons and the more extreme orders of the Friars Minor (Franciscans and Dominicans).

There were centres of a rigid nature, where some people no longer wanted to stay, and other more flexible ones that attracted many people.

The monasteries were also self-sufficient and sold food. They acted as a safety net for the socially weak. Some of their members were recruited from the ranks of the socially deprived. The monasteries' many vast properties involved a great deal of work.

The clergy were often passive. It was the people that organised life in the parishes.

The laity were thus reflected in the institutions, rather than the clergy.

In the 15th century, civic organisations largely took over the churches as well.

Religion attacked by opposing forces. Opposition to the Abbey made itself felt at the religious level too.

An association linked to the rise of the people established itself in a civilian suburb, in the form of a group of Antonine monks.

Care of the poor. The development of hospitals (*ospedale*) and care for the poor was typical of the popular movement in the 12th century (cf. Florence). Such welfare was now organised on a communal basis and – compared to its meagre predecessors – considerably improved.

On St. Martin's Day 1309, the People's Council decided to build a hospital (opposite the *Badia*) and a convent, whose members would care for the sick. Moreover, they decided to distribute bread to the poor on a permanent basis, so that no-one would go hungry any longer.

Let us imagine the lengthy debates that preceded this decision. How was it to be funded? How was it to be organised?

Sickness. The Antonine monks devoted themselves to dealing with a terrible sickness, popularly called “St. Anthony's fire”.

The sick became incurably ill through poisoning after eating grain infested with ergot (*secale cornutum*), a carcinogenic fungus.

Time and time again, between the 11th and the end of the 14th centuries, this illness spread like an epidemic in France.

Patron saint. In such times of existential need, people called on the peasants' most important patron saint: St. Anthony the Hermit.

He was buried in Vienne, not far from Lyons. It was the starting point for associations of hermits that spread from there to 369 locations up to the year 1300 or thereabouts. At first they were laymen, but in 1218 they accepted the rule of the Antonine hermits in Vienne.¹⁶

Anghiari also joined the Antonine network, originally with lay brothers. In the 12th century, they erected a hospital in the *borgo* “outside the town walls” (*extra moenia*), presumably to serve other sick and poor persons, and also a chapel.¹⁷

The chapel was a hall with two pieces of vaulting that are roughly square in shape. This is a monumental form that the people of the time may have associated with French churches. A picture of the Egyptian St. Anthony the Abbot (c. 250 to 356) decorated the back wall. He is known as the patron saint of sufferers from shingles (*herpes zoster*), the plague and scurvy, and as the patron saint of weavers and domestic animals (one of his attributes is a pig).

Augustinian canons. In 1297, the Antonine order of hermits merged with that of the Augustinian canons, and adopted their rule.

Communities of Augustinian canons played an important rôle in the Upper Tiber Valley.

Their range of interests seems to have been very broad and also fairly liberal. This particularly enabled them to serve in a complex situation with tensions between town and country, and life as lived by people with oral traditions and those with varying degrees of education. The people also had

different forms of social orientation.¹⁸

St. Anthony was the patron saint of peasants; he was mostly depicted in the company of a pig.

He represented an important factor in and around Anghiari: some of the town dwellers earned their living by farming. The peasants in the countryside also had close connections to the town. They sold their produce in the market there, and the artisans who provided many things necessary for country folk lived there too.

A double church. The merger with the Augustinian canons presumably took place after lengthy local debates.¹⁹

This was the reason for the erection of a second building. The construction was an expression of plurality.

The first church remained standing, the second was dedicated to St. Augustine, the founder of the order. The two churches were built one on top of the other, a hall being constructed on top of St. Anthony's chapel. Visitors nowadays find an upper and a lower church.

The lower church has a vaulted ceiling, the upper one is flat. Thus, the monastery has symbols to mark the fact that the new hall belongs to an order associated with simplicity and the common people (the Benedictines, who were rich and well established, mostly built their churches differently).

Paintings. There is a painting of St. Anthony in the upper church too.

The close ties between this church and the peasants are apparent in another fresco (only preserved as a fragment).

Visitors to the church see a harvest scene. The harvest is a matter of life and death to a peasant; he has to live with the fear and uncertainty that his crops might be destroyed through hail, storm or drought.

Reconstruction. For details on the reconstruction and enlargement of the church in the middle of the 15th century, see the chapter on the townspeople's appropriation of religious spaces.

Meeting place. It is significant that this monastery competed with the Abbey in offering room in its church to the council and democratic assemblies. This happened in the “lower town”.

Furthermore, this makes it clear that the churches – and other churches as well – were used for multiple purposes.

Mendicant orders: reforms, poor relief and participation

Democracy in the mendicant orders. The new mendicant orders became very attractive as a result of their links with the popular movement. They were rooted, demonstratively and often provocatively, in the tradition of civic simplicity.

The peasants in the countryside were impressed by this. Although initially attracted by town culture, they felt more at home in the mendicants' socio-symbolic network than in the orders in which the large landowners had established themselves.

Furthermore, the mendicant friars were not organised hierarchically; their structure was democratic. Their General Chapter was a “public gathering of all brothers”.

St. Francis of Assisi. People in the Upper Tiber valley have been fascinated by St. Francis.²⁰

Francesco d'Assisi was born in Assisi in 1182 and died there in 1226. He was the son of Piero Bernardone, a wealthy cloth merchant. His real name was Giovanni, but people called him Francesco because of his liking for the French language, as it opened up for him the courtly world of the knights.

He was full of enthusiasm for the anti-social aspects of this world, and he and his friends formed a gang of sorts.

In 1203, while languishing sick in prison in Perugia, his thoughts prompted him to develop the ideas of poverty, a helping hand and preaching. He refused to become a priest, wanting to remain a “brother”. He was the model of the *poverello*, a poor and simple human being. People invented many stories about him, which circulated over the centuries.

His monastic rule was approved in 1209. He founded the order of the Poor Clares in 1212. The interpretation of the monastic rule was extremely controversial. As a result, he resigned in 1220, founding the so-called Third Order of Brothers and Sisters of Penance for laypeople. In 1222 he withdrew, and died in 1226. He was canonised a mere two years later (1228).

St. Francis in Anghiari. In 1224, St. Francis was walking on the rocky mountain of La Verna (one day's journey from Anghiari) when he received the stigmata – wounds to his hands and feet similar to those suffered by Jesus Christ when he was nailed to the cross. This happened either at Michaelmas or on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.

He walked back to Assisi along the ridge on which Anghiari stands. “Crowds of people gathered to see the man of God (*l'huomo divino*) and receive a token of grace from him”. (Lorenzo Taglieschi)

He rested for an hour in a hut, then planted a tree²¹ (there is a commemorative plaque to the northern side of the present-day Ospedale). It was a symbol of the tree of the Cross, to show that Jesus was crucified out in the countryside as a simple human being (like the crucifixes erected in those times at forks in the roads).

People long remain conscious of a happening of this kind. It takes on a symbolic character. The third *borgo*, no longer enclosed by a wall, was given the name “Borgo della Croce”, a name that it bears to this day.

Further evidence of this lasting effect is the fact that in 1499 a Franciscan monastery was built at the top of the *stradone*.

An organisation and a focal point. St. Francis of Assisi was one of the most important social thinkers in history. The poor relief that he established cannot be overestimated in the context of the history of the human mind.

The confraternity of Santa Maria del Borghetto built a church on the place where the cross was erected, dedicating it to St. Francis. However, his followers took a timespan of almost two generations (1499 to 1534) to complete the church, an indication of how difficult it was for them to raise the money.

In 1499, a monastery was built for Franciscan monks of the Regular Observance.

In 1565, arcades were built in front of the church, accentuating the focal and final point of the *stradone*, the long straight road.

Painting with socio-cultural symbolism. The painting on the main altar of St. Augustine's church is also indicative of people's fascination with the *poverello* and of their attachment to the popular, religious and social reform movements. It shows St. Francis to the right of the Mother with her Child.

Moreover, the Madonna is accompanied by St. Damian, the patron saint of physicians. He is a symbol of the growing importance of health care.

To the left of the Madonna stands St. Anthony of Padua²², another Franciscan.

He is joined by St. Anthony, the hermit abbot and patron saint of peasants (mid-15th century).

These five patrons represent a socio-cultural network, they stand for several important sections of

society and interest groups.

The municipal lending bank. Shortly before 1500, a municipal lending bank, Monte di Pietà, a bank for the poor, was founded on Piazza del Borghetto (Piazza Mameli) in the house of the Augustinian Confraternity, presumably in connection with the Augustinian monks.²³ This social and communal institution was founded on mercy (*pietà*) as a counter-measure to the usurious interest normally charged, which mainly hurt the common people and artisans.

The entrance to the poor man's bank is still there – to the right of the tunnel-like path on the north side of the square (the stairs to 51 Via Garibaldi).

The bank was shut down in 1821.

Hospitals provide relief for the poor in times of great adversity

Poor relief became so essential during the Middle Ages that, as Taglieschi reported in 1614, every quarter of the town had set up its own hospital for the poor. Santa Maria was founded in 1410. San Antonio del Mercatale, which also catered for pilgrims to Rome, was built on the main square and run by the Compagnia dei Bianchi. Santa Maria/San Martino in Borgo della Croce (at the end of the *stradone*, later a monastery) was run by the Santa Maria Confraternity.

Lorenzo Taglieschi, a locally born historian writing in 1614, held this care of the poor to be unequalled throughout Christianity.²⁴

San Martino Hospital. In 1353, the priors of the Fraternità di Santa Maria del Borghetto decided to set up a hospital in the “ruga (fold) della Croce” on the *stradone*. It was to be dedicated to St. Martin of Tours, a saint known for his care of the poor. The confraternity invested a large part of their income in this project.

St. Martin was declared to be a patron saint for the whole of Anghiari, and the street was named “Ruga (fold) di San Martino”.²⁵

The hospital served the sick, poor elderly persons and the dying who had no family.

It also offered shelter to travelling pilgrims, many of whom had little or no money.

Foundlings (*bastardelli*) were also taken in.

There was a widespread and socially accepted procedure in place for illegitimate children whose mothers were unable to provide for them: the mother laid her baby in a certain place, usually in front of a church door. No questions were asked, and the parents remained unknown.

In the 19th century, a revolving compartment (*ruota*) like those seen in cloistered convents was built into the façade of a house belonging to a man named Trompetto in Via della Compagnia Nera (Via della Misericordia). Unwanted new-born babies were placed in it by their fathers or mothers. A white or coloured ribbon with a half-coin attached was tied round the baby's neck as a sign. The commune now had a duty to protect the child and bring it up.²⁶ Trompetto and his wife collaborated with the Spedale degli Esposti in Sansepolcro.

The second hospital. In 1410, Giovanni Agnolo Bigliaffi, being childless, made the following bequests: first, a chaplaincy dedicated to St. John the Baptist was to be set up in the *Badia*; second, a hospital known as Santa Maria della Misericordia was to be established in his own houses (in Via del Borghetto di Sopra,²⁷ now Via Taglieschi, next door to the baptismal church of San Giovanni). The hospital was for sick women with no family of their own.

Each of these facilities was to cover its operating expenses with the dues paid on real estate given to

it.

Ospedale di San Antonio. This was the third hospital. It was founded in 1398²⁸ by the Compagnia di Sant' Antonio, San Iacopo e San Cristoforo and housed on the Mercatale. It was also referred to as the hospital on the other side of the drawbridge (*fuori del ponte*).

Posthumous fame as a motive for founders. Lorenzo Taglieschi mentions that one motive for founders was to establish a lasting memorial to their name. This was effective, in his opinion. Their heirs profited likewise, as the family was held in high esteem.²⁹ One example is the Bigliaffi family.

The surrounding countryside

Re-structuring. The Lombards had no difficulty in capturing Central Italy in the 6th century. In the year 571, they conquered Pavia and made it their capital city.

They then did something thoroughly radical and unheard of, something that only conquerors can achieve: they dispossessed the entire class of Roman landowners.

The land was then given to the dukes who, feeling themselves to be fairly independent, behaved accordingly.

The terms “*contadino*” for a peasant who belonged to a count and “*contado*” for the land owned by a count indicate – through the history of the language – that the land had been apportioned to new lords.

These counts also radically reversed the form of landed property: one part of the land was collectively held in common by the peasant villagers, the other was put at their individual disposal as a fief, and they remained to some extent dependent.

The Lombards brought this concept of property either held in common or placed at a peasant's individual disposal (it was not his property, but he was the tenant, the occupier/user) from northern Europe.

The Lombards themselves were soldiers; they led rough and violent lives as semi-nomads. They founded “forest villages” with a marginal culture. They let their pigs roam free in the forests, kept sheep and horses. They felled trees for timber and hunted.

Technological advances. Three-field crop rotation was introduced and threshing methods improved.

The one-wheeled handcart became common, and animals could be used for transport purposes, with far-reaching consequences for traffic and communications.

Land was able to be reclaimed through small-scale deforestation and the draining of wetlands. New settlements were built.

The land. For centuries, often right up to our time, the land was cultivated in a sensible way and used – very intensively – for the same purposes. The Tiber floodplain was a carpet of many small fields.

Grain was the most widely grown crop, followed by broad beans for feeding cattle and humans.

Vines grew in a row (*vignale*) around nearly every field.

Olives were rare; if there were any, they appeared as individual trees. The problem was that they could be killed off by the frost when icy north-easterlies were blowing.

On the hillsides, fields alternated with small wooded areas. The forests were used intensively as well.

The farmers always feared sudden floods from the hillside streams, which meant parts of the fertile land could become waterlogged.

The peasants stayed in the forests some distance away for the chestnut harvest.

Cattle were not numerous. A farmer would have two oxen, mainly for ploughing, and he would keep pigs for their pork.

In the legal statutes of Anghiari, goatherds, who were usually not older than 15, were treated very harshly, in order to make sure their animals did no harm. Goats were greatly feared, being viewed with terror, as they ate everything down to the last leaf, especially the young shoots of trees and bushes. For this reason, numbers of goats were limited, and they had to be kept on the periphery.

In Anghiari, some agricultural workers had no land of their own, but earned their living as day labourers.

People struggled to tame the Tiber by building dykes, and presumably the Sovara as well. The land was then cultivated and used as far as the dykes. The peasants had to sign agreements committing them to planting up to 400 trees or poplars, for the protection of the dykes and canals.

Changes in the structure of the land. The abbey appointed a steward (*castaldo*) for the administration of their extensive properties. He ensured everything was working properly, allotted the tenancies and collected the dues. Auditors (*sindaci*) or agents (*procuratori*) from the mother house in Camaldoli monitored his work. The steward had to swear to act faithfully and conscientiously.

Tenancy agreements (*livelli*) had a life of 29 years.

Gradually, in the course of the 13th century, money dues (rents) replaced payment in kind. At the same time, the peasants freed themselves from any kind of service or personal dependency. However, this came at a price – the rental was put up with every new agreement.

The process. The monastery surrendered rights, but raised its financial demands. The peasants gained more freedom, but their economic situation worsened. This was to the advantage of the landowners, above all Camaldoli monastery.

Country seat and village. In view of developments in the towns, the lords were also keen to use the early stages of economic growth in the areas round their fortresses. This was how villages arose.

Many of these villages were named after the noble families that owned them.

Some small localities tried to copy the larger ones in seeking their independence, de facto breaking away from the supremacy of the count of Anghiari. In a legal sense, the count remained the supreme ruler.³⁰

The origin of the country seat. Lorenzo Taglieschi, the historian from Anghiari, rightly claimed in 1614³¹ that it was the proximity of the frontier that prompted the Frankish king Charles (Charlemagne) to build an especially great number of fortified locations (*castelli*) in the area.

He deployed foreigners, mainly Franks, to rule these locations. Taglieschi said this was a reward, or rather plunder, for the services they had rendered in the conquest of Lombard territory. In Taglieschi's day, many of these families were still living on their estates.

He names the following fortified country seats (*castelli*) as examples: Monterchi, Caprese, Chiusi Nuovo, Pianettone, Toppole, Carciano, Montagutello, Montaguto, Monte Santa Maria, Bivignano, Ranco, Pietramala.³²

The lords were warriors who lived on the dues of the tenant farmers.

When the count was replaced by the municipality, the town tried to hold sway over the countryside, as the counts had formerly done.

The nobility lose power. The Ghibellines lost the battle of Campaldino (1289) in Casentino to the Guelphs. Thereupon, many Tuscan towns chased away the nobility and removed them from power.

Arezzo issued a law stating that any nobles who renounced their noble status, and who handed their castles and their lands over to the Republic of Arezzo, would be allowed to become citizens of Arezzo and, as such, run for political office. Many families were resigned to doing so. They were able to comply, as they had already used the emerging money-based economy and collected assets of different kinds, which allowed them to live comfortably in the city. The families included those of the Counts of Anghiari and Montaguto.³³

Max Weber wrote: “It was under the rule of the *popolo grasso* that massive acquisitions by the burghers of landed property from the feudal lords took place, and that in Tuscany the manorial constitution based on compulsory labour services of the peasantry was replaced by the [yield-sharing] *mezzadria* tenancy, an institution peculiarly adapted to the relations between primarily urban landowners, whose only ties to the countryside consist of a *villegiatura* and their rural tenant farmers.”³⁴

Yet the rural population – even the free peasant landowners – remained excluded from all participation in political power.”³⁴

Urbanisation of the rural upper class. Most of the members of the upper class that owned land in the countryside had their main residence in the town. This was mainly because they had been forced to relocate to the town in the 13th century.

Cash shifted from the countryside and fuelled the ascendancy of the town.

The rural upper class acknowledged the advantages of the town: the fortified town wall provided protection for life and limb and worldly goods. Moreover, the pleasures of a more sociable life were enhanced by a highly developed infrastructure.

As a result, the rural upper class became culturally urbanised. This development manifested itself in their town and country houses, which were largely characteristic of town dwellers' houses.

The process narrowed, or ironed out, the differences between the urban and rural upper classes.

The town and its surroundings. For many centuries, living conditions in the town were very different from those in the countryside. Nevertheless, people always rated the surrounding countryside highly, as can be seen at many levels.

On the one hand, the countryside needed the town, because the town gave access to the monetary economy; it was also the source of supply of higher-value manufactured goods.

On the other hand, the town needed the countryside for its own development.

The holy places in the town obtained their income from their rural properties.

A further trend was the transfer of funds by tradesmen earning good money in the town for the acquisition of rural property.

Political groupings were symbolic – specific groups were known as “insiders” and “outsiders”.

The town was largely a location for prestige and symbolic acts.

The countryside only regained its share of prestige with the return of a new feudalism. At the time of the principality, country seats were reconstructed to look impressive (Galbino, Barbolana and others).

Poverty divide. There was a huge poverty divide between town and country. This was one of the many reasons for the country's greater reliance on the town than we find in villages north of the Alps.

System of access. All roads in the surrounding countryside therefore led to the town, in a way that could not be more striking.³⁵ Thus, the system of access also had a symbolic effect.

Even nowadays, there is no road all the way through the Sovara Valley. The road between Pieve di Sovara and the turning to Toppole is unmade and non-asphalted. From then on, no road leads to the south.

Centre of gravity. The first area to be mentioned is usually the west: the Sovara Valley, followed by the Tiber Valley. By this we mean Anghiari gravitated towards the west, which was its interior. The Tiber Valley was orientated towards Sansepolcro.

Historic routes. There was a Roman road that ran through this district from Rimini to Arezzo (Via Ariminensis), passing through Ponte alla Piera. It crossed the River Cefrone by means of a wide and arched bridge.

The historic routes did not follow the valleys, which were a source of danger to life and limb.

A river was unpredictable; it could burst its banks.

Great armies often marched through the valleys.

The military system thus created two types of road: those travelled by large companies of men, and others used by peasants, who thus avoided being murdered by intruders.

The most important route through the territory was the ridgeway that passed through Ponte alla Piera, Anghiari and Castello di Sorci.

How was access obtained to the hillsides of the western Tiber Valley? “In rolling terrain, you will find long, flat roads following the contour lines, linked to short, steep ascents” (Darko Stevic). There used to be a road halfway up the hillside³⁶. It would be possible to reconstruct it.

The *borghi*. For many centuries, a ring of small villages lay outside the gates of the fortified town of Anghiari (they now form part of the urban hodge-podge).

There was once a hamlet on the southern side of present-day Piazza Mercatale. At the height of the Middle Ages, the houses were incorporated in the settlement on the square. We can still see traces of their origins, as they are unevenly aligned.

There used to be another hamlet on Piazzetta della Loggetta, and a third on Via del Terrato (Via Mazzini). Up to about 1900, a fourth lay on the north side of Via Gramsci. The hamlet to the south of Porta Sant'Angelo is easily recognisable even nowadays.

A small settlement cluster of this kind grew up around Santo Stefano church at the foot of the hill. Later, a woad (*guado*) mill was erected a short distance away to the south-east (the valley is famous for its dye), and the small hamlet of l'Infrantoio grew up around it.³⁷

It is likely there was a hamlet at the top of the *stradone*, to the north of the Franciscan church.

In 1614, Lorenz Taglieschi observed the structure of these hamlets: “The roads from Piaggia, from Terrato, from Portulana, from Monteloro, from Cospaia, from Schiatello, from Bozia, and outside the Porta di Sotto, were full of hamlets (*borghi*), which once meant roads outside a town, ... and even if these hamlets were not walled, they were nevertheless like further fortifications, [and people called] this whole conglomeration of dwellings Anghiari.”³⁸

Acquisition of land by town dwellers. In the 15th and, above all, the 16th centuries, wealthy town dwellers secured their assets by buying land from the counts.³⁹

This process began at the height of the Middle Ages and was widespread in the 16th century. Many members of the rural nobility, having lost part of their income – the absolutist state no longer required their military services – had gone bankrupt. These landowners therefore sold part of their property or all of it, depending on their financial needs.

The years between 1560 and 1620 saw the largest number of acquisitions of property by wealthy

town dwellers.

Métayage (mezzadria). The country's structure altered in the 13th century: a monetary system came into being. This enabled owners of properties in the countryside, most of whom had an urban mindset because they also lived in the town, to behave like "capitalists" in the treatment of their tenant farmers. A system of métayage (*mezzadria*) was introduced.

Besides this, there were small properties (*piccola proprietà*) and some larger properties as well.

The system of métayage goes back to the administrative reforms of the Emperor Frederick II (1212-1250). Overnight, the feudal lords (*feudi*) became property owners, being now in a position to sell property as well. Wealthy town dwellers invested their capital in real estate. Those who only owned land could also alter the form of their business activities.

Thus, the mercantile character of the town was transferred to the countryside. The owners became influential in determining the use to which the soil was put. Under the new system, the land had to produce higher yields.

This system, known as "*il lavoro a metà*", did not involve much work on the part of the landowners. It was the most frequent form of contract. The peasant signed a tenancy agreement that, at first sight, looked good. He was able to cultivate his farm as he wished and enjoyed all personal freedoms. However, he had to supply his *padrone* with one half of all his receipts. Put in another way: his farm had to produce twice as much as the peasant family needed to support itself. This frequently did not work, or just about worked, especially in difficult years.

The *padrone* supplied the tenant with the means of production: cattle, seed, fruit trees and implements. If the harvest was poor in any particular year, the *padrone* gave him credit up to a certain limit. However, this credit could also weigh heavily on the tenant. Most peasants piled up debts over many generations.

The system led to a tense relationship between *mezzadro* (the tenant) and his *padrone*.

The French Revolution brought about the abolition of feudal rule, but not the structure of ownership. The peasants' debts remained.

It was not until 1962 that *mezzadria* was abolished by law. It was too late for the agricultural industry. Farmers had emigrated and farms fallen into decay.

Image building. What image did peasants and landowners have at that time? The cultural sphere was dominated by the feudal aristocracy at the beginning of the new millennium, when peasants almost completely disappeared from works of art and literature. The clergy and the military dominated the underdeveloped pictorial world.

When the bourgeoisie became landowners from the 13th century on, their writers gave voice to the new masters' prejudices against the peasants: in satirical writings they were portrayed as being wily and cunning. This was a negative but accurate portrayal of the social system. Every peasant cunningly attempted to deprive his *padrone* – who was squeezing him with demands for a fifty per cent share of his earnings – of as much as possible, above all by hiding things. Demands for honesty were one-sided. The *padrone* depicted his exploitation of the peasant as natural, just and legal. According to his lights, the peasant was a liar and a cheat.⁴⁰

The self-assured peasants, who composed satire in the form of poetry and song, told the opposite tale. Theirs was a protest against misery and suppression.

Ballad singers (cantastorie) travelled from farm to farm singing these songs. One such famous singer was Giuseppe Dell'Omarino di Upacchi.⁴¹

This type of narration is still alive and widespread in our own time. The Tuscan comedian and film actor Roberto Benigni is a master of improvised and critical story-telling in *ottava rima*. Anghiari has its own balladeer: the post office worker Mario Guiducci.

Peasants' revolt. The peasants in the surrounding country revolted in 1495, due to a change in the system of taxation. The landowners were to receive tax relief, but there was to be no reduction in municipal income. The tenant farmers who worked the land were therefore to be liable for half the property levies that the landowners had previously paid.

The farmers were enraged at this injustice, as their situation was miserable enough as it was. They assembled, full of wrath, and armed themselves.

First, they beat up some of the burghers, because the shift in the burden of taxation had been thought up in the town. Then they threatened to set fire to the houses if the statutes concerning the tax were not repealed. It would not have taken much for Anghiari to be taken by storm and plundered.

A number of burghers managed, by using “good words” (*buone parole*), to persuade the peasants to lay down their weapons. Florence then ordered the peasants to be disarmed and sent home, saying their case should be dealt with as a civil matter.

Judges were engaged, whose deliberations ended in the repeal of the new provisions. Things became peaceful once more.⁴²

Economic situation. Both lowland and hill farmers mostly practised subsistence farming.

In 1614, Lorenz Taglieschi described the land as prosperous: there were extensive cultivated areas without forest. He listed the agricultural produce as follows: plenty of grain, wine, oil, cattle, birds, woodland animals, poultry, cheese, chestnuts, fruit of every kind. He named a wide range of respectable landowners: titled persons, doctors, administrators, experts in weapons and in writing.⁴³

He failed to mention any peasants. This shows that there was a deep divide between the owners and those who worked for the owners on the owners' land. Ownership was largely income without performance.

This was based on the growing predominance of some urban professions. These professionals bought up the land, profiting from the monetary economy that had developed in the Middle Ages.

Lorenzo Taglieschi said there was a lot of “fat land” (*terreni grassi*), a wide range of trees, all kinds of vegetables for man and beast, vineyards covering a chain of pleasant hills, yielding the best wine.

There were many opportunities for hunting.

Taglieschi believed it was the best and most fertile land in Tuscany.⁴⁴ He may have been exaggerating a little. He emphasised its usefulness and the pleasure it gave. It was therefore not surprising, he said, that the god Janus lived there in Antiquity.

Export. The only exports were cattle and woad (*guado*). Woad was not produced for local use; it was a much sought-after dye used in textile manufacturing. Florentine textile manufacturers (like the wool guild of Arte della Lana) were the main customers, and this was the reason Florence bought up the neighbouring town of Sansepolcro in 1440.⁴⁵

The value of woad decreased when indigo from Latin America became widely available in the 16th century, but it was still being produced in the Rieti area and in the Upper Tiber Valley right into the 19th century.⁴⁶

From the 14th century onwards, imports of iron were offset by exports of woad.⁴⁷

House types. There were two basic types of house in the country.

The more common type was the one-room, two-storey house. Such houses were often later enlarged

by means of an extension.

The second type was the house-tower, as built by lords in the countryside since the warlike times of the early Middle Ages. Towers had three or four storeys; the downstairs barrel-vaulted room was a horse stable; an indoor staircase led to the living area. The windows were copies of traditional town-house windows. The area under the roof was a pigeon loft. Tower and pigeon loft were closely linked.⁴⁸

This type of house was mainly to be found near a town. It was an imitation of town towers.⁴⁹

Beside these two types, a sub-type emerged: a one-room, two-storey house built on to a tower.

A tower could also be built on to a one-room house.

The one-room house could also acquire another storey, becoming a *casa torre colonica*.

Houses. Mediaeval farmhouses have hardly been preserved, and more or less no pictures remain. One picture from 1566 shows very simple houses in the country.

They were mainly one-room houses, often with a second house attached. The windows were small and set high in the walls. The roof was tent-shaped.

The ground floor served as a cattle stall. The upper storey was reached via a staircase leading to a gallery. There was a single upstairs room: the area in front of the fireplace (*focolare*) was kitchen and living room, dining room and often bedroom as well. Sometimes there were other small rooms too. The house was surrounded by the farmyard (*aia*), with its barns, hen houses and sheds.

The second type – the tower house – had small downstairs windows.

Types of settlement. The way a settlement was built depended on the soil and the use to which it could be put.

The Italian countryside is in the main a valley system (*sistema di valle*) – valleys with small streams, larger streams and rivers. This morphology almost always leads to a hierarchy of settlements, reflected in the types of buildings.

This is significant even to the present day. Migration from the small tributary valleys is much more widespread than in the larger river valleys.

The countryside was cultivated in various ways: mixed cultivation (*cultura promiscua*), a differentiated range of many and various types of cultivation (*policultura*) and monoculture (*monocultura*).

Farmhouses were built on the plain, on the hillside and at the foot of a mountain or hill. At heights of between 100 and 400 metres, farmers typically practised mixed cultivation, with trees and vegetables, under the *mezzadria* system.

Between 400 and 500 metres and 600 and 700 metres, farmers were typically owners of smallholdings, most of which included woods with chestnut trees. Farmhouses stood close together (*abitato concentrato*).

Peasants grew minor cereals (*cereali minori*); later on they grew potatoes (*patate*) and maize (*mais*). They had hay meadows (*prati falcibili*).

Anghiari was surrounded by very many settlements, on hillsides and on the plain.

In the 13th century, a growing number of poor solitary dwelling houses with their own farmyards and perimeter fencing (*chiusura*) appeared in the midst of the countryside. Their owners mostly had fruit farms or vineyards.

Nowadays we find:

- solitary standing farmhouses

- villas housing a farmer and his family
- a villa pure and simple (rare)
- a *fattoria* (farmhouse) converted into a villa

Life on the farm. The farmer's wife baked bread, kept chickens and pigs and dried the chestnuts. The grandmother did the cooking and looked after the children. The children had to learn to do all kinds of work as soon as they were able. The farmer's main work was in the fields. The grandfather did repairs and looked after the barns. Other relations usually lived on the farm too. Even the elderly had to go on working, although they were often in pain. They had to do their best for the survival of the farm.

The farmer and his family locked themselves in the house at night, together with their dogs and animals. Someone had to keep watch.

There were births and deaths on every piece of land.

Everyone had to work, because it required a great deal of effort to feed a family. Throughout the centuries, a peasant family just about managed to survive by working with their hands. They had no chance of creating wealth.

In the aftermath of natural disasters families particularly had to summon up all their strength.

Families, often related, tried to help each other out in emergencies.

The many hamlets. During the course of the early Middle Ages, on land that was somewhat off the main routes, some peasants left their villages and took to building a house near their fields, or on land that had been cleared.⁵⁰ Such houses were scattered across the countryside.⁵¹

It did not take long for a previously solitary farmhouse to develop into a collection of buildings – a house for every branch of the original family, each with its own extension. This was how small hamlets came into being.

These farms were full of lively scenes.

There are many hamlets (*villa*) in the countryside (*contado*) surrounding Anghiari. On the southern hillside flanking the Tiber Valley we find Topo, Casale (Infrantoio in 1614), Tambuzo, Valcelle, Monte, Turicchi, Corzano, San Leo, Mocaio, Cantone, Tubiano, Burazzano di Sopra and Burazzano di Sotto.

On the other – northern – side we find hamlets mostly built on promontories: Campaleone, Sterpeto, Valle, Cicogna, Pieve di Micciano, Motina, Colle, Albiano, Bargiano, Casaccia, Viaio, Cafaggio di Sopra, Cafaggio di Sotto, Palazzo de' Nuti.

An ancient system of paths links these hamlets. People used to traverse the hillsides with their mules.

There are many hillside hamlets on the way to Toppole.⁵²

People did not make a hard-and-fast differentiation between villages and hamlets. Sometimes a village was also referred to as a *villa*; many had their own church.

Villages like this were mostly built near a fortified place, where the villagers could take refuge.

“From Castello di Sorci you can see the following villages on the other side of the Sovara: Pianettola, Toppole, Carciano, Valialla, Bivignano and Castiglioncello, and other villages and castles as well that are occupied and engaged in farming. All of them belong to the commune of Anghiari and the area under the authority of the same *podestà*, and most of them are subject to the ecclesiastical authority of the parish priest of Sovara.” (Lorenzo Taglieschi, 1614).⁵³

Woods and firewood. Fires had to be kept burning in the houses; on Mondays they had to light fires in the home bakeries.

There was therefore a constant fetching of wood. The peasants had the right of “*legna*” – “on Saturday mornings they take their sons with them into the woods for coppicing, which is good for the trees.”

Large quantities of wood were piled up at the entrance to the hamlets in autumn. Tree trunks were bundled together and leant against the forks in the trees.

Nowadays, coppicing is rare. The appearance of the woods has changed, as they are overgrown.

The various types of forestry can be clearly seen near Motena, at the edge of the Tiber Valley. In 1833, there were forests of holm oaks (*quercus ilex*) and also mulberry, olive and chestnut trees on the slopes of the hills. Behind the hamlet, the wood consisted of holm oaks and maquis.

Certain place names indicate that the forest had once been cleared: Ronco, Ranco, Rancaccio (from the Latin verb *runcare*).⁵⁴

Nowadays, 55 per cent of the area run by the Upper Tiber Valley joint municipality consists of forest land.

Urban ways in the countryside. Unlike their counterparts north of the Alps, the landowners had an urban lifestyle; in this part of the world, town and country were alike in many ways. Urban prosperity spread, influencing the mindset of country folk. The better-off tried to copy urban manners.

Thus, even today's travellers are struck by the fact that, in contrast to the situation north of the Alps, buildings in the countryside are similar in character to town houses.

Castello di Montauto. Between Arezzo and Anghiari lies the *contea* of the counts of Barbolani di Montacuto, which was still in existence in the Habsburg-Lorraine era (18th century). On the far side of the River Libbia, in fact a rivulet, we can see the heights where stands the windswept Castello di Montauto. Its location protected it from the disasters inflicted by marauding armies on the march, from their plundering, blackmail, arson and murder.

In the 7th century, a group of Arian Lombards occupied land that included Monte Aureo. One branch of the Galbino family erected a castle (*castello*) on the top of the hill (*monte acuto* = spiky mountain), that is still easily visible from many parts of the area (from the Franciscan monastery garden, from Via del Carmine, from the Sovara Valley), and is therefore omnipresent. The view from the castle across the Sovara and Tiber Valleys is panoramic.

St. Francis of Assisi (c. 1182-1226) spent some time at Montauto in 1224. Count Alberto di Guglielmo di Rainero da Montaguto was a follower of his. The two of them shared their meals in the kitchen. Legend has it that St. Francis left his tunic there, marked with traces of the stigmata he had received at La Verna, and that the count gave him a new one. St. Francis said he would never return, as he was going to die.

The old castle is now in ruins. A new one was built alongside it in the 16th century.

Castello Barbolana was built as an “annexe” to Castello di Montauto. Perched on the ridge of a hill, it can be seen for miles around. Extensions were built in 1536. The result is a paradoxical form: on the one hand, it had ceased to be a fortified working castle, but on the other hand it looked like one, on account of its powerful shape and size.

A little further downhill from the castle, there is a farmhouse belonging to the castello.

Castello Galbino stands more or less hidden in a tributary valley, not far from the Sovara Valley. Like Castello Barbolana, it was one of the residences of the counts of Galbino.

In the Middle Ages, the building looked quite different from what it does now. The southern outside wall still shows some traces of its earlier appearance; one such reminder is a Gothic window.

It was rebuilt in about 1550. The building surfaces were evened up and finished with plaster, making it look larger. Traces are visible of the original building of hewn stone.

The corner towers were originally used for military purposes, but their present-day rôle is aesthetic and emphatic.

On the east side, open loggias are to be found on both upper storeys between the two corner towers. In the middle, there are arches under the roof beams.

A three-storey loggia gives on to the garden.

How was a large building of this kind financed? Wars did not vanish with the coming of the territorial state. On the contrary, taxes were raised. However, there was less destruction than in former centuries, which meant that resources could be accumulated and put into building projects.

There were two farmhouses, one *fattoria* above and one below the castle, in which the administrator had his offices. He collected the dues from the peasant farmers.

There was a tower in the middle of the *fattoria*.

A hamlet for four to six families came to be built around the lower *fattoria*, housing the various branches of one family.

Castello di Pianettone was used by the Camaldolesi order for the administration of the area under the responsibility of the *visconte*.

Toppole lies on a steep promontory. It was once a castle plus village (*castello*), with a church and a few houses.

Verrazzano. This castle lies deep in the Alpe dei Poti. As it was far from any transit routes, armies on the march left it more or less in peace.

Houses stand in line on the ridge, a path before them and a previously worked terrace in front of it. Seven to ten families used to live in these houses. Two hamlets were also built on the ridge.

One of the newer houses in the centre bears the date 1862. It stands for a short period of transition, when agriculture was doing better and there was a brief boom. Disaster came on its heels, however, as large ships brought cheap produce to Italy from overseas and flooded the market.

If we look eastwards from Verrazzano, we can see Monte Santa Maria and, across the Tiber Valley, Città di Castello.

Castello di Montedoglio stands on a ridge of hills bordering the Tiber floodplain to the north. In 1614, Lorenzo Taglieschi described it thus: "Its territory stretches for more than six miles, encompassing all hamlets and their land. All the land is cultivated and, with over 1900 inhabitants, densely populated."⁵⁵

Notes on:

The Middle Ages (6.)

1 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 61.

2 Weber, 1922, 347/348.

3 See also: Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 29.

4 Machiavelli, 1520/1987, 79.

5 On this subject see: Bianconi, 1973.

6 Veri, 2000. Castello di Pietramala.

7 This is how Taglieschi described it. Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 66.

8 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 66.

- 9 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 66.
- 10 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 95.
- 11 Listed by Taglieschi. Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 86/87.
- 12 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 210.
- 13 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 108.
- 14 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 210.
- 15 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 95.
- 16 H. Chaumartin, *Le mal des ardentes et le feu de Saint-Antoine*. Vienne-la-Romaine 1946. Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 9/20. V. Advielle, *Histoire de l'Ordre Hospitalier de Saint Antoine De Viennois*. Paris/Aix 1883. Un symbole franciscain: le Tau. Paris 1977.
- 17 Sant'Agostino was probably originally a chapel. The legend of Thomas Becket's visit to Italy has now been disproved. According to the legend, Abbot Rolando dei Conti di Montedoglio from nearby San Bartolomeo allowed the fugitive Thomas Becket to stay in the abbey and a dwelling belonging to it. – Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 12/13 also refute the suggestion that the Antonites and Augustinian Canons merged in 1188 (the date mentioned by Taglieschi) – a merger brought about by the Augustinian Giovanni Bono da Mantova.
- 18 It is no coincidence that, at a later date, Martin Luther became an Augustinian monk. The Reformation was supported by many in this order.
- 19 See Salmi, 1961, 191/192. Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 12/13.
- 20 Francesco d'Assisi, 1982. Frugoni, 1993. Krüger, 1992.
- 21 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 69.
- 22 St. Anthony of Padua (born in Lisbon c. 1195; died in Padua 1231), initially an Augustinian monk, then a Franciscan. He was the first Franciscan to be entrusted by St. Francis with the task of teaching theology. His first teaching post was with the friars in Bologna. He travelled as a preacher through Italy and the south of France. He was canonised only one year after his death. In some places, parents place their children under his protection by giving grain or bread to the poor.
- 23 Records concerning the Monte Pio d'Anghiari have been kept in the Municipal Archives since 1633 (Inventario No. 1031 ff.).
- 24 Taglieschi, 1991, 42.
- 25 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 104.
- 26 Bartolomei, 1992, 21.
- 27 Ascani, 1973, 244/245. – Plans for a new building meant the painting of the Madonna dell'ospedale de' Bigliaffi (ospedale di S. Maria della Misericordia, also known as S. Giovanni) was moved to S. Antonio's church in 1621.
- 28 Babbini/Benedetti, 1987, 18/20.
- 29 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 151/152.
- 30 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 49. He understood these things well.
- 31 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 49.
- 32 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 49. He understood these things well.
- 33 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 77.
- 34 Weber, 1922, 573.
- 35 Ansgar Uwe Lenser, in: Einsele/Günter/Peterk/Stevcic, 1995, illustrations on pp. 42 and 43.
- 36 Stevcic, 1995/237/242.
- 37 Bartolomei, 1992, 28.
- 38 "La strada della Piaggia, quella del Terrato, della Portulana, di Montoloro, di Cospaia, do Schiatello, della Bozia e, fuori della porta di Sotto, si riempirono di borghi, che anticamente voleva dire strada fuori di città , ... e, se bene questi borghi non avevano mura, con tutto ciò, avevano similitudine di un altro castello e si domandò tutta quaesta moltitudine di habitatione, Anghiari" (Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 41/42).
- 39 Around 1450, Florentine families had about 32,000 estates and over 800 villas.
- 40 Cf. Braudel, *The Wheels of Commerce* (in German: Handel, 1990, 315/316).
- 41 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 74/75.
- 42 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 222.
- 43 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 43.
- 44 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 44.
- 45 The family of Piero della Francesca were forestry managers and timber traders there. See: Polcri, 1988, 39/54.
- 46 Zuccagni Orlandini, 1832, tav. XIX.

- 47 Amintore Fanfani, 1935.
- 48 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 66. “Ai cittadini fu concesso il poter far la torre alle case loro, che era gran privilegio, le quali poi furono deroccate e ridotte in colombaie.”
- 49 Di Pietro, in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1972, XXXVI.
- 50 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 33.
- 51 Tanaglia, 1400. Sereni, 1979. Gradi, 1992, 47/52.
- 52 Ansgar Uwe Lenser, in. Einsele/Günter/Peterk/Stevcic, 1995; illustrations on pp.50/51.
- 53 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 43.
- 54 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 41/42. Earliest mention 1290. – Tanaglia, 1400.
- 55 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 42/43.

7. Transition to the Florentine Republic

A small territory in difficulties

Large territories were taking shape: Florence, Milan, Venice, the Papal States and Naples. They were by nature aggressive.

In the face of such aggression, the situation in the smaller states became more and more difficult. Florence was encircling Anghiari. Although the Milanese Visconti supported the town rulers of Anghiari – the Tarlati brothers Bartolomeo and Marco – they had their own strategic reasons for using Anghiari.

Initially, the Tarlati brothers had sought a political alliance nearer home, first in Perugia, then in Siena (1384). However, they had less and less success in forging alliances of this kind.

In many places it became obvious that minor territories would be unable to protect themselves against the greed of the larger ones. A ruler in a small territory would therefore fall into the arms of a greater power – of his own accord. The first to do this here was Marco di Galeotto, the lord of Castello di Sorci, two miles from Anghiari. In 1358, he placed himself under the protection of the Republic of Florence, receiving 6000 gold florins in return.¹

Anghiari's position weakened.² The Florentines were unwilling to have a Milanese protectorate on their doorstep, so they laid siege to the castle of Pietramala, the Tarlati brothers' headquarters between Anghiari and Arezzo.

Migrants from Anghiari living in Florence and the inhabitants of Anghiari pulled strings in secret. The matter was debated on the piazza.

Two factions emerged: “insiders” (*dentro*) and “outsiders” (*fuori*). The “inside” faction tended to be Ghibelline, and to side with the town rulers. The “outsiders” were more likely to be Guelphs, and in favour of Florence. Fierce conflicts arose between the two factions.

The historian Lorenzo Taglieschi tells us these parties were still around in 1614.

Decision. Once Florence had finally taken possession of Arezzo, it seemed impossible for Anghiari to assert itself against Florentine power.

Bartolomeo Tarlati therefore decided to surrender to Florence of his own free will, rather than lose everything. In a first step, he declared that some of his castles now belonged to Arezzo, which made them Florentine.

He then went to Florence to negotiate. While he was there, rebels in Anghiari seized the town, and

Bartolomeo's brother, Marco Tarlati, fled to Urbino.

This is a typical example of the downfall of minor territorial lords.

In Anghiari, people no longer nurtured an illusion of freedom. They pragmatically wished to place themselves under Florentine protection under honourable conditions – for good.

On 9th June 1385, the town bell summoned the townsmen to the usual meeting place, the church of Sant'Agostino,³ to a meeting of the “General Council of Twelve Good Men” (*Generale Consiglio de Dodici Buon' Huomini*) and the “60 Good Men” (*Consiglio dei Sessanta Boni Viri*), 30 of whom were from the town and the other 30 from the countryside (*huomini della terra e del contado*).⁴ The men were heads of families, both conservatively minded Ghibellines and supporters of the popular movement of the Guelphs. The *priori* (*priori di comunità e di credenza*) were also present – they formed a small council of acknowledged experts. The *vicario*, Bartolomeo di Gorello d'Arezzo, a famous poet, represented the Tarlati brothers, who had already been driven from the town.

The delegates established which factions were present. In accordance with these groupings, they appointed two mayors to appear as *sindaco* and representative (*procurator*) before the Florentine *priori* and the Gonfalonier. They were to apply for voluntary subordination to mighty Florence.

They did this six days later, on 15th June, in the hall of the Florentine Republic.

The Tarlati town rulers had to relinquish the following castles: Anghiari, Gaenna, Pianettolle, Montagutello, Carciano, Valialla and Ranco, and the fortresses Pantaneto and Elci as well.⁵

The Guelph *priori* of Arezzo ordered the castle of the Ghibelline Tarlati in Arezzo to be razed to the ground, eradicating even the shadow and physiognomy of the old castle (“*ita quod nulla effigies castri ibi remaneat*”).⁶

Nevertheless, Florence allowed the remaining branch of the family to keep four hamlets that were their property. In the following years, they remained loyal to Florence, residing at their family seat of Castello Montanina.⁷

Florence accepted Anghiari's decision and behaved generously.⁸ The municipality was allowed to keep all taxes (*gabella*) collected on wine, contracts, fatstock and piazzas; the exceptions were tolls and the tax on salt.

No taxes were raised on poultry, eggs, cheese, wood, melons, pears, apples and other fruit, citrus fruits, oil, barley, pulses and other foodstuffs. There was no taxing of grain, broad beans, oats and other things either. No dues were paid on the sale of animals, apart from horses and mules. The only dues paid on fatstock were for slaughtering.

Florence did claim a tax (*gabella*) on the import, export and transit of goods. A customs house used to stand on the long, straight road next to the Mercatale; the building now houses the police station and library. Fairs were exempted from customs duties.

Anghiari had to re-write its statutes. It was free to make its own decisions, providing they did not jeopardise the honour of Florence. However, the statutes only came into force once Florence had authorised them. Florence was able to delete, amend and revoke them.

In Anghiari, the residence of the *podestà* was reconstructed.

On the morning of the feast day of St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of Florence, Anghiari had to pay the following dues: a wax candle and the sum of 300 florins, 150 florins being the six-month salary paid to the ruler empowered by Florence, who now bore the title of *podestà*. Anghiari itself became a “*podesteria*”.

The agreement ended by stating that Anghiari and its inhabitants were to enjoy the same favours as

loyal Florentines, and be treated in the same amicable way.

Vicariato. Florence obliged by declaring the entire area to be a *vicariato*, and the *podestà* to be a *vicario* (deputy).⁹

Montauto, Monterchi and Montedoglio also belonged to the *vicariato*, which covered far more territory than the surrounding *contado* and included Caprese (Michelangelo), Pieve Santo Stefano and part of the eastern Casentino.

On taking office, the new *vicario* was extremely rigorous in suppressing any rebellion against subjugation to Florence. When interrogating suspects, he applied the severest forms of torture. The death penalty was also imposed, although we do not know the names of those condemned to death. Above all, his government, which was rooted in the popular movement, turned against the magnates, who were perceived to be arrogant.

Social climbers. Following the transfer of power to Florence in 1385, new families rose from the ranks. In the course of time, they and the old families united, mostly through marriage.

Florentine territory enlarged. In 1440, Pope Eugene IV sold the neighbouring town of Sansepolcro to Florence for 22,000 florins. Florence was mainly interested in its production of woad. The town remained under its own administration.

The administration and its headquarters: the palace of the *vicario*

Supreme rule and self-government. The *vicario* played a part in discharging supreme rule, but under his rule the town and its surrounding territory were largely self-governed.

Administration of the *vicariato*. When Anghiari passed to Florence in 1385, its administration immediately underwent a process of clarification and development.

An administrative office (*podesteria*) was also set up in Chiusi la Verna, Caprese and Pieve Santo Stefano. Thus, the surrounding area moved somewhat closer to headquarters, and its considerable autonomy was qualified.

The *vicario* was always a citizen of Florence, appointed by the Florentine *magistrato delle tratte* not by the drawing of lots (*tratte*) but at the discretion (*per grazia*) of the appointing body.¹⁰

The *vicario* had a staff of two officers, one being the chancellor (*cancelliere*), who had to be a *dottore pisano*, meaning he was a graduate of Pisa University and bore the title of judge. The other was a notary (*notaio de'malefiti*), who also had to adjudicate civil matters.

Two clerks were employed in the *vicario's* office, and six other employees together with their superior were engaged in cleaning the town hall, policing the court and guarding prisoners. Two of them were grooms (*cavallari*) and jacks-of-all-trades.

The *vicario* was careful to ensure that his employees were, like him, Guelph party members.

In 1386, the old offices were supplemented by some new ones.¹¹ This shows that the system of infrastructure and its administration were further developed in the Republic of Florence than in Anghiari.

The new offices were: inspectors of fats (*grascieri*) and plants (*viali*); assessors (*stimatori del comune*); workers at San Martino Hospital; counsellors (*sindici*) for the *vicario*; auditors to inspect the *vicariato's* revenue and expenditure (*soprasindici dell' entrate e uscite*); chamberlains.

This bureaucratic machinery was still unchanged in Lorenzo Taglieschi's days (1614).

Anghiari changed its coat of arms, its ritual and identification sign (a logo of sorts), to identify it

more strongly with the Guelph cause.

Max Weber wrote that size determined the options. Direct democracy was only possible in small groups – and “in the absence of qualitative functions which can only be handled by professional specialists. Where such a group of professional specialists is present, no matter how strongly the attempt is made to keep them in a dependent position, the seeds of bureaucratisation are present”.¹²

The vicarios's palace. The *vicario* had his headquarters in the *castello*, which had always been an area dedicated to ritual – it had been the temple to Janus in Antiquity – but had been barbarically destroyed. In about 640, the long east (left-hand) side of the building had been taken over by a Benedictine convent. The present-day square was their cloisters, and their church was built on the remains of the temple of Janus. It now served as the place for administrative ritual ceremonies.

After 1339, Perugia had begun to establish an administrative building in one of the wings; it was the base for every Tarlati *vicario*. The complex was enlarged.¹³ A number of nearby houses were purchased.

Civilian appearance. Political change and the new status of the building were reflected in its appearance. It was visible evidence that Florence had transferred its democratic tradition – whereby the town hall was a symbol of the popular movement – to Anghiari. The building was no longer a military fortress, but looked thoroughly civilian. Its civilian aspect was also emphasised by the fact that the old fort (*cassero*) to its rear – was no longer in use.

The empty space that is now Piazza del Popolo was once (until 1900) a walled, square-like courtyard in the tradition of the former convent cloisters.¹⁴

The form of the complex is also symbolic – it no longer conformed to the type of town hall that looked like a country castle in an urban setting (like in Florence and Siena), but took its cue from houses owned by rich Florentine burghers.

Coats of arms. The holders of the office of *vicario* left their coats of arms on the façade of the palace.¹⁵ The Florentine *signoria* always appointed their town “directors” for a very brief tour of duty, in order to prevent the office from becoming autonomous.

The elegant, pale ochre walls are nowadays studded with coats of arms, in stone and painted. Once his 12-month tour of duty ended, each head of the administration – *podestà* – was allowed to display his person symbolically and for all eternity in the form of his family coat of arms.

A family coat of arms demonstrates the significance of family ties. Such traditions regarding the texture of the social fabric have hardly changed since time immemorial.

In the hall, the entrance to the east wing bears an inscription with the coats of arms of four *vicarios* with the dates 1402, 1453, 1485 and 1488.

Bench. There is a long bench in the piazza, next to the gateway, for people to sit on.

Well. In 1394, a well was dug in the courtyard, in front of the picture of the Madonna. In 1462, it was reconstructed to form a cistern (*vasca cisterna*).¹⁶

Loggia. It is likely that there was once a covered hall, or loggia, in front of the right-hand side of the *vicario's* palace.

Hall. There is a large hall on the ground floor, a loggia which was apparently the former court room. It would be interesting to find out why the arcades were not open to the outside world, as they were in many town halls.

Archives. Documents are the basis of any legal system. Only those who had a piece of parchment with a seal had certain rights. The prevailing mode of thought was that the law was something tangible.

Documents had to be kept safe, as rights would lapse if they were stolen. The municipality therefore placed the archives near the staircase in rooms with low ceilings, well secured with heavy doors and locks.

Courtroom. The hall was the courtroom where the court sat on certain days.

Civil law was keyed to arbitration, to achieving a settlement between the parties in dispute.

Penal law was based on deterrence. Nevertheless, the most common form of punishment was a fine, which was also a form of deterrent in a monetary economy.¹⁷ The authorities were the main beneficiary, as they were able to fund projects out of the income from fines.

A harsher punishment was public humiliation at the pillory (*berlina*) on the main square.

There were only rare cases of irreversible physical punishment in Central Italy, such as cutting off a hand, or piercing or chopping off a tongue.

Where judges often sentenced criminals to death in other countries, here they usually banished them. Mercy was frequently shown after several years of banishment, and the person was allowed to return, mostly in response to pleas from his relatives and friends.

The most severe, but very rare, punishment was death by hanging on the gallows (*forca*). Well-born murderers nearly always avoided this fate. The poor were more likely to be condemned to death.

Those who received the harshest punishments nearly always had their property confiscated.

The painting of Justitia. Complex processes like the judicial system find their expression in abbreviated, easily memorable form: in symbols. Justitia is depicted as a woman with a stern gaze.

Why is she female?

The picture, probably painted about 1460 by master Antonio of Anghiari¹⁸, is to be found in a shallow round niche topped by an arch. Both these forms have conventionally been used since the days of Antiquity to depict dignity.

Justitia bears the symbols of court proceedings. The Florentine lion (*Marzocco*) stands for the authority from which the court received its mandate; a sociologist would say: the regulatory authority. The sword demonstrates that this function of the state had power to enforce its verdict. The scales imply that the court had to interpret the law in the same way for all people. We may wonder if this was always the case.

The crucifix (now in the council chamber) also bolstered the court's authority to administer justice.

Prison (*carceri; segrete*). The prison was linked to the court, being located behind the south rear wall of the courtroom. Prisoners inscribed their laments on its interior walls.

What human and social dramas were played out there?

Torture chamber. One of the rooms was once used as a torture chamber.¹⁹ Torture was used to extract confessions, and for centuries people thought this was quite normal. Torture by rope (*tormento della fune*) was notorious: a rope was placed under the armpits of the person under interrogation, who was then raised by the rope and suddenly dropped. This was excruciatingly painful and often had long-term effects on a person's health.

The chapel and its façade with the Madonna and saints are an indication of how the state authority viewed itself, and of its belief in the sacred nature of its foundations. The chapel served to ritualise many processes of the municipal body politic.

Rationalism and magic. Whatever happened, at one level people were extremely rational – in those days rational thinking was more highly developed in this region than in other parts of the world – but at another level they were conscious of the fact that everything is also tinged with uncertainty.

People developed a kind of wily wisdom, not only because they had to, but also for rational reasons. They thought it could do no harm to use magic in order to come to an arrangement with the powers of uncertainty.

This curious relationship between rational thinking and magic had an inner dialectic. Greater self awareness, which enabled people to experience the concrete world in an increasingly profane way, did not lead to a parallel reduction in things magical. This synthesis of the sacred and the profane is typical of Central Italy.

Those who had been condemned to death spent their final night in the chapel. On 30th June 1582, Grappino di Biagio da Ortignano, was hung for a crime with the crossbow; on 2nd August 1630 Giuseppe da Cortona was hung for robbery and sexual offences; on 6th August 1748 Giuseppe Nardi Serpentini da Pieve Santo Stefano was hung for theft; and on 24th August 1756 Faustina Santioni da Monterchi was hung for infanticide.

Paintings in the chapel (*Capella del Tribunale*) are described below.

Hall. People had to climb the stairs to reach the great hall on the first floor, where meetings and banquets were held.

The room is a typical hall built in the tradition of Antiquity, retained as a matter of course in Tuscan houses and churches.

Occasionally, it has been used as a theatre.

A balcony was an ancient sign of grandeur. It was used by persons appearing before the populace to make announcements, or for festivals.

The *vicario's* room. The *vicario* once resided in a spacious room next to the council chamber. It is now the mayor's room.

What looked like expensive textiles were hanging on the walls. Decorations of this kind, reflecting wealth and grandeur, were in fact unaffordable, however, so they used a cheaper method – painting. This enabled them to afford more or less all the riches of the world. The *vicarios'* coats of arms fitted conveniently inside the huitfoils.

Chancellery (*cancellaria*). The chancellery building stood opposite the *vicario's* palace.

The gallows. It was not until 1571, in the context of a reform of public services, that the *vicario* Filippo Spina turned the gallows into a fixed construction.

It was set up at the place where the Battle of Anghiari was fought on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul in 1440. Anyone walking to Anghiari from the east will come across a chapel (1440) commemorating the event.²⁰

Why is it in such an exposed place? Presumably as a deterrent.

In fact, hangings were rare.

The following report is from the year 1630: the hangman was despatched by the Florentine Council of Eight. The condemned man was accompanied by thirty members of the *compagnia nera*, Capuchin friars and *frati zoccolanti*. It was considered heroic for a man to face death courageously.

The condemned man hung on the gallows for six hours, after which the brothers of the *compagnia nera* took his body down and carried it, covered with a cloth, to a room in the abbey. They burnt the hangman's rope over the main entrance.

The entire hanging was paid for by the municipality.

All the townsfolk, especially the women, were dreadfully upset by it. It was reported that they had not seen the likes since the death of Ninina, thirty years earlier.²¹

In 1630, Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote: “The hangman arrived yesterday on the orders of the balia [in Florence], to hang the stonemason Giuseppe da Cortona for robbery and sexual offences. He pleaded guilty, without being tortured, to many crimes. They included robbery of grain, forcing open a strongbox in the house of Lorenzo Angolieri, where he was supposed to be working, and stealing seven *scudi*, two pairs of earrings and a linen sheet from it.” On the following morning, a group of workmen erected the gallows. The stonemason was led by a group of 30 policemen, accompanied by the black confraternity, and by Capuchin and discalceate friars. It was a popular spectacle. He hung on the gallows for six hours before he was taken down. This was the first hanging for a period of thirty years.

The gallows was dismantled in 1787.

The town was largely self-governing

Municipal constitution (*statuti*). In 1387, in the presence of the *vicario*, the Council of One Hundred (*Consiglio dei Cento*) elected six experienced men to draft new statutes. The amended statutes were very different from the old ones.

Office holders were as follows: the four existing *priori* were joined by two others. As in Florence, there was a *Capitano del Popolo* (captain of the Guelph party), the other was the standard bearer, the *Gonfaloniere*.

At any one time, half the *priori* were to come from the “insiders” party, and the other half from the “outsiders”.

They were to hold office for three months, which meant no-one could do harm.

All offices holders were chosen by lot, so there were no elections. Populism became a problem at other levels.

As the number of offices had increased, there was a greater number of families whose names were in the bag of lots.

Conflicts. Lorenzo Taglieschi mentions the formation of strong factions and many disputes between families that had formed their own factions.

Taglieschi said no-one wanted to be a loser and inferior to the others. The disputing parties often had recourse to weapons, using them for murder and manslaughter.

Factions. Around 1415, believing they were descended from the aristocracy of Antiquity, the townsfolk inside the fortress area had the feeling they were superior to “outsider” folk.

Florence mediated and widened the procedure for choosing by lots. It also decreed that any person might register with one or the other party without let or hindrance.

The Grand Council (*general consiglio*) gave its consent.

The principle of “conciliation” is underpinned by equality.

Regulation and conflicting interests

Problems of democracy. How was Giorgio to be tamed? Giorgio, of course, was a wild fellow, sometimes very good, but sometimes very naughty. The regulatory institutions put checks on him, drew red lines, used both the stick and the carrot. In villages, this institution tended to be the church rather than the mayor. From a historical point of view, the superstructure we know as the state was set up at a very late stage, not until the process of industrialisation was well under way, and with the help of brain

washing performed by the mass media.

The peasants were therefore more anarchic in their behaviour than town dwellers. They felt, in their crafty way, more independent. Their ways were similar to those of present-day farmers in the Abruzzo region, or the Alps.

Means of regulation. The institution that bound a community together and regulated the lives of individuals had evolved to a far greater degree in the town than in the villages.

The places people met, the piazzas, allowed those in control to keep an eye on them with a minimum of effort.

At the same time, it was more likely that in some cases the people would rally to form an opposition.

Concessions were made, the populace was allowed to have its say, a degree of self-government was introduced – all this had a psychological effect. As a result, rules were in part no longer imposed from above, but the townspeople regulated themselves. When democracy is highly developed, this self-regulation can be far reaching.

Achieving the right balance. Such matters are complex and hard to control. They demand great flexibility on the part of persons in key positions who, having to juggle the various interests, need to develop the skills of a mediator. Present-day politicians, and even administrators, are required to have such skills.

Achieving this synthesis is a balancing act; the person in a key position will have ambivalent feelings. If he leans a little too far in one direction, the result can be back-slapping, sleaze, corruption and tricks used to deny justice to weaker groups. Too far in the other direction, and he quickly loses his consensus and becomes isolated, which can end in his fall from power.

The ancient Romans had years of experience with such behaviour patterns in their cities. The means to deal with them have been around for centuries: short terms of office and the appointment of outsiders to certain positions.

Such means were not entirely forgotten, neither in the era of late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, nor in times of foreign rule with other regulatory systems. One reason for this was presumably the fact that no foreign occupation of Italy was complete. The occupiers were small in number and not powerful enough to ignore the native regulatory system.

The complex balance of power up to the 16th century – up to the era of absolutism – had its roots in the fact that no tools had been developed that were rigorous enough to allow the formation of a system for wielding absolute power.

Taxes and dues

Taxes. Around 1100, Count Bernardino ordered the imposition of a tax on property owned by town dwellers outside the town walls, to raise revenue for municipal expenditure.²³

In 1310, the Grand Council decided that those without roots in Anghiari or the surrounding countryside, and who lived there away from their family, were deemed foreigners and had to pay a tax (*gravezza*).

A market tax (*gabella*) was the most important levy as, for many years, it was almost the only source of revenue for the public purse. It was usually paid once the person liable had passed the town gates.

Customs. A property opposite the fountain in the Mercatale fold of the hill was purchased in 1386 for the establishment of a customs house (Via Matteotti).²⁴

When crossing the frontier at the village of San Leo, travellers had to pay customs duty at the *dogana*. This was announced on a stone tablet bearing the words: QUI SI PAGA LA GABELLA. It can be seen in the Anghiari museum in Palazzo Taglieschi.

Taxes on property and assets (*catasto*). In the 1420s, the Republic of Florence had run out of funds, owing to long wars all over Italy. Public debt was unusually high, the market tax (*gabella*) could not be increased any further.

Florence was therefore looking for ways to raise revenue in order to pay its army. The situation was difficult, as it risked social conflict. People could not be burdened with higher living costs, which meant existing taxes could not be increased. In 1427, it found a way out that was to have long-lasting consequences for the history of taxation.

The basic idea was that the wealthy should bear the tax burden, which was seen to be fair. In future, the tax base was to be comprehensive, and was to comprise assets that had previously not been liable to taxation. This latter form of taxation was a landed property tax, or *catasto*.²⁵

A law was passed to make land and income the tax base. Every person was obliged to list his fields of arable and grazing land, houses, workshops, cattle, draught animals and beasts of burden, goods and implements, valuables and money, receivables and income from rents.²⁶

The “*miserabili*” were given the option of voluntarily paying a poll tax. Non-taxpayers were not entitled to hold office or seek justice in a court of law.²⁷

When the *signoria* in Florence demanded this of their dependent cities too, nearly all of them demonstrated their displeasure by trying to block the measure. Many wealthy persons would rather go to prison rather than declare their worldly possessions. This was the reason for an uprising in Volterra.²⁸

Tax on cattle markets. In 1510, the Piazza del Mercatale was paved with bricks, funded by a tax (*gabella*) on cattle crossing the piazza.²⁹

Fines. In 1513, the peasant farmers of the *corte* di Montaguto de' Barbolani had to build a loggia or put a roof on the house in Borgo Mannini. Fines imposed in two court cases covered the expenses.³⁰

Tax to fund repairs after war damage. When bridges, roads and ditches were damaged as a result of war in 1440, the *priori* imposed taxes on the clerics to cover one half of the expenses.³¹

Fortress tax. In 1440, the Council decided to improve the ring of walls and fund the improvements by means of a tax levied for a period of 15 years.³²

When Valialla voluntarily joined Anghiari – and thus Florence – in the year 1453, the inhabitants were obliged to supply Anghiari with timber, stones (*sassi*), large blocks (*pietri*), lime-based mortar (*calzina*) and sand (*rena*), even though the peasants of Valialla did not have any houses in the fortress.³³

War tax. In 1467, Florence imposed a tax – a war loan (*prestanza*) – throughout the state. The wealthiest citizens had to pay almost double, but their influence was so great in comparison with the less well off, that they were able to get their money back.³⁴

Under the threat of war, the fortress was repaired in 1467. Battlements were added to the Porta di Sotto and Porta Fiorentina. The drawbridge was furnished with chains. They were funded in part by the town treasury, and in part out of fines imposed and collected by the *vicario*.³⁵ At the same time, the Republic of Florence ordered Countess Orlandina to improve the fortifications of Montedoglio Castle, merely sending ammunition and weapons in return.³⁶

A tax was created in 1502 to repair the damage caused by war.³⁷

In 1512, a new tax was levied to pay for the army, in the wake of the seizure of power by the Medici³⁸

In 1515, Florence imposed first one war tax on the population, and then another.

Giusti di Niccolò protested that the Florentines should not make their peoples pay for an unjust war like the campaign waged against Urbino. In response, he was summoned to Florence. He refused to go, and a fine of 200 florins was imposed on him. His brother Giovanni was locked up until the entire sum had been paid to Florence.

In 1517, the third war tax was levied.³⁹

As a rule, taxes (*gravezze*) like the tax on bread (1521) were imposed on the population to finance the billeting of soldiers.

This was hotly debated.⁴⁰

In 1530, soon after the Medici seized power, a tax was immediately imposed on the whole state. Anghiari was obliged to raise 497 bushels (*staio*) of grain and 548 lire within a period of ten days. As they were unable to do so at such short notice, the town sent two envoys to Florence, who managed to negotiate payment by instalment over a period of five years.⁴¹

Duke Cosimo de' Medici exhausted both town and country with taxes for the military. In 1542, he levied a new and particularly harsh tax called the *soventione*. Every location had to provide a certain sum. The *vicario* and an elected commission had the unenviable job of taxing those who were liable in as fair a way as possible.⁴² The result was innumerable debates and conflicts.

Anghiari had to pay an annual tax to finance the construction of the fortress the Duke was having built in Sasso di Simone in the High Apennines.⁴³

Wars constituted the greatest tax burden for the population. Taxation reached its peak under Duke Cosimo de' Medici.⁴⁴

In 1566, a new tax (*gravezza*) was introduced.

Special taxes. After Santo Spirito church in Florence went up in flames in 1463, during a feast in honour of Duke Giovanni Galeazzo of Milan, a tax was imposed throughout the years of reconstruction on all artisans and merchants in the entire republic. Anghiari had to contribute 25 florins a year.⁴⁵

Taxes for a show. The high nobility looked askance at the Medici, who, in order to gain prestige, employed the skills and artistry of all the craftsmen in Florence for the celebration of a uniquely opulent ducal wedding in 1566. This huge and splendid spectacle gained immediate fame, but had to be financed by means of a country-wide special tax.

In Anghiari, the Taglieschi, Musetti and Testi families, whose tax burden was particularly great, refused to pay, so the tax inspector (*esattore*) Vicenzo Chieli had them arrested. They were fined an extra quarter as a punishment.⁴⁶

Tax rivalry. Taxes in Florence were even higher than in Anghiari, so Mazzone di Gregorio, a mercenary leader who had settled in Florence, applied to the Republic to allow him to register his residence in Anghiari, his native town. Anghiari bestowed its highest honours on him for this.⁴⁷

Government bonds. The Republic needed money in 1481, and raised it in the form of a bond offering. This enabled the rich to make a fortune. In Anghiari, Mazzone di Gregorio, Antonio di Migliaio, Giovanni Batista di Veriano Angelieri and Folco di Cristofano subscribed 300 florins each.⁴⁸ This is an indication of how wealthy some of the families were.

Taxation strategy. In 1614, Lorenzo Taglieschi was extremely critical of the prince's taxation strategy. Initially, Anghiari had to pay "for one pair of oxen in the service of the masons' lodge at

Florence Cathedral. They were used for transporting tree trunks from the source of the Arno on Mount Falterona down to the River Arno". This was typical of the princes – they introduced taxes and promptly increased them. In the end, the municipality had to pay for eight pair of oxen.⁴⁹ The princes regularly demanded higher and higher taxes of their overburdened subjects.⁵⁰

Accommodation expenses. It had always been the case that when the *visconte* and *podestà* were visiting small localities in the surrounding area, they had to be given accommodation paid for by the local authorities.⁵¹

When Federico, lord of Urbino, together with his wife Batista and Alessandro Sforza, travelled to La Verna for the Feast of the Stigmata, they were given hospitality paid for by their hosts, the mercenary leaders Mazzone di Gregorio and Francesco Prospero. The town had to pay the considerable expenses incurred by their trains of followers.⁵²

In 1536, Duke Alessandro de' Medici visited Anghiari during his travels in the state. The town paid his expenses.⁵³

Notes on:

Transition to the Florentine Republic (7.)

- 1 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 106.
- 2 For more information on the following, see Taglieschi 1991/1614, 116/117.
- 3 Lorenzo Taglieschi: "Il 9 giugno 1385 nella Chiesa di S. Agostino, al suono della campana, fu congregata il General Consiglio de'dodici buon homini, dei Priori di Comunità e di presenza di Ser Bartolomeo di Ser Gorella d'Arezzo, Vicario d'Anghiari, fu fatta sottomissione a Fiorentina della Terra d'Anghiari, della Rocca e Cassero, con le Capitolazioni che si veggono nel libro rosso di Cancelleria per il buon Governo ..." (quoted in Babbini, undated, 5).
- 4 On this subject see: Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 119/120. Ascani, 1973, 223.
- 5 Ascani, 1973, 199/200.
- 6 Resolution of the priors of the city of Arezzo (Provisiones Communis Aretii, volume 1, c. 9), quoted in Ascani 1973, 223/228.
- 7 Ascani, 1973, 202.
- 8 For details on the following see Ascani 1973, 223/228.
- 9 Benigni, 1988, 151/163. See Fanfani, 1983, 12/24, on the subject of the vicariato. – Fasano Guarini, 1991. – Barbolani di Montauto, 1983, 47/55.
- 10 Babbini, 1989, 5. This refers to the administration of the procedure of drawing lots to determine the names of successful candidates. Tratta is the drawing of names written on slips of paper from a bag.
- 11
- 12 Weber, 1922, 170.
- 13 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 120. In 1614, Taglieschi commented on the reconstruction saying, "che poi da' Fiorentini fu ridotto in più comoda forma" (p. 95). – Babbini, 1989. – On the subject of town halls in Tuscany: Rodolico/Marchini, 1962. – Paul, 1963. – Tabarelli, 1978. – Bevere, 1992. – F. Cardini/S. Ravelli, Palazzi pubblici di Toscana. I centri minori. Firenze 1983.
- 14 Franceschini, 1975, Illustration 22 (1764).
- 15 The old plaster was removed and new plaster applied in 1963.
- 16 Babbini, 1989, 29/30: drawings of the cistern by Loris Babbini.
- 17 For convictions and punishments see Babbini, 1989, 47/70. Filza di quaderni di condanne dal 1387 al 1419. Comune di Anghiari, Archivo storico, A. S. C. – filza no. 28 Invent. 19/10/1959.
- 18 Babbini, 1989, 37.
- 19 Babbini, 1989, 48, 49. For torture in Florence see Herzfelde, 1978, 55.
- 20 Babbini, 1989, 48, 71. Bartolomei, 1992, 53/55.
- 21 Babbini, 1989, 48, 71/72. There are inventories of the torture chamber.
- 22 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 153.

- 23 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 54.
- 24 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 122.
- 25 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 159. Ascani, 1973, 253.
- 26 Herzfelde, 1978, 4/5, 52/53, 56.
- 27 Herzfelde, 1978, 5.
- 28 Ascani, 1973, 253.
- 29 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 215.
- 30 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 236.
- 31 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 178.
- 32 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 189.
- 33 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 199.
- 34 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 204.
- 35 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 205.
- 36 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 205.
- 37 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 228.
- 38 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 235.
- 39 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 238, 244. For taxes at the time of the plague, see p. 251.
- 40 Taglieschi, 1991/1614.
- 41 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 265.
- 42 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 300.
- 43 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 327.
- 44 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 316.
- 45 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 202.
- 46 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 326.
- 47 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 207.
- 48 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 215.
- 49 “... di pagare il prezzo di un paio du buoi in servitio dell'opera di S. Maria del Fiore, per trainare i legni dalla Faltona in Arno: e perché fu la prima volta si levassino buoi da Prato Vecchio con lo sborso di scudi 35, si nota per mandarlo alla memoria de' posteri, acciò sappino il modo che tengano i principi per introdur gravezze, con facilità nel principio, che poi riescono tanto inollerabili che sino di otto paia di buoi è stata caricata la nostra comunità” Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 325.
- 50 “Costume usato dagl' antichi principi di levar le minor gravezze per aggiungerne delle maggiori, materia che hoggi non si practica da' moderni principi i quali non restano d' impor nuove gravezze e di augmentar le vecchie, anzi che astringono i popoli a pagarle con pene e spese duplicate” Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 342.
- 51 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 64.
- 52 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 206.
- 53 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 285.

8. Life in the Late Middle Ages

Town and country

The area and its people. The population density in town was quite different from that of the country, and townspeople lived very different lives from country folk. The main reason for this was the lack of space in the town-fortress. This, in its turn, was due to the fact that extensions to the town wall were making it ever more difficult to defend. The houses were built very close together, the streets and alleyways were narrow. There were more or less no green spaces; obviously nobody missed them, and if they did, they could always go outside the town.

People lived at close quarters.

Country life and town life were completely different. Whether your house was free standing and quite a way from its nearest neighbours, or whether it was tacked on to the next-door house, was not the same thing at all.

Distribution of production. Not everything could be produced in the town. Farmers lived in the town too, but their fields were outside it. Above all, the town was the base for trades that could not be plied in the country, or only under exceptional circumstances. In most cases, towns even banned trades from the countryside, creating a monopoly in the town.

Subsistence farming. Subsistence farming was practised in the countryside. Tenant farmers earned their living by producing what they needed for survival on their arable and grazing lands, in scrub areas and in forests.¹

Excess production resulted in contact between town and country. If peasant farmers had excess produce, they were able to sell it in the town. They could then buy what they needed with the money they earned, an iron plough, for instance, or other implements. If their excess produce earned them a larger sum of money, they were able to spend it on pleasure. There were quite a few pleasurable things on offer in town.

The market was also growing, along with the granting of credit. These developments were particularly marked in external trade. However, small traders were also willing to grant their customers credit, noting the sums by cutting notches in a block of wood. The landlord of an inn chalked up his customers' debts on a wall.

Two-way relationship between town and country. The countryside was only self-sufficient to a limited degree. Food production was entirely in the hands of the country, and the countryside kept the town markets going.

This gave rise to a mutual relationship of give-and-take between town and country.

Organisation as power. Right up to the twentieth century, peasant farmers made up the majority of the population. However, it was not the majority that was in charge, but those at the social interfaces, and they lived in towns. Farmers had to work extremely hard and for very long hours in order to survive at the most basic level. They did not have time to act as leaders of society; they had no time for organising or decision-making.

Peasant farmers experienced the structural changes in Europe passively – hardly ever were they active in bringing about change themselves.²

Everything in this world is subject to human evaluation. If something is highly valued, it can confer power. Frequently it can become an established fact, and the individual accepts it as being self-evident. This was the way in which the countryside became devalued. The town made the countryside subservient to it.

Despite the many differences between town and country, in other ways they were close.

Immigrants. Sometimes people entered the town not just to exchange goods, but as immigrants. Many families came from the outlying areas and stayed.³ The countryside shed those who failed to find any work there – sons of large families, for example, or sometimes young girls.

As a rule, they started doing very simple jobs in the town, working as day labourers.

Some of their children learned a trade, improving their social standing.

Occasionally, relatives of burghers moved into the town, either distant relations entering their families' businesses, or children they adopted.

Migrants were either welcome or unwelcome, depending on the circumstances. If mortality rates were very high in town, the outlook for migrants was good. New day labourers were often required, as many workers had to retire for health reasons, and others were needed to do lowly jobs.

Women mainly found work as servants.

The town did not automatically allow incomers to settle. The gates were guarded, and the guards knew everyone. Merchants from outside had to prove their identity.

The fortifications were not only used to defend the town from its enemies, but to keep an eye on inhabitants and incomers.

Domestic trade. Home-produced goods were also traded in the town on a considerable scale, so money was circulated within the town itself. Such products were mainly needed only by town dwellers, and only they had the money to buy them.

Division of labour in the town. Many products could only be invented and produced – mainly by the townspeople – if there were raw materials, and often spare parts, nearby. Experience led to division of labour, that is to say, a variety of trades.

This division of labour developed historically, beginning very simply, then branching out into more trades year by year. Some trades reduced the range of their activities, giving more opportunities for improvement and specialisation.

Money. In simple societies, products were just bartered. Money was developed at a very early stage in the Mediterranean area, first appearing in urban markets. The principle was as follows: a chicken was no longer swapped for a natural product of a different kind, but for a piece of valuable metal called a coin. This rarely had much value of its own, but could be exchanged for all kinds of other things. Its most exciting characteristic was its apparent universal application.

A town means trading by using money.

Money made trade indirect. In one way it thereby became more complicated, in other ways it was simplified.

Money is not a thing, but an abstraction. It has its own kind of magic, however.

Historical change. Quite early, the two systems – barter and the exchange of natural goods for money – functioned alongside each other.

Barter was always subject to uncertainties. Turnover was sometimes higher, sometimes lower.

If the situation improved, the exchange of goods for money became more widespread. If things took a turn for the worse, bartering became more common.

This meant the situation for everyone – rich and poor – was one of uncertainty. People often thought nothing of failing to meet their obligations.

Market. Every town was a marketplace. The townspeople's food wants were not met on their own fields, which was why they gave the local farmers the opportunity to sell their produce. They did not go into the countryside themselves, but used regulatory means to force the peasant farmers to come to the town.

Max Weber wrote: "... the discussion of the market phenomena constitutes essentially the content of economics".⁴ A market is a place of exchange, where people look each other in the eye and shake hands. It is the means by which people communicate about the basic things of this world; it exists in a very similar form everywhere. Many goods were exchanged in markets right into the twentieth century. They were the places where people mingled to meet, talk and swap news, to hire and be hired.

Exchange between one town and another. There were local markets, markets for trading goods

from afar (annual fairs and exhibitions), commercial markets (stock exchanges). Some people traded outside their own town, going from one town to another. We call this long-distance trade. Products from outside were sold at a profit in local markets. The idea was for the trader to purchase at a reasonable price, but as the sellers did not know what he had paid, he could achieve a fairly high profit margin.

A special transport sector evolved with long-distance trade: the carriers (*barocchiali*).

The market and peace. According to Max Weber, “... the intensive expansion of exchange relations has always gone together with a process of relative pacification. All of the 'public peace' arrangements of the Middle Ages were meant to serve the interests of exchange. The appropriation of goods through free, purely economically rational exchange ... is the conceptual opposite of appropriation of goods by coercion of any kind, but especially physical coercion, the regulated exercise of which is the very constitutive element of the political community”.⁵

Regulation. At first, the market was action between persons, having the potential for conflict. A kind of market supervision was called for – a police force.

The market only regulated itself up to a point. In important areas, it has always had to be regulated.

Barriers have been erected as the result of taboos – sacred ones and corporatist monopolies.

Politics and administration continued to have the task of matching exchange and production in the towns. This was only possible if there existed something like the idea of a communal body, and a kind of responsibility towards it.

Thus, the market moved into the sphere of the general public and was regulated by the municipal authorities.

The commercial police controlled the quality of goods.

Regulatory tasks included peace-keeping in the market, beginning with ensuring that participants remained free from bodily harm, through to rules governing honesty with regard to certain products. This latter manifested itself in a number of quality control checks.

The regulated market became a communal institution for persons with related interests, based largely on money.

Production. The townspeople only lived indirectly off agricultural produce – when it was exchanged for products made in the town. They earned their income from commerce or trade.

The town facilitated trade; it was the home of artisans. It was here that “the predominant part of non-agricultural production was performed with craft technology, organised with little or no capital in small shops employing strictly limited numbers of journeymen trained in long apprenticeship ...” (Max Weber)⁶

There may have been the odd artisan plying his trade in the countryside, but one characteristic of the town was the variety of its trades.

Oikos of the castle. In early times, trades evolved to provide services for the castle. For many years, the town modelled itself on the *oikos* of the various town rulers.

“The existence of the market is often based on concessions and guarantees of protection by the lord or prince.” (Max Weber)⁷

The stronger the market, the less the town relied on the *oikos* of the landowners. Landowners – in the case of Anghiari it was the Tarlati family – supported the market, as they profited from a flourishing money economy. This was visible in their large-scale architectural embellishment of the Mercatale, the marketplace outside the town gates.

The square. If a market grows, it needs certain framework conditions. A street is not enough – it has to be widened. This is how a market square is born.

Education. For centuries, the place of learning was life itself. The shoemaker's apprentice learned his trade in his master's workshop.

It was only at a very late date that educational institutions became disconnected from everyday life. Most people were illiterate. Teachers were only needed when reading and writing started to play a greater rôle and were no longer confined to members of particular occupations, like theologians, administrators and lawyers.

Differences between towns. In principle, towns were similar in structure, but with increasing complexity, they assumed a distinctive appearance.

Just as people can be friends or foes, collective enmity can arise, and for the same reasons – fear of strangers, envy, jealousy, feelings of superiority or inferiority, violence and revenge, the desire to be top dog.

This partly explains the motives behind the design of a town, mainly its outward show.

Alliances. A town can resort to aggression in the same way as one group of people can become violent towards another one. Alliances are formed as a protection against aggression.

Townspeople invested capital in the countryside. Whenever wealthy burghers wished to accumulate capital, there was an increasing need for secure investments. This resulted in extensive purchases of land in the countryside. Whole estates were bought up together with their tenant farmers.

This made the countryside more dependent on the town.

Intensification of agriculture. The burghers in the towns that were growing more prosperous led a more differentiated way of life. As a result, farmers in the surrounding areas grew a greater variety of crops: vegetables.

Social networks. For thousands of years, people had not lived alone. They were part of social networks, clans known as extended families. The individual was taken care of in times of flux – as a child, a sick person, an invalid or the surviving relative of a deceased person.

In a town, a person can be alone, and fall through the social net. A small family can fall on hard times too. A town had many advantages when people were young and capable of working, but it was misery for the old and the sick if they had no large family. Migrants to the town needed a long time before they built up a social network, or discovered one.

Things often became so disastrous that other burghers took the initiative and founded institutions to support such victims.

Ways of life around 1385

Around 1440, Count Almerigo Brancaleoni of Pioboco, the brother-in-law of Agnolo Taglia in Anghiari, put together a collection of writings in the form of 75 *discorsi*, recalling ancient and public memories (*memorie antiche e pubbliche*) of Anghiari, from its beginnings up to the Florentine era. Lorenzo Taglieschi made extensive use of this source (1614).

Taglieschi expressly pointed out that, in 1440, Brancaleoni expressed great surprise at the fact that people in 1385 lived very different lives from those of his day.⁸ This observation marks him as a historian who does not project backwards, but one who is able to relate his own era to times gone by.

Taglieschi wrote that people in 1385 lived lives of great simplicity (*sobrietà*), with regard to their

dress, their food, and everything else as well.

Most people looked like shepherds rather than farmers. They were clothed from top to toe in sheepskins, with boots on their feet and small caps (*berrettino*) on their heads.

He was especially surprised to note that the women were not dressed more elaborately than their menfolk.

The richest woman's best frock was a fairly narrow-fitting skirt of a linen and hemp mixture, belted with a simple linen band.

Nobody was addressed as *messere* or *madonna*, and no-one doffed his hat in greeting. Titles were subject to inflation in the 16th century. Knights, judges and doctors of law were then addressed as *messere*, notaries as *ser*.⁹

In 1385, no-one bore arms, except in times of war.

In the 14th century, there were few two-storey houses, either inside or outside the fortress. The roofs were thatched with straw (*paglia*) or ferns (*felce*).

In those days, nobody received guests when he was in bed, unless he had a long-term illness.

There were few copious wine drinkers, although the town was surrounded by vineyards. In the 16th century, Anghiari was famous for its excellent wine.¹⁰ A Trebbiano was served on festive occasions, particularly at weddings.¹¹

If living conditions were good, people might be lucky enough to live to an old age. In 1385, there were an amazing 70 nonagenarians in the town.

Nobody had servants.

And no-one had any animals for riding. There were only a number of donkeys used as beasts of burden.

A dowry never exceeded 200 (Luccan or Cortonan) lire in 1385, even among the richest families. A farmer's daughter never received more than 25 lire.

There were no doctors around 1385, and no priests, although there were many brothers (*frati*) – both white and black monks. People only went to church on feast days.

The citizens of highest repute were the notaries.

The Tiber flood plain was not inhabited. There was little grain, because rain water failed to drain away.

The most important villages for Anghiari were along the banks of the River Sovara.

People did not go for walks in the countryside – if they were in the open air, they were at work.

Changes. This way of life changed in the 15th century, at least for those who were prosperous.

Music addicts. Many sources, including visual ones,¹² confirm that people in Central Italy were great music lovers.¹³

The character of their music was not so very different from that of typical present-day Italian popular songs, being emotional, soft, inviting, very erotic.

Simple folk songs, which were probably borrowed from urban culture, had the same characteristics.

One important piece of evidence, an organ from the early 16th century, is exhibited in Anghiari's Museo Taglieschi. It used to be in Santo Stefano, at the foot of the hill.

The music was neither sacred nor secular, but a mixture of both. In 1544, the writer Pietro Aretino voiced a presumably common opinion when he said organ music was “*dulciter et optime*” and of matchless “*dolcezza*” (sweetness, gentleness). A similar source from 1480 describes the organ in the minster at Ulm (South Germany), recommending people to go to church on market days and listen to

the “sweet music” of the organ.

This type of late mediaeval music is the origin of some of today's popular music.

Cards. Playing cards for money has been widespread since the days of Antiquity, and a passion for gambling is still common nowadays.¹⁴ The Florentine apothecary, Luca Landucci, complained in 1497, “... then they all succumbed to gambling, to everything that was evil, opening bottles of Frascati and the taverns”. Gambling was often considered a sickness. In 1528, the Florentine Republic forbade it, but without success.

Even professional gamblers were occasionally to be found. One man in Anghiari lost his livelihood when the ban was introduced in 1528, so he was offered the office of auctioneer instead.¹⁵

Passions. In 1451, the castellan of Monterchi castle, Leale d'Anghiari, hit his son Checco on the head with a stick. His brutal and patriarchal means of punishment unintentionally caused the boy's death.¹⁶

Jealousy was rarely a motive for murder. Received opinion was quite civilised: no-one should commit murder for the sake of a woman.¹⁷

Names. It was customary in many places to give a son his grandfather's name at baptism, followed by his father's name. Thus, all names were repeated in the second generation. Each name alludes to a patron saint (*patrono*), and on the saint's feast day everyone with that name celebrated.

In addition, they had family names, and possibly a name to denote where they came from. For the most part, this latter was only used outside a person's home town, for example, Baldaccio d'Anghiari.

The upper classes were the first to include their house of origin in their names. In the 14th century, the church began keeping registers with names to denote the various families, mainly to prevent incest.

Many people were given a nickname (*soprannome*) to distinguish them from others, as a joke, or to make fun of them. Some such names were often quite drastic, such as Matteo Cane (cur). In Verona we find Cangrande (big dog) della Scala. In Venice there was the mercenary leader Bartolomeo Coglione (eggs). (After his death his name was changed to Colleoni for reasons of prudery). Nicknames became semi-official, being used in official documents as well.¹⁸

The year. The year began on 25th March, the feast of the Annunciation.¹⁹

Bells gave the day structure, simultaneously ritualising it. They were expensive musical instruments, because they were made of rare materials, and had to be cast with care.

The day started with the chiming of a bell; the market ended with a bell ringing. A bell chimed at noon and in the evening. Bells rang at festivals, and tolled when a man went to his grave.

The Taglieschi Museum has a bell from the parish of Micciano (1448); one from the village of Ponte alla Piera; a 16th century bell from San Martino near Montedoglio Castle; and a bell cast in 1616 from the Abbey church (*Badia*). There is also a small bell from Castello di Montauto.

Brothel. In 1468, the Grand Council (*general consiglio*) dealt with the problem arising from an increase in the number of prostitutes, due to the quartering of soldiers on the march.

The council did not forbid prostitution, but restricted it to one particular place.

It designated a house for this purpose near that of the Compagnia Nera (Via della Vecchia; 26 Via delle Mura di Sopra).²⁰

Locals often call the western part of Via della Misericordia “Via del Bordello”, even nowadays.

Descent into poverty. In 1614, Lorenzo Taglieschi lamented the fact that many a man fell from happiness (*felicità*) to misery (*miseria*), and cited the example of Carlo and Niccolò Giusti. “All of a sudden he found he had lost all his worldly possessions in Caprese and Citerna – he had squandered his

inheritance. It was his vices that destroyed it.”

The end of the story shows how important prestige is for many people, and the good opinion of their fellow men as well. Carlo Giusti felt everyone was pointing at him, so in his shame he locked himself in a house in Panteto, ending his life in extreme poverty.²¹

Female mortality rate. Women seriously risked death while lying in after childbirth. Why did Taglieschi never mention this? He merely mentions one occurrence from the year 1587, but gives no explanation for it. A certain wife lived for only three years after her grand wedding. This was a tragedy shared by many women and their families.²²

Relations between the classes. The cadastral records of 1427 (in the state archives in Florence) highlight the social differences.

Out of the total population of Anghiari, 5.4% were living in misery; these “*miserabili*” were mainly people with no possessions at all. The poor made up 43.6% of the population, being for the most part farmers under the system of métayage, or day labourers. The middle class (*mediani*), which made up 38.9% of the population, mainly comprised artisans and traders. Rich merchants and large landowners were among the 12.1% that made up the class of the well-to-do (*agiati*).

A comparison with the villages will make the picture clearer: the percentage of persons living in misery accounted for between 5% and 10% of villagers – a similar proportion to those living in the town. However, the poor – the largest group – constituted between 60% and 70% of villagers, a much larger proportion than in the town. The middle class, accounting for 20% of villagers, was much less numerous. The upper class at 0.5% to 2% was decidedly thin on the ground.

Anghiari was a town in which the whole spectrum of 16th century Tuscan life was to be found. Intellectuals, experts, scribes, lawyers and doctors lived there. There was a Scuola di Umanità.²³

In 1523, Niccolò Machiavelli wrote: “If you only notice human proceedings, you may observe that all who attain great power and riches make use of either force or fraud; and what they have acquired either by deceit or violence, in order to conceal the disgraceful methods of attainment, they endeavour to sanctify with the false title of honest gains.”²⁴

Riches. The economic situation fluctuated throughout the centuries, punctuated by crises. However, there was also a process of accumulation, as many fortunes were made over a period of time. More people became wealthy in Central and Northern Italian towns than in other parts of the world, with the exception perhaps of Flanders and some South German cities.

What do we mean by riches? First, riches have a function – they confer prestige on the wealthy, which increases their self esteem. They provide embellishment for a family, which is then well regarded. In their turn, the family members insist on their good reputation, cementing their position among other rival families.

Riches do not exist for the rich alone. The function of riches, as far as ordinary people are concerned, is to force them to behave with respect and reverence.

There are other aspects to riches too. In a church, people find the festiveness and solemnity they lack at home.

We find the same principle in a present-day bar. In Garibaldi's bar on the main square, there are cast-iron columns and vaulting, a variety of vessels above the counter, all kinds of advertisements that claim to be important.

Why do ordinary folk not find this ambience strange or daunting? Why do they feel attracted to it?

If we are to discover what the symbols for riches express, we must differentiate between the

individual elements and their “grammar”. Nowadays Garibaldi's bar signals that people are welcome there.

The same would be true in later times of the grand furniture bought by the petty bourgeois.

The richest citizens. In 1467, the richest persons in Anghiari were the mercenary leader Gregorio di Vanni; Giusto Giusti, chancellor to one of the mercenary armies; Milano Taglieschi and Bernardo d'Antonio detto Moisetto.²⁵

At the time of his death in 1539, Ilioneo Taglieschi was the wealthiest man in Anghiari. His clothes, furniture, silver, gold, jewels and house contents alone were estimated to be worth 10,000 florins.²⁶

Hosts. When Federico, lord of Urbino, together with his wife Batista and Alessandro Sforza, travelled to La Verna for the Feast of the Stigmata in 1469, they were given hospitality and entertained by the mercenary leaders Mazzone di Gregorio and Francesco Prospero.²⁷

Mazzone di Gregorio belonged to the circle of friends around Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere (who became Pope Julius II in 1505). He was a nephew of Pope Sixtus IV, and spent the night at Mazzone's house in 1476.²⁸

Conviviality. Family life was fairly convivial. Their womenfolk went to market, and socialised with other women from rich middle-class families.

Violence and civil behaviour. Many people appreciated the fact that a civil, or non-violent, mode of behaviour was demanded of the population, as the long years of violence perpetrated by warring nobles with their love of combat were remembered in tales told on the piazza and around the family hearth.

Merchants. We have no information about merchants in Anghiari – but they did exist. Other towns provide records that allow us to guess what the merchants of Anghiari did, and what they thought, albeit on a more modest scale.

We know a lot about the textile merchant Giubileo di Niccolò Carsidoni (born before 1340, died in 1432) from the neighbouring town of Sansepolcro with a population of 4,000.²⁹ He was a merchant like many others in Tuscany. The rules, or conventions, that applied in their dealings with one another were the product of many years of experience, and were more or less the same up and down the country.

It was their custom to deal in almost anything that could be traded. Merchants behaved like sniffer dogs. If they were ambitious, they could not get a living from their home towns alone, so they spread their wings, operating in neighbouring towns, co-operating with other merchants, offering their services to wealthy customers. Business always had its ups and downs – one day it was good, the next day poor. Thus, dealings were characterised by a peculiar mixture of euphoria and fearfulness, trust and suspicion, foresight and chance, having a go and fighting shy, co-operation and egoism. The sums had to tally: purchase price = sales price plus expenses plus profit. In such an uncertain situation, a merchant was never immune from the unexpected, with the result that he tried to increase his security, mainly by creating reserves in the form of real estate. It was never easy to get credit in times of crisis. Additional risks lay in the slow and awkward – and often dangerous – transport system. The further away the goods came from, the greater the danger. A merchant therefore ran the risk of being ruined, not constantly, but he often trod a narrow path.

Carsidoni, too, traded many different wares, in a number of Central Italian towns, and in the city of Florence.

The most important merchants also supplied small traders who sold their wares at weekly markets and at fairs. Small traders from neighbouring towns bought small quantities of goods. The wealthy

ones did not only buy locally, but also further afield.

Carsidoni traded mainly in woollen articles (*Arte della Lana*), warehousing his cloths in a store near the *Badia*. He also traded in wine, metals (mainly iron) and woad (*guado*), a widespread crop in that area³⁰, especially in the 14th century. Other goods he traded in included cattle, land, bricks and other building materials, houses and business premises – some of it rented property. Eventually, he became the owner of many estates, which not only served as collateral, but also lent prestige.

Carsidoni was careful to note down the exact price of everything he bought and sold. The books he kept between 1368 and 1396 have been preserved. Another ledger – that kept by Bartolo d'Uguccio from 1348 to 1360 – is in the municipal archives of Sansepolcro.

Carsidoni took advantage of every opportunity for trading. It seems his business activities increased from day to day. We have evidence of him – or his representatives – turning up at various trading centres.

Furthermore, Carsidoni acted as a money-lender (*prestatore*) for small sums. This was a risky business. In 1370 he lent money to Capitano Giovanfermo da Bergamo, a mercenary leader, and never got it back.

Travel. Not many people travelled, as they had no reason to. The area was more or less self-sufficient as far as consumer goods were concerned, therefore few things needed to be imported. What is more, travel was arduous and expensive.

The only group of people who went elsewhere were some merchants, and they went armed.

The military provided a perilous outlet for some men, mostly the young. Pilgrimages constituted a more peaceable form of travel. Piety was often just an excuse for doing something new.

Luca Landucci from Florence gives us some idea of how long journeys took, when he writes: “And on 7 May 1475 I went to Rome for the jubilee, taking one of my sisters-in-law with me. We toiled for 15 days there and back.”³¹

Trades and trading

Shop counters. The street area was not only for passers-by, but for manufacturers and traders too. Old pictures show us streets and squares full of people.

Like in Roman times, artisans and traders sold their goods from inside the shop where they were produced, passing their wares over broad stone counters to the buyers outside. The goods were displayed on the counters (as in the market quarter in Pistoia and south of the church of Santa Maria della Pieve in Arezzo). Thus, the most important trading activities took place at the interface between the inner space and the outer one. The street in front of the house was a market.

House number 12 on Via Nenci has two entrances of hewn stone; one presumably gave access to a shop, and one to the upper storey. Number 13, a three-storey house of smooth ashlar, has two doors with rounded archways and the remains of a shop counter.

At the sides of the squares, the openings to the houses were mostly in the form of wide arches; they all had counters, some of stone and some of wood.

One example of a house with an opening of this kind is number 24/26 on Via Giordano Bruno. The small mezzanine window belonged to the loft (store).

The family members or their servants would stand in the archways like the traders on the marketplace, chatting to many of the passers-by. This kind of communication has been part of market

life for centuries. On one side of the street there were loud goings-on, on the opposite side they were telling jokes, in other parts it was quiet. A whole range of different characters met to exchange goods.³²

Burglar-proof doors. House number 26/28/30/32 on Via Matteotti has an old opening for a shop. Its extraordinarily strong fortress-like doors protected the shop from plunderers at night and in times of uncertainty.

Trading sign. There seem to have been few signs to indicate the practice of a particular trade. Only one has been preserved. At the top of the rounded arch at number 8/10 on Via Garibaldi we find two animals, probably animals for slaughtering.

Porches. Many manufacturers had porches built, to protect their goods from wind and weather. If there were a sudden cloudburst, people could shelter under them too.

It was not until the 16th century that taste dictated that a flat façade to a house should be the aesthetic norm, with the result that these useful porches disappeared.

One porch was preserved on a house on the eastern side of the main square.

Indoor space. For many years, the area inside was the shop floor. A suspended ceiling was often put in beneath the original – mostly vaulted – high ceiling. This type of loft was used as a goods store.

The larger part of buying and selling did not retreat from the street into the inside of the house until the 19th century.

Opening hours. Luca Landucci noted in his Florentine diary: “And on 22nd August 1481, we spice traders decided that on feast days we did not want to go on standing in the *bottega* until 10 o'clock in the evening, as had been our wont, but that we would draw lots, and he who was chosen by lot would remain in his shop all day. This means that four shops in all will be open in the city at any one time.”³³

Market. Sales stands took up every bit of space available, as that was where customers congregated.

This led to chaos, as anyone who has ever visited an oriental bazaar can imagine.

Prices were carefully noted down by the authority responsible for the market – which in a way was tantamount to price control.³⁴

The townsfolk were not the only ones to come here to shop or get their hair done; peasants from the countryside came, both to buy and to sell.

In the event of civil disturbance, shop owners closed their heavy oak shutters “for fear of being plundered” (Luca Landucci).³⁵ The buildings were then locked up almost like fortresses.

At night, when people were asleep, the houses had the same appearance of being locked up. There was a world of difference between the look of the town during the day and its appearance by night, from both functional and aesthetic points of view.

Fellow citizens of the Jewish faith

Jewish citizens had a special status.³⁶ The church's lack of tolerance put their existence in jeopardy. They were held individually responsible for the murder of Christ by the Jews. There was no question of forgiveness, and no-one reflected on what the past had to do with the living.

Jews paid a large sum of money to obtain a residence permit and enjoy the protection of the town rulers, who were happy to have this source of income.

They were limited in their choice of profession. The main one was trade, another was money lending – a dubious form of business. The charging of interest created conflict.

Envy and prejudice were kindled with regard to this small section of the population. All kinds of imaginings, projections and assignments of guilt – exonerating the non-Jewish population – became entrenched.

It was easy to exploit this syndrome.

Anti-Semitic sermons. Gabriele Mascella, an Augustinian preacher from Umbria, told his listeners he knew how to take the wealth extorted by means of usury away from the Jews.

Sermons like this led to pogroms in many places.

When the preacher came to Anghiari, the *vicario* and Abbot Antonmaria warned the monk not to preach in this vein.

These two men, who were obviously somewhat enlightened, feared a popular uprising against Leoncino and Donna Benvegnuta, Jewish citizens who had recently set up shop (*banco*) on the piazza with the permission of the Duke. The *vicario* and the abbot felt in duty bound to protect the Jews, and did not wish to be rebuked by their rulers.

The Augustinian preacher was a fanatic, however, and refused to desist from preaching (“a mad undertaking” – *matta impresa* – the *vicario* and the abbot had apparently called it).

The *vicario* therefore appealed to Florence, and Florence ordered the preacher to quit state territory before the end of Lent.³⁷

A wedding

Alliance. The most important event in family life was a wedding. The social aspect was more important than the individual. A marriage meant an alliance, which was important in a society where not everyone enjoyed legal relationships under the protection of the state (such as we enjoy in our advanced industrial age), but where protection arose from relations with other human beings.³⁸

Rituals. Powerful rituals were used for cementing the alliance, and the process became engrained at a deep psychological level. The persons present were on show. It was also an exhibition of time, effort and money spent. All this transformed into prestige. Large weddings remained in people's memories.

Fortune. The dowry – which could be very considerable, depending on the circumstances – meant marriage continued to be a means of increasing one's fortune and thus one's resources.

Parental orders. As the family was a social institution, the “head” of the family had the first and last word as far as alliances were concerned. This meant parents were expected to find partners for their sons and daughters.

In Florence, there were also professional marriage brokers, who were paid for their services.³⁹

Luca Landucci reported on his wedding as follows: “On 24th May 1466, Saturday, ... I wedded Salvestra, the daughter of Domenico di Domenico Pagni. I received a dowry worth 400 florins from the Monte [the state bank] ...”.

This was the sum of money paid out by the insurers as a result of a dowry insurance policy taken out by the bride's wealthy parents.

The first matter to be settled prior to every marriage was the business agreement. The engagement would then follow. In a church ceremony, the bridegroom swore in the presence of witnesses – his father and other relatives – that he was willing to marry. The bride's father also made his promises.

The bride did not appear until the rings were exchanged at her parents' house and in the presence of a notary. The notary tied the knot, not the church. A Mass was only said at princely weddings. “And on

5th July 1466 I gave her the ring. It was a Sunday evening. Ser Giovanni di Neri drew up the deed. And on the Sunday evening of 27th July 1466 I took my wife to the house of the said Domenico. I received my endowment ...”.

There follows a comprehensive and detailed list of the objects endowed, each with its price tag. The bridegroom made his bride gifts of costly clothes and jewellery.

The marriage was consummated in accordance with the stars – a custom involving magic from the days of Antiquity. Leading the bride to her new home was a great ceremony. Her relatives and friends went with her to the bridegroom's house to the accompaniment of music. On their arrival, she was received by her husband's relatives and friends. A huge banquet followed. After this, the bridegroom led his wife back to her father's house, where another banquet with music and dancing took place. This could go on for several days, depending on the wealth of the families. At the end of the festivities, the bride took her trousseau stored in its chests and made her way to her husband's house with a minimum of fuss.⁴⁰

Children. Luca Landucci reported that his wife had borne him twelve children. When she died, after 48 years of marriage, seven were still alive – four sons and three daughters. Two of the daughters remained at home and one became a nun.⁴¹

Entering a convent. If a girl's dowry was insufficient, or if a family inheritance was not to be jeopardised, or if the girl could not marry for some other reason, wealthy parents could ensure that their grown-up daughters were taken care of by placing them in a convent. This explains constant efforts to provide this sort of care in Anghiari, or to maintain such provision.

Festivities

Excessive eating and drinking. In 1309, it was said of the people of Anghiari that if the wines of the previous year reached maturity shortly before the wine harvest of the current year, they used this as an excuse for tasting (*assiagare*) the wine, and spent their time “eating to excess” (*nel mangiar fuori d'ogni misura*) and “drinking without inhibition” (*nel bere sopra ogni regola*).⁴²

Annual fair. In 1309, an annual fair (*fiera*) for linen was set up. However, the mighty guild of linen workers in Florence succeeded in closing it down. Merchants from outside then organised the fair in Monte San Savino, which had a reputation for independence.⁴³

Public festivities. After the Battle of Anghiari (1440), the occupying Florentine forces in Anghiari celebrated by organising a competition. The winner was presented with a prize (*palio*) of a piece of linen only twelve cubits in length.

The competitors competed on foot, running down the long, straight street to the fountain on the Mercatale, where the winner's prize was hanging from an iron pole. It remained there after the competition.

In 1484, the piece of linen was exchanged for a piece of costly scarlet material, and the competition took place on horseback. When Taglieschi was alive, this prize was still hung from its pole on the Mercatale.⁴⁴

When Florence annexed Montepulciano in 1511, it ordered public festivities (*publiche allegrezze*) to be held in all towns in the territory.⁴⁵

When Giovanni de' Medici was elected Pope in 1513, taking the name Leo X, Florence ordered the holding of festivities.⁴⁶

In 1539, it was decided there should be two festivals per year funded by the municipality. The first was to be held in Santa Croce church in May, and the second in the Abbey church of San Francesco and the church of the Annunciation in September.⁴⁷

Victories and the signing of important treaties were celebrated as public festivities⁴⁸, as was the birth of a successor to the throne.⁴⁹

Culture of death

We learn most about social relations, and more especially about how civilised people were, when we look at how they behaved in extreme situations.

During the plague of 1348/1349⁵⁰, a number of people had the courage to commit themselves fully to organising a service that involved removing infectious corpses to the cemetery (*camposanto*) on a stretcher.

Life-long and deep emotional ties were established between the helpers, ties which held for many generations. The confraternities that were being formed were an extension of those ties.

This culture of death also resulted in rich people frequently paying for the burial of the dead from poor families.

Protective figures. Many people made a bequest to the Madonna del Borghetto. She was a figure who stood for personal protection in life-threatening situations. She would help the poor in the face of illness and death.

The Madonna of Mercy (*Madonna della Misericordia*) played a similar rôle. A chapel was built in her honour on Via della Vecchia (26 Via delle Mura di Sopra).

Remembrance and portrayal. From time immemorial, many people in Central Italy could hardly imagine someone could be well and truly dead. In Tuscany, therefore, dead people were depicted as sleeping, rather than dead. The person always remained intact. Whatever the buffettions of fate, he or she was still there.

This attempt to give form to survival manifested itself in other ways too.

In 1444, the mercenary general Agnolo Taglia from Anghiari died in Rimini at the age of 52. As they could not bring his body home, he was buried there “with pomp (*pompa*), such as is not usual in Anghiari”. At the same time, a funeral service was held in the *Badia*, as Taglia had bequeathed a house to the Abbey.⁵¹

Tombs in the centre of town. The dead were buried under the floors of churches, which served the culture and cult of death. The dead remained among the living. The universe of the dead was present in the land of the living.

Altar and family vault. In 1446, the mercenary leader Gregorio d'Anghiari paid 100 florins for the embellishment (*abbellimento*) of the main altar in the Abbey church. He joined Selvestro Taglieschi in donating a room behind the church for the enlargement of the sacristy.

The altar, by the Florentine painter Piero di Lorenzo, was decorated with the noblest “Greek ornaments” (*alla greca*); the wooden frame was covered entirely with gold, the most expensive material.

Now everyone in the town would know – apparently till the end of time – who was responsible for putting this magnificent work on show. His name would remain alive.

This was closely linked to another idea: the two families had vaults built near the altar. In 1458,

Luca de Selvestro Taglieschi marked the place with the inscription: “*Taglieschi de morte ad vitam*”.⁵²

In 1504, the mercenary leader Mazzone di Gregorio died. Lorenzo Taglieschi claimed he was “reputed to be one of the richest and most highly honoured citizens outside Florence”. This was no doubt a huge exaggeration. His funeral took place in the Abbey church amid great pomp.⁵³

In 1461, the mercenary leader Matteo Cane, owner of the Taglieschi house, had his family tomb built beneath the floor of the Abbey church – he was buried there 36 years later, in 1497. He also set up an altar dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St. Matthew, his patron saint. The sculptor, Maestro Santi di Benedetto di Santi da Settignano, had settled in Anghiari.⁵⁴

Choice of location for a burial. The tombs of the Taglieschi and Gregorio/Mazzone families were the first important family tombs to be built in the Abbey church.⁵⁵ This shows that for centuries the Abbey had lived a life of its own. It had kept the town at a distance; or possibly the wealthy townsfolk were not interested.

The burghers preferred Sant'Agostino as a burial location; it housed the greatest number of family vaults. In 1499, the Franciscan church of Santa Croce became another favourite location.

Allegiance. A family that had a vault in a particular church would also celebrate all other family occasions of a religious nature in the same church, providing it with a good income. This led to an unspoken rivalry between the churches.

Education

Learning. Most people learned from life. They did not go to school, and could not read or write.

But they did not miss much. For centuries, education merely provided men with qualifications for high office in church or state.

Schools. In 1339, a teacher was paid a salary from the public purse. He was a man from Perugia, as this was the time of rule by Perugia, and his name was Michele di Bigliaffo. He was a *maestro di scola et humanista*, and at the same time chancellor of the municipality (*comunità*).⁵⁶

During the course of the 15th century, the beginnings of a secular educational system were gradually appearing in Tuscany. What was there in Anghiari?

In 1472, the schoolmaster was given a classroom and a flat in the confraternity house, above the chancellery.⁵⁷

If they were not in the service of the church, intellectuals could, for the most part, only earn their daily bread as schoolteachers. In 1541, teachers were living in great poverty in Anghiari.

Learning meant little or nothing to the population.

The Council regulated teachers' pay anew and gave them a rise. However, many priests entered this profession too. When a new teacher was appointed in 1541, the job went to a priest. He was said to have worked in many towns previously, and was very learned.⁵⁸

Intellectuals. For a long time, there was scarcely an intellectual of any description in the whole territory of Anghiari. Ricciardo di Marco di Angelieri d'Anghiari (†1466) was one of the very few. In order to be able to survive, he worked as parish priest (*piovano*) in Monterchi. This meant he had to remain on traditional theological territory. Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) mentioned him in many of his works, describing him as an excellent theologian and philosopher.⁵⁹

One scholar from Anghiari, Agnolo di Niccolò Canini d'Anghiari had to seek his living abroad, and embarked on a career at the University of Paris. However, he died by poisoning in Barcelona.⁶⁰

University studies. It was not until about 1500 that studying at a university became more widespread.

The following biography shows how long the educational system remained in the hands of theologians. In 1524, the Augustinian friar, Angelo di Cristofano Bestiaveccchia d'Anghiari, was a student at the University of Bologna. His studies, first of medicine, then also of literature and philosophy, were paid for by the confraternity. He made such a brilliant speech in the presence of Pope Clement VII that Bologna University provided a permanent place for a student from his home town of Anghiari.⁶¹

Education led to a greater striving for truth. At the same time, however, the suspicion grew that what masqueraded as truth was not in fact truth. Academics became critical. Intellectuals worked and strived for centuries under this tension.

Under the new order of things, following the election of Giovanni de' Medici as Pope Leo X and the proxy rule of Florence by his brother Giuliano in 1512, education was in the hands of the prince. In 1514, a ducal edict forbade students from studying at any university other than Pisa, which was where Marco di Vanni d'Anghiari went.⁶²

Language. Traditional facilities stuck to Latin, the ancient language of lawyers and theologians.

Lorenzo Taglieschi, writing in 1614, held his own Tuscan speech to be a form of Latin that had been debased by the barbarians, especially by the Lombards who ruled for about 200 years before Charles defeated them in 773.⁶³

This shows the persistence with which the vernacular was discredited, even in provincial Tuscany.

In Florence, “*volgare*”⁶⁴ gained precedence over Latin, first among the merchant class, and then among some of the intellectuals. The great story tellers, poets and even preachers spoke “*volgare*”, the Tuscan tongue which was to become the basis for the Italian standard language.

Antiquity. In Italy, there was no break with the traditions of Antiquity. Everything was rooted in those traditions, whether it was philosophy, writing, building or design. For people in Italy, Antiquity was like the classical period is for us – they let themselves be guided by its rich legacy.

They also saw themselves as having their origins in Antiquity. Their educated men made use of this myth.

Interest in Antiquity, characteristically from the point of view of philology, grew during the 15th century. People wanted to know everything in detail. Printing was one of the driving forces behind this. If something appeared in print, it seemed more exact than orally transmitted information.

The intelligentsia was on the rise. Nevertheless, they allowed themselves to be exploited, hoping artfully to use their education to assert themselves.

However, education was not a necessity as it is in our days, so not many people had any schooling. There were hardly any educational institutions. For the most part, education was the result of individual curiosity. Some of the wealthy classes regarded it as a mere status symbol. Others viewed it as a source of enlightenment.

We have little precise information about the history of education in the middle-sized town of Anghiari. Lorenzo Taglieschi, who lived around 1600, and others like him were exceptions. However, their particular level of education can only be explained if we assume there were indeed certain widely accepted standards.

Home life

Living conditions. In fifteenth century Anghiari, 260 families owned their own homes.

We can tell they enjoyed a certain pre-eminence by the fact that they – as home owners – had to pay a contribution to the salary of the *podestà*.

Working backwards from the cadastral records for 1427, we can estimate that about 70% of the heads of families would have been home owners at the height of the Middle Ages.

Presumably there were many children, but not all would reach adulthood.

Furthermore, there were many unmarried persons, living and working in their relatives' houses.

On the basis of our estimate, we may assume that Anghiari had roughly 3,000 to 4,000 inhabitants, making it a good-sized town.

Living together. In those days, living in one's own house was almost a matter of course.

Each extended family had two floors of living space. A family of artisans would work in the large ground-floor room; a farming family would keep their cattle in the same space. The upper storey also comprised one large room, where the family cooked, ate and slept.

Separate rooms. It was only at the end of a long process that our forebears developed a sense of also existing as individuals. It seems to us the most natural thing in the world, but down the ages this sense was anything but natural. The wish to distance oneself from one's fellow men in certain areas of life developed only very slowly.

Gradually the idea of privacy developed among wealthier citizens, with the result that they erected dividing walls or wooden partitions in their sleeping quarters, and produced a number of bedrooms.

For this reason, many houses were raised by one storey during the 14th century. Three-storey houses dominated the streets, then as now.

Water and sewage will be dealt with later.

How the houses were organised. Normal houses had three storeys in the 15th century. The underlying idea was simple and rational: the living space was divided along clear lines, in accordance with the various functions.

A family of artisans would work on the ground floor. There was a large, wide opening on to the street.

A small entrance beside the main one proved the building had a staircase. This meant the building could be organised in a flexible way: it could also be divided up into one-storey flats for poorer people to rent.

The first floor was the space where the family spent the day. Above all, there was the hall where they ate their meals. The women sat here during the afternoon, mostly next to the window, so they had contact with the street. This can be clearly seen in Palazzo Taglieschi, which is a museum nowadays.

The kitchen was in several places, as processing the fruits of the fields was a long process involving a number of stages. One stage took place in the cellar, another in the garden behind the house, a third at the hearth that functioned as a cooking stove. Only big houses had a separate room for the kitchen.

An outside chimney was a rarity. Some examples of one are at 2 Via delle Mura di Sopra; 13 Via delle Mura di Sotto (19th century?); 1 Via Nenci (beside Via della Misericordia).

Several bedrooms were on the second floor.

The extended family. Every family was an extended family. It comprised several generations, normally three: grandparents, parents and children. Additional members were brothers and sisters or uncles and aunts of the owner and his wife. Everyone worked in the family business.

Servants. Wealthy families started taking on servants in the 15th century. Some were live-in servants who counted as part of the family, even if their rank was low. If they were married, and had extended families themselves, they lived in their own houses.

Fireplaces and chimneys. The technology of chimney building was very old and highly developed. In some other regions, the hearth was situated in the middle of the kitchen, which meant the surrounding walls were always black. People in Tuscany were very circumspect in handling fire, turning it into an art. The house owners mostly tried to make a cavity for the hearth in a thick wall, but this was difficult if the house was of ashlar, which is why the area around the hearth was mostly built of bricks.

Occasionally the supporting structure of the hearth was made of wood, but the wood had to be of low flammability. This proved they were not greatly afraid of it catching fire.

Earthquakes. People were more afraid of the many earthquakes than of fire. The old terraced houses fared quite well by holding each other up.

Furniture. The old houses did not contain much furniture, as we can see from the many wills of the time, which often merely mention four plates and a bowl.

Windows. A window regulates the various dimensions of access from the outside world to the inside one, and vice versa. House dwellers can participate in the world outside by looking out. Passers by are able to perceive some signs of the life within. Windows control the climate.

Most of the windows were very small in comparison with the total surface of the walls, as historical sketches (Codice Taglieschi, 1624) show.⁶⁵

Larger windows were a sign of greater prestige.

For centuries, openings in the walls were only closed by shutters. This meant the rooms were gloomy, having little daylight.

Ground-floor windows were smaller and barred. Rather, they were air-holes, because the rooms at that level were not living space, due to rising damp in the walls.

Shutters served to protect the rooms from the sun. They were opened in the mornings to air the rooms and shut over mid-day to keep the sun and the flies out. They were opened wide in the evenings.

Windows connect the outside and inside worlds. You can lie on a window seat gazing out for hours.

Window frames can be meaningful. The town hall has windows set in frames. When the shutters were closed, it meant the people within could withdraw from sight. Passers by could hardly see in, but this did not matter.

Children's windows. Occasionally, houses owned by distinguished families had special windows for children – round ones, underneath the big windows. They were so small that a child could poke its head through to see what was going on, but could not fall out. Examples of these are at 5 Piazza Mameli; 17 Palazzo Taglieschi; 6 Via dell' intoppo.

Window design was significant, as was the design of doors.

Lavatories. At 18 Via Nenci, we can see a lavatory drain (*cesso*) in the north wall of the oldest house.

The lavatory bowl is said to be visible even now, in the wall of the upper storey. The excrement simply fell, like animals' droppings, on to the street.

Only rich people had lavatories. Farmers relieved themselves in the woods, and ordinary folk had chamber pots covered with a plank of wood. Where did the contents go? They were often emptied on to the street, or on to the garden for manure, or chucked over the town wall.

Some rooms were specially designated as lavatories, first in castles, then in convents and finally in the homes of prosperous citizens. They were very small rooms, often situated upstairs, in the corner of a house.

The following examples can still be seen today: the one on the east side of Sant' Agostino monastery, 21 Via delle Mura di Sopra, was built of wood and bricks and set crosswise between two walls; the one at 18 Via Giordano Bruno was also built on high, crosswise to the existing walls.

House number 24 Via della Misericordia contained a one-room flat on every floor for each family that lived there. In the 19th century, a wooden hut with a privy (*gabinetto*, “*vado al liscite*”) was put up for all those living in the house, behind the special door through which the dead were carried out. A pit was dug in the alleyway in front of the house, and covered. Once a year, the faeces were removed by means of a bucket fixed to a long pole, and taken to the fields by cart, to be used as manure.

“When Palazzo Taglieschi was still divided into flats for ordinary folk, we were one of twelve families living in it. There was a single toilet for all of us. Fifty years later, and not only does every family have its own lavatory (*gabinetto*), but in about 1970 the room was enlarged and turned into a bathroom (*bagno*). That's what's you call progress (*progresso*).”

The house mentioned had a place for washing. It was in front of the wall opposite the wooden hut. There is still a stone sink (*acquaio di pietra*) there.

Daylight. People used to live their lives according to the rhythms of nature. They rose with the lark and went to bed with the lamb.

The exceptions were the two summer months of July and August. This meant their hours of sleep were longer in winter and shorter in midsummer.

Goethe wrote while travelling in Italy on 28th October: “It isn't yet eight o'clock (in the evening), and everyone has gone to bed.” Being an intellectual used to a different routine, he added: “I nearly followed their bad [.] example.”⁶⁶

The 1920s saw the end of this rhythm dictated by nature, as electricity became widespread, and it was reinforced in the 1960s, when television became common.

If you went out at night, you had to find your way around in the dark. Wealthy people had a servant bearing a lantern to accompany them.

The beginning of public lamp-lighting of sorts came when the wealthy fixed lanterns next to their gateways. However, these were not lit every evening, but only when the owner wanted.

There is a wrought-iron lamp-holder next to the entrance to Palazzo Taglieschi (16 Piazza Mameli). At the corner of the *stradone/piazza*, the small loggia (built in 1466; refurbished) contains an elaborate wrought-iron lantern from the beginning of the 20th century.

Light was an expensive luxury. For this reason, festivals involved a great display of light. Those who wanted to be highly regarded placed lights on their window sills. The wealthy put flaming torches in holders next to their windows.

In the 16th century, the practice of letting off expensive fireworks on special feast days became widespread.

Fittings on house walls. Many houses had useful fittings attached to their outer walls, for instance iron rings for tying up mules, asses and horses.

We see such rings – some made of stone, some of metal – at ground floor level of house number 2/3/4/5 Piazza Mameli. There is a children's window at upper-storey level. A holder for torches can be seen beside the upper windows. A beam rests on iron bars protruding from the wall beneath the upper

windows; costly hangings used to be hung from it on festival days. Another similar beam was used for the same purpose.

There are five rings on the Taglieschi house (Piazza Mameli 16/17/18), and three others in the Via Garibaldi side, an indication of the many animals in the town.

We can see holders for torches in the upper storeys – four for each of the two storeys. They were lit on feast days.

In addition, there are iron hooks projecting from the wall, with wooden bars resting on them for the display of costly textiles – as in Ghirlandaio's painting of 1483 in Santa Trinità in Florence.

House number 7/9 Via Taglieschi has three stone brackets above the upper-storey windows. Each bears an iron hook, such as is used in present-day guttering. The wooden bar for festive hangings rested on these hooks.

Seating. When the weather was mild, many people took a chair outside and sat in the shade by their doors, changing their positions as the sun cast shadows in different spots. Neighbours often sat together.

Low walls or boulders offered people a chance to sit down; many sat on the wall on the main piazza.

Benches were placed in front of many public buildings (the *vicariato*, Santa Croce arcades). As far as we can tell, the only one to be found in front of a private building was beneath the arcades on the Mercatale.

Store rooms. On Via della Misericordia, store rooms were built into the northern side of the hill. They were once used for agricultural purposes.

In many cases, they were formerly used by small businesses.

In about 1960, they were changed into household utility rooms – for storage, or as laundries or wine cellars, and for other purposes.

Roof-top galleries. In the 16th century, a roof-top gallery was built on to the Taglieschi house (16/17/18 Piazza Mameli) and on the San Martino Convent in the *cassero* on the *piazzuola* (Palazzo del Popolo).

Such roof-top galleries did not become widespread until the 19th century. At this late stage, they were built on to larger houses for drying the laundry (*panni*).

Terraced houses on Via della Misericordia

These are narrow houses – between three and four metres wide. In the 13th century, they had two storeys.⁶⁷

A third storey was built on in the 14th century. It was a sign of population growth in the town and of the fact that there was only room for expansion within the town-fortress, which meant building upwards.

As these houses were built on a slope – some of them were built into the hill – they had deep foundation structures (sub-structures) as well, with one or two basement floors that could be entered from the lower street (Via della Mura di Sopra). These were formerly used for supplies (*fondi*), to house cattle, or as utility rooms.

A person entering the house from the street found himself in the family's only living-space. A ladder-like staircase would lead him up to the living-space of a second family.

There were no walls to divide the room into separate areas. The fireplace was the central feature, and it was here that the womenfolk did the cooking. In winter, the fire was the source of heating. Stores were suspended from the ceiling or kept in a small open cupboard. The daughter of the house would fetch water from the well and place the jug next to the fireplace.

The family had its meals at a medium-size table. Wooden bed frames, with sheets covering their straw mattresses, stood wherever there was space. People hung their clothes over the backs of chairs at night.

They did not have many clothes or much underwear, perhaps a couple of changes when garments were in the wash. Everything was worn for a long time, as laundry work was a drudge. The womenfolk had to walk a long way to where they did their washing.

When they wanted to relieve themselves, people sat on the commode. The pottery bucket was taken into the countryside to manure the fields, or emptied once a day over the town wall.

No privacy at home. People could not live their lives in private. Everyone took part in everything, heard and saw nearly everything, almost without exception. To this extent the second family in the house – often relatives – also lived their lives in public.

Property. A house may have belonged to one family, or to a landlord who let it out to a family with whom he had business connections.

Doorway for the dead. In Umbria, above all in Assisi, there was a widespread belief that the dead should have their own exit. The terraced houses in Anghiari contain remains that point to their having had a separate doorway for the dead too.

Whenever a dead body was fetched from a house, two men removed the masonry from the doorway for the dead. The bearers left the house, passing through the doorway, then walked between the ranks of watching neighbours and carried the dead man to his grave in the church. A mason then came and blocked the doorway up again.

Different rooms for different functions. It was not until 1950 that people's living requirements underwent changes, regarding both quantity and quality. From this time on, the different functions were separated by walls. The cooking area was turned into a kitchen. A thin partition wall, mostly right down the middle of the old one-room flat, provided the family with a living-room at the front. From here, a staircase often led to the floor above.

They slept in a bedroom. Once the family upstairs had moved out, the flat came to have rooms on two floors. The children had their own room on the floor above.

The Taglieschi house (museum)

Everyday life. The building complex on Piazza del Borghetto (Piazza Mamelì) has exhibits documenting the long history of everyday life in a wealthy family. As a museum, it is unique within Tuscany. You get an impression of everyday life through its rooms, objects and pictures.

The wealthy Taglieschi family owned the house for centuries. We know something about a number of its members. References to them indicate they were merchants, land owners and mercenary leaders.

The ensemble of buildings consists of eight houses in all, with over twenty rooms. They were pieced together during the course of the Middle Ages – some being acquired by marriage, others inherited or purchased.

The tower house. It may have been a mercenary leader who had the first tower house built. It was

built in the style of a castle of the rural aristocracy. In Tuscany, it was land-purchasing magnates who brought the tower house into the town.

Merchant's house. A rich merchant must have had a house built on the south side, next to this tower house. Downstairs, a large gate and a flight of steps led to the working area. The family walked up an open staircase to the upper floor.

A narrow alleyway came next, with other houses built behind it.

We can only guess at the details of how the family came to put the various houses together. Once they had acquired the houses on both sides of the alleyway, they turned the alleyway into an open courtyard, building a wall with a gate in it. They probably built rooms over the courtyard at a later date.

Major alterations. Matteo di Antonio di Bartolomeo Taglieschi (1462-1490), a mercenary general who had been in the service of Genoa, Florence and Bologna, may have been responsible for setting sweeping new building measures in train. As usual, he had a nickname, which in his case was revealing: Matteo Cane = cur⁶⁸. He undertook several missions to negotiate on behalf of his home town. His gains were to some extent ill-gotten, since they came to him largely in the form of booty. The Taglieschis were reputedly the richest family in the 15th and 16th centuries.

They were proud to be distant relations of the Malatesta family. Malatesta was ruler (*signore*) of the town of Rimini and the owner of large tracts of land in Romagna. This connection gave added prestige to the Taglieschis, in a society that attributed almost magical significance to such things.

The architect responsible for the conversion project may have been Maestro Santi di Benedetto di Santi da Settignano. He settled in Anghiari ⁶⁹, where he received a number of commissions (the altar of St. Mary and St. Matthew of 1461 funded by Matteo Cane; the façade of Sant'Agostino of 1472). The master probably brought avant-garde art with him from Florence to the provinces.

How do I gain access to Museo Taglieschi? By walking and using your senses.

But what is the significance of the rooms, tools, objects and pictures? Sadly, that is another story. Nearly all museums in Italy fail to provide visitors with intelligent answers. Labelling is sparse; even the well informed find it unhelpful.

The concept of the museum fails to provide visitors with a context of any kind, so they are forced to work things out by themselves, even though they have not learnt to ask the right questions. The outcome is disastrous: visitors naively draw their own conclusions and ignorance is perpetuated.

What should an enlightened concept for the museum be like?

The main entrance is very large and intelligently constructed.

The wealthy paid particular attention to making their doors secure, affixing several heavy wrought iron bolts, wooden bars, and of course locks. All the doors look equally strong, especially those on the western side with their strong nails of iron.

The individual parts of the main door could be opened in various ways. Small windows enabled those indoors to check who was outside. Two upper openings could be opened to let fresh air in without opening the door. In the rear part of the ground floor, we shall see a door whose every leaf has a small window with a grating. Other houses used to have small shuttered windows of this kind too.

The ground-floor windows are also fitted with several bolts. These precautionary measures were the result of long experience: fear, suspicion, worry, caution, the need to be safe and defend oneself.

The entrance hall was originally an alleyway, later it was rebuilt as a courtyard. The staircase to the upper storeys was for many centuries open to the sky. (It was not covered until modern times.)

For a long time, there was no clear distinction between inside and outside areas. People reacted

differently to heat and the cold – they did not share our standards, and were not pampered to the degree that we are.

Pierre Bourdieu taught us to pick out the subtle signs for differentiation in status, not merely with reference to social class. He wanted us to observe differences in importance, whether something was held in high regard, or what prestige was attached to rooms and objects.

Thus, the portal door to the counting-house was of a completely different design from the simple entrance to the basement.

The basement. When we enter from the square, passing through a portal on the right-hand side of the main entrance and going down four steps, we find ourselves in the basement utility area (*cantina*).

This floor was not a living area, because the damp rises from the earth into the walls. This did not matter as long as people were moving about and working. The house dwellers could only live and sleep on the upper floors. The front part of this floor was used for trading purposes.

It seems that vaulting was added at the time the houses were being converted – apparently to make the rooms more prestigious in the eyes of the people of those days. To this end, the architect had brick pillars built in front of the walls, a little taller than the height of a fully grown man, from which sharp-edged stone vaulting rose. In the middle, they rest on a short, thick, circular pillar of ashlar. In this way, the rooms were strengthened and at the same time given a degree of prestige.

There are two window seats in the large niche beside the door to the street, so people could sit down during a break from work, have a rest, satisfy their curiosity. Some of them would be actively joining in, some watching. They could observe lively goings-on, as this was once a very busy square, the centre for business and trades in the town.

In the middle of the entrance to the next room, the owner allowed himself what was then a luxury: quarrying and building a decent 16-metre-deep, fully walled well, which he then more or less put on display for all to see.

Having crossed a narrow barrel-vaulted room, we come to a third room that has a strong door giving on to a narrow side alleyway between two houses. This must have been the point of delivery for goods arriving or being fetched by mule and small carts. Presumably this part of the house was formerly used as a store.

If we climb some stairs, we come to the ground floor of the next-door house that was incorporated during the conversion process. Two of the next three rooms are vaulted with barrel and shallow vaulting. These rooms, that also have an exit on to the alleyway, may have been used as stables for beasts of burden.

A number of vessels for storing all kinds of food would have been on display, in a certain logical sequence. Liquids such as oil were kept, transported and even despatched in vessels of fired clay. The potter's craft was therefore highly developed.

Two hand mills and an olive press are evidence of the fact that raw materials were processed here.

A light was presumably lit in a small niche. A statue may have stood in the larger niche below it.

All the floors were re-fashioned at the time of the conversion project, using identical broad and quite carefully hewn flagstones.

Atmosphere. Let us imagine how different the rooms used to be. They are now so quiet and almost ritualised, but they would have been full of people, the atmosphere would have been one of work, noise and bustle; facts would have been enunciated, words spoken in jest, or as curses. One could bring this all to life by means of stage productions, or at least with photographs and audio recordings. The

museums lack the inner consistency that is demanded of them. They still feel it is their duty to create an aura of sanctity or feudal gentility, although both these concepts have been shaped by prejudice.

Time. The sun dial (1846) is one of those objects that point to the original and simple way our ancestors related to time. The museum could use the many bells to demonstrate the language of signals transmitted publicly over long distances, thus emphasising the fact that our concept of time and our feeling for it have changed over the years.

The office. To the south of the main entrance, we experience a spatial contrast. There is a much smaller but longer room on a mezzanine floor, with a way down to the ground floor below. The two cupboards indicate that this room was presumably used as a counting house. It was not only the movement of goods that was registered here in large books of account; this was also the office from which countryside properties were administered. There are two windows high up the wall; we can imagine the lighting was dim.

On the back wall there are two objects on show: an iron locking device for a door and two locks. This is the famous “*catorcio*”, the key to the town gate that a group of youths from Sansepolcro stole in 1450.

The pictures on view are described later.

The hall. A staircase leads up to the hall on the first floor. Its irregular dimensions point to its builders having had trouble in converting the earlier buildings to chime in with the taste prevailing in Florence around 1480-1490.

The large space was used mainly as a dining area. The extended family – three generations together with uncles and aunts, and maybe servants too – met there for meals, and to talk over the events of the day.

The walls are traditionally simple, refined and elegant. The doors are placed like sculptures in the walls; the centre of attraction is the fireplace.

Moulded doors were highly prized. The south door, which pre-dated the hall by one hundred years, was greatly admired, even though its style had gone out of fashion.

Dealing with heat and the cold. It was not until a few decades ago that other forms of heating replaced stoves and open fires, which had previously been the only forms available. This is linked to surplus energy in the industrial era and a vast increase in the number of workers doing jobs sitting down, who need a higher temperature at their workplace to keep their circulation going.

People used to work as artisans, and in their free time they stood around on the streets and squares.

For these people, the open fire was a place of refuge in the cold months from January to April. In the evenings, they gathered round the fire to talk over the day and to swap stories.

This makes it clear why a fireplace has something of a monumental character. It became ritualised through the signs of its form.

The labyrinthine Taglieschi house contains a large number of rooms and several fireplaces.

The family had its ritualised signet – its coat of arms – raised over the fireplace.

Chimneypieces and hearths. The technology of chimney and flue construction is very old and highly developed. In some other regions, the fireplace was situated in the middle of the kitchen, resulting in black walls all around. The Tuscans understood heating very well and their appliances were sophisticated.

Owners of buildings mostly tried to put their fireplaces in a thick wall. If a wall is built of ashlar, this can be a problem. For this reason, most fireplaces were built of bricks. We can see this at 43 Via

Garibaldi, to the north of Palazzo Taglieschi. Many other houses, for instance 24 Via del Castello Antico, have the same feature.

Sometimes the support structure was also made of wood – but of wood that was slow to ignite. This shows they did not greatly fear an outbreak of fire.

Ceiling construction. The great hall has the same ceiling as all other houses of the time, with smaller two-metre beams resting on upright rectangular beams. They were placed close together, in order that tiles could be laid on top of them.

Sometimes a construction of this kind was in need of repairs. We know an accident occurred in the Abbey hall when, in 1450, a beam from the ceiling fell with its tip pointing downwards, killing one of the priests.⁷⁰

The organ was not originally from the Taglieschi house, but from Santo Stefano church at the foot of the hill. The music that comes from a cassette player was played on this organ. The organist is playing a piece from the first half of the 16th century, a piece of the “sweet” music beloved of the people of that time. It is a soft instrument, designed quite differently from the mighty organs of later times. The music is meditative in character – almost psychedelic. Its byword is simplicity. Only later would virtuosity come to the fore.

Sitting down. Seats were by no means taken for granted, but the Taglieschi house contains a striking number of seats.

Seating was even ritualised, with some chairs assuming the character of thrones. The substance of the chair gave rise to a feeling of self-aggrandisement in the sitter.

A view from the window. It was possible to sit and at the same time gaze out of the window from one of the window seats. They were mostly used by women, who did not appear on the streets and squares as often as their menfolk.

The extended family, comprising a wide spectrum of relatives, lived in the house.

How was the building complex organised to cope with this? The lives of the various branches of the family were intertwined. They had no privacy, as they would have nowadays. The large rooms were mainly used for dining. Doors from these rooms led to bedrooms for the individual families.

This kind of life must have resulted in many conflicts. Nevertheless, we must not imagine that the families had great expectations of going their separate ways.

How did they manage their conflicts? They were trained to polish their behaviour through a highly developed process of civilisation.

We might wonder whether there are clues in the art of the time and its language of expression. We find, for example, a marked tendency towards softness, communication, consensus.

Side rooms. The two northerly side rooms may have been former bedrooms. The larger corner-room at the front could be heated in winter. A cupboard with locks was let into the wall, maybe for the safekeeping of jewellery. The next room has two window seats, which were clearly a favourite vantage point for observing what was then the main street.

The inhabitants did not mind the everyday hubbub. Sensitivity to noise is a recent phenomenon.

Back room. From the narrow landing, we enter a small room that could also be heated. We are greeted by a bearded male figure and a long-haired female next to the fireplace – perhaps recalling evening conversations beside the hearth, which were a frequent feature of daily life. We know this from Baldassare Castiglione's famous book on the education of courtiers, which to a large extent deals with evening discussions by the fireside.⁷¹

A window (with a window seat) looks out on the short, formerly very busy, alleyway.

Two portraits show us that Spanish ways and manners became fashionable in Central Italy in the 17th century.

One of the portraits is of the poet who told the tale of the stolen town key.

The map of the tombs in the church of San Antonio provides information on family structures in Anghiari.

A floor for guests. The steep main staircase brings us to the second floor. The great first-floor hall has its counterpart here. Doorways, chimneypieces and ceiling are all more opulent than those of the floor below. The reason for this lies not only in the style of the times, but also in the use to which the room was put.

This was probably an apartment for guests. The motto on the chimneypiece, which they would have been constantly confronted with, also points in that direction. It reads: *Fingere et chognoscere*, roughly meaning “Please note which family you are visiting”. The family is symbolically depicted by means of the Taglieschi coat-of-arms.

While it is true that the motto was originally in Latin, the owner of the house reproduced it in the local dialect, the language of the people. Why? Was this a concession to those who did not understand Latin properly?

The process structure of objects. Under the left-hand window in the hall, there is a small, rectangular opening that is round on the outside. What was it for? Guests could have brought children with them too. Just like adults, children also needed to look out, at other children. They could do that here, without any risk of falling out. They could also establish contact between the indoor and the outdoor world.

We can learn from this theory that objects – as objects – fail to yield explanations. It is only processes that can explain things. We should not regard objects as fetishes, but as processes in the guise of matter.

The bedrooms. Guests could presumably withdraw into the northern corner-room. It may have been their dressing room. It might have been a room for a guest's maid-servant and her child. There is a window on each side, giving views in two directions. Nowadays the room contains exhibits of costly woven cloth and kitchen appliances.

The second room must have been the guests' bedroom. There is a lockable cupboard in the wall next to the door. We can still see the remains of painted textile wall coverings. If the family did not have enough money for the very expensive originals, a painter was engaged to create an illusion – later this process gave rise to wallpaper as we know it.

Present-day exhibits are of costly materials. Magnificent cloths of this kind were worn by priests on church feast days.

From a room forming a passageway on the west side of the hall, one has a view of the courtyard and staircase. It may have been used as a bedroom.

We do not know what use the next few rooms were put to either.

The kitchen. The room in the south part of the house, with its fireplace and its sink set in the wall, might have been a kitchen. If that were the case, the front room was perhaps a multi-functional living space and kitchen extension, with a second sink and a servants' dining room. Over time, the servants were in fact required to keep away from the more prestigious areas of the house. Their working rooms and some bedrooms were presumably one floor higher up. Most of the servants, however, had their

own homes in the town.

If you opened the corner cupboard, you could look through a small window on to the south side of the square.

There must have been a way of access to the next-door house on the south side, where presumably some people associated with the Taglieschis lived.

What happened to the house in later years? The building complex fell into the hands of an equally rich family, the Angiolieris. Later owners were the Testi family and finally the Lisis.

In 1881, the complex was bequeathed to the church. It was intended to serve as a poor house.⁷²

“I was born in the house”, says one elderly woman. “My father was a stonemason. Nine families lived in the big house. One room was divided into two kitchens, one for each of two families. The main floor was good. There was a café downstairs with tables outside on the square. There was a room next to it, where toffees were sold. You never forget things like that.”

The families never quarrelled. Why not? We were all poor. All the children gathered in our flat. We played housey-housey and cards; we danced as if we were in a disco. There was no water in the house, we got it from the well on the corner. Whenever I wanted to get out, my excuse was that I was going to fetch water. The staircases were dark. I met other people at the well. I was very sad when I had to leave to get married. My parents died in the flat. The stories are never-ending.”

An engineer owned the house for a while. He offered the families the option of buying their flats. “But we couldn't buy. We had no money. Then we were bundled off into the house opposite, the one with the Marzocco.” In 1951, Don Nilo Conti, the parish priest at the *Propositura*, bought the house and donated it to the state. With great foresight, he stipulated that it should be turned into a museum. Conti himself collected many of the present exhibits.

Streets

Life on the street. For thousands of years, until the 1970s, one half of life was lived on the streets. Nowadays, the streets in the historic centre of town seem largely silent and deserted. People of earlier centuries would be very surprised at this.⁷³

Formerly most dwellings were small. The poor only had one room. This was why they spent part of the day in front of their houses – on the street or a nearby square. This was especially true in mild weather or in the summer months.

The doors were always open during the daytime. A curtain of closely tied strings was hung up to keep the flies out.

Some household objects were kept outside: brooms, poles, shoes, saucepans, laundry – anything for which there was no more room in the narrow living quarters.

Flowers were not grown outside until much later, probably as late as the 1960s. There was a very good reason for this: a lack of water. People had no water in their houses, the only water was in the well serving their quarter of the town.

Living room. The street was a public living room. All generations gathered there – small children, young people, adults and the elderly. Your extended family and your neighbours were there too. These were close and extensive street communities.

The womenfolk sat on small chairs in front of their houses, doing some of their kitchen chores there in the mornings.

They looked for company, often sitting in a group.
In the afternoons they mended clothes or sewed new ones.
Above all, the elderly had their place in front of their houses, where it was easy to find company. Many of them had difficulty in walking.

Men and women played cards or diced together.

The dimensions of the streets encouraged this kind of communication.

The streets were loud (until the 1980s). They formed spaces for sounds that often carried a fair distance and could not be ignored. In most cases, everyone could hear what was being said. Many speakers had sonorous voices.

Goethe made the following general observation in his Italian Journey: “ ... into the labyrinth of the town ... As a rule, one can measure, or almost measure, the width of an alley with outstretched arms; in the narrowest, one cannot even stretch them to their fullest extent. There are some wider streets, but all are relatively narrow.”⁷⁴

Street theatre. All the world's a stage, and every day is a constant drama – in the best sense of the word. The closely built houses in the old part of the town form a permanent stage.

Against this backdrop, it is possible for absolutely normal things to develop, alongside a measure of the ritual and monumental in everyday life. At certain moments, you can witness people, even if they are peasants, performing monumental acts.

You get the feeling that the divine is there at that moment, not just anywhere, and not somewhere else.

A wealth of pictures is created.

Is it any wonder that it is intensified in artists' paintings?

Story telling. All communication was by word of mouth. Up to the 19th century, few people could read and write.

Stories were told without end, nearly all of them local ones. The stories were about the townsfolk themselves.

Not many people saw the outside world. Those who did told tales of their heroic deeds when they got home. All this seemed exotic and very desirable to the stay-at-homes.

When television was introduced, the focus shifted from local stories to the exotic.

Work and the street. On the historic street, a person's workplace was very close to public space.

Frequently, his workplace stretched beyond his door on to the street, so that the street also became a working space. When the weather was mild and warm, some paid employment took place on the street.

This started when artisans used the street as a temporary store for some of their materials, leant planks against the wall, fetched a table from the house so they could work outside.

Traders mostly offered their wares for sale on the street. Itinerant tradesmen walked around.

In front of the windows. Everyone could see what kind of linen other people had, because the laundry would hang on washing lines stretched between the windows.

Next to the windows there was often a semicircular stone, on which stood a chamber pot – especially if it was full – to banish any smells from the room.

A view of the street was what people wanted. The inhabitants of a house could not always walk out on to the street, but they wished to participate as much as possible in life outside.

The Taglieschi house has many rooms with a view. On the ground floor, two stone window seats are built into a niche. The hall has a round window for children, which allowed them to look out in safety

by themselves.

Neighbourhood areas. The townsfolk always viewed their immediate surroundings as their neighbourhood. It was here that the most important events in public life took place. Everyone knew almost everyone. Neighbours organised procedures to help each other out. It had always been like this from time immemorial. They gave each other mutual assistance in good times and in bad.

The areas have names: Rione di Sant'Agostino. Rione del Poggiolino. Rione tra le mura, below the Poggiolino. Rione delle due porte on Via Taglieschi. Rione della Calabria, on the way to Porta Sant'Angelo. Rione dei cordoni. (*Cordoni* are thick ropes; on the right of the steep path behind Piazza Mameli, the house next to the well, where the PCI now is, used to be a shop that made and sold ropes). Rione della Piazzuola.

Town planning. The fact that these are very small areas is a sign that people viewed their surroundings in a very tangible way – they restricted themselves to what was near to them.

Even now, many centuries later, most people think similarly. This also applies to the world's biggest cities. Look carefully, and you will soon notice that people think their neighbourhood is the most important part of their surroundings. The underlying idea is still that of a small village. The Quartier Latin in Paris is a kind of village, with all the literary associations that have come down to us from numerous writers. People remain real people. If a town expands greatly, to them it is a collection of small areas.

In fact, the images of a town that many town planners present in their publications are abstractions that lack any empirical foundation. They are the products of wishful thinking, the flashy pictures of advertisements, but for the inhabitants themselves they are of secondary importance. They do not belong to real life processes, but in the world of entertainment.

Room for movement. When men and beasts move, it is never in a straight line. Straight lines only came with mechanised propulsion.

Man has been ejected from any space that has a purely mechanical function.

The space we need for movement must be at least as wide as our outstretched arms + space to left and right + room to reach above our heads + room to breathe.

Different ways

In Italy, this is very often provided by walls whose openings have these approximate dimensions. Mostly, there is an arch above our heads.

Tracks

In this town, we are always aware of tension between inside and outside.

Many of those who dwell in the narrow old part of the town have a garden. It lies where everything looks very different from the residential street.

Since the 14th century, the main square – the Mercatale – has been outside the fortress wall. (It is now known as Piazza Baldaccio.)

Labyrinth. Walking through the town is like making your way through a labyrinth. The townsfolk have known the tangled paths since childhood and have no difficulty in getting around.

Factors. The network of paths has been determined by the topography of Anghiari.⁷⁵ When we walk

around the present-day town, it is still the topography that is our guide. We are thus led by mankind's experience since ancient times – the experience of our legs. It is the terrain that has determined the tracks of the paths.

Another factor is property ownership. Most land was parcelled out centuries ago. It is hardly ever possible to buy a piece of someone's land, especially if there is a house standing on it.

Thirdly, the use of the roads reflects traffic development.

The fourth factor is cultural. On the one hand people were keen to demonstrate their prestige, and on the other they took pleasure in designing the space available to them.

Types of paths. How do the paths differ in quality? A closer look reveals that there are three types of path.

The oldest path over the hill was wide enough for carts. This type of road originated in Antiquity.

The paths on the walls are narrow. Only two persons or two mules could pass here, providing the mule driver walked behind his beast. These paths were made when transport was by mule.

This type of path is exemplified by the steep, ramp-like transverse road.

A cul-de-sac ends in a courtyard.

The paths in the *borghetto* vary in width. In some places they are very narrow (Via Giordano Bruno; Via Taglieschi), in others they are fairly wide. When people took up residence along these streets (around 1200) there was some traffic by cart.

The long, straight street is uniquely broad, which points to its having been built for prestige purposes.

The Renaissance road is the present-day Via Mazzini (16th century). Its width is not its defining characteristic, but the fact that it is self-contained.

The oldest path leads in two directions. Coming from the Sovara Valley, it runs over the ridge of the hill and then passes along the present-day Via Matteotti, Piazza Baldaccio, Porta San Martino, Via Giordano Bruno, Via Garibaldi into the Upper Town, until it reaches Piazza del Popolo.

From the Tiber Valley, it leads on the south-eastern side to the present-day Porta Sant'Angelo, snaking up the s-shaped bends of the ravine⁷⁶ (Via delle Mura di Sopra), Via del Castello Antico and up to Piazza del Popolo.

It is the most straightforward form of road: it leads to a particular destination, and the path it takes corresponds, where possible, to the topographical situation.

The system of rings of terraces. To the north and east of the Upper Town, a second system of paths was created: ring-shaped paths along terraces. These were built not to provide a way to a particular destination, but owed their existence to the structure of the fortress. After every change in its structure, the paths remained.

One might mention at this point that the paths and waterways of Amsterdam developed in the same way.

In Anghiari, this resulted in the formation of a system of rings. It was based on people's inclination to walk comfortably, which developed at an early stage in Central Italy. Comfort came at a price – the steep ramps, or even steps, of the linking roads.

Thus, the terraced paths follow the contour lines. The intermediary ways cut across them at right angles.

The oldest paths in the Upper Town are wide enough for a man and his mule to pass another man and his mule at a slow pace.

Here are some examples. Via Nenci from west to east: 2.20m; 1.90m; 2.00m. Via della Misericordia: 1.90m; 2.30m; 1.80m. Via delle Mura di Sopra: 1.60m; 2.30m; 5.00m; 3.20m. Via del Castello Antico: 2.60m; 2.20m; 2.40m; 2.70m. Vicolo della Piazzuola: 2.60m; 2.50m.

Footpaths. The network of paths to the *borghetto* is just as ancient as the way up the hill, but its origins are different. It is made up of ancient footpaths.

People can also cross over the way up the hill in the lowest part of the Upper Town. They can now walk to Piazza Mameli through the tunnel. Once there, they have the alternative of going south, taking the southern Via Taglieschi to the Tiber Valley, or taking Via della Torre and climbing up to the southern ridge.

If they come from the south, from the Tiber Valley, they can walk along Via Taglieschi to the present-day Piazza Baldaccio. This was how the mediaeval Via del Borghetto di Sopra came into being. It is roughly parallel to the hill path.

In earlier times, it was possible for an ox cart to take this road in the Lower Town, the artisans' quarter. A second cart had to wait at a passing place before going on its way.

Here are some examples. Via Garibaldi: 3.70m; 4.00m; 3.60m. Via Giordano Bruno: 2.30m. Vicolo del Poeta: 1.70m; 3.00m.

Transverse roads. As this system served small-scale social structures, there were narrow side roads in the Upper Town and *borghetto*. They gave quick access to the terrace-type roads.

These transverse roads were the lowest in a hierarchy of ways. Therefore, at some time or other, they were closed in parts.

One such example in the Upper Town is Via Piazzuola. We have evidence of an abandoned side alley in Via Nenci.

Via del Poeta in the Upper Town is still there. A transverse road led through the Taglieschi House (on the west side – a short stretch is still visible).

Narrow unnamed alleyways lead off Via della Torre in both directions. The southern one leads to the double wall; the northern one comes to an end after a few paces. The Testi family obviously closed it while developing their Palazzo Testi building complex, after the property came into their hands.

This area is densely built up with very tall houses. For example, house number 7/9/11 has up to four floors projecting above the double wall.

Superstructures are discussed later.

Steps. The way between two terraces is mostly in the form of a steep ramp or flight of steps. Historically, these originated at a time when there was hardly any traffic by cart.

One example is Vicolo della Piazzuola. The most spectacular steps are on Vicolo del Poeta. Via della Misericordia has steps too, and above all Via della Torre. Via del Fosso only has steps in its upper section. There are steps from Via del Pratino to the steep hillside. The end of Via del Teatro has steps.

The fortress area in the Upper Town did not develop its own network of roads on account of its social structure. A military mind reduces the number of access points, in order to keep better control.

There was probably only one point of access – on the present-day Piazza del Popolo.

The designed road. In 1323, the town ruler created another road system. The long straight road.

Many people switched to using this road, because it was more effective. The way over the hill declined in importance. The Upper Town was marginalised, because the economic focus shifted to the *borghetto* and Mercatale (Piazza Baldaccio). The new axis was a visible sign of this shift.

The new road was unusually broad – 18 ells. This width was a sign of the prestige attached to the

road.

After power shifted to Florence, the long road (*stradone*) became subject to building regulations. The original width of 19 ells (*braccia*) had to be respected, in order to prevent the construction of any insufficiently elegant buildings.⁷⁷

The long straight road has always been important for the appearance and the image of Anghiari. It is characteristic and memorable. One indication of its significance is its appearance in so many paintings.

The road system in the surrounding area

Transport. Donkeys and mules can stand the heat better than horses, which is why their use became so widespread in the Mediterranean area. A donkey can carry over 200 kilos.

For many centuries, horses were the Mercedes of their times. They enabled their riders to move at great speed. The amazing notary, Giusto Giusti of Anghiari, was able to cover long distances in Tuscany quickly and frequently.⁷⁸

Later roads for cars. A similar far-reaching transformation came about in the industrial age, when the northern bypass, Via Nova, was built.

Paving of roads. Over a period of time, the authorities paid for some roads to be paved out of the public purse, because roads threw up dirt, which could soil delicate goods. This was a costly and major undertaking.

Parata was the name given to the cost of re-surfacing or paving a road, or of repairing a bridge to make it fit for princely visitors.⁷⁹

Some data point to differences between medium-size towns and large cities. In 1241, a scheme for paving roads was drawn up in Bologna. In 1339, the whole of Florence was surfaced with tiles and paving stones.⁸⁰ In Anghiari, the roads were not comprehensively paved until the 16th century.

In 1506, the long straight road (*stradone*) was re-surfaced. Tiles (*mattoni*) covered more than half its length, and stones (*sassi*) were used for the remainder.⁸¹

In 1510, Piazza Mercatale was paved together with the road from Porta Fiorentina to the *vicario's* palace, and from there to the Abbey church. The house owners had to bear two-thirds of the cost of paving the road in front of their property; the municipality made up the rest. Giovanni Batista di Verano and Filippo di Vettorio were in charge of the entire project for paving the roads and the Mercatale.⁸²

Many family clans were becoming increasingly prosperous. They looked for ways to make their prestige visible and put their wealth on show. The opulence of their houses extended to the public domain in the form of an opulent “floor” covering for the road. The word “beauty” was specifically used.

In 1536, the entire length of two roads was paved; one road started at the Ligi family home on (present-day) Piazza Mameli, going up Via Garibaldi, along Via Nenci, as far as the Abbey; the other was Via della Vecchia (Via della Misericordia), also known as Via del Pozzo di Ser Agnolo.

Wealth was an important aspect: property owners bore two-thirds of the costs and the municipality one third.

There were practical reasons too. When it rained, the unpaved roads were muddy and full of puddles. Paved roads were thought to be “healthy” and a “protection against damp soil”.⁸³

In 1539, the road round the Church of the Cross (Via intorno la Chiesa del Crocifisso), the

Franciscan church of Santa Croce, was paved with tiles.⁸⁴

In 1540, the roads near the Abbey church were paved: under the vaulting of the *piovano* (the parish priest's – presumably the present-day Via del Castello Antico) up to the Compagnia Nera (Via della Misericordia).⁸⁵

In 1547, a quiet year, Via del Borgo della Croce (the long straight road, *stradone*) was re-surfaced from its middle, i.e. the large Mercatale square. As there were always large muddy puddles (*fanghi*) there, it was paved with large stones from the river (*siliciare di sassi*). This type of paving stone was less elegant than tiles. It seems the municipality, having failed to persuade the property owners to bear the expense, had to pay in full.⁸⁶

Strada del Terrato (Via Mazzini), which led into the countryside, became an elegant road. Prosperous property owners and the municipality had it paved with tiles in 1583, splitting the costs in the usual way. On the northern side, a new bridge was built over the stream.⁸⁷

In 1558, the following roads were paved with tiles (*mattoni*): the stretch of the *stradone* in front of the *dogana* (customs house); certain parts near the wall of the arcades on the piazza; the path (Via della Piaggia, the path on the slope) leading from the well (nowadays under the arcades) up to Porta Fiorentina.

The building contractor's name was Aluigi di Niccolò Musetti.

He also had Via della Tomba paved.

The total spent on roadworks in that year was 20 gold *scudi*.⁸⁸

In 1580, one of the remaining stretches of the long straight road, from the middle of the *borgo* to the church, was paved with stones (*sassi*), in order to rid it of puddles.⁸⁹

The following illustrates the fact that it was only later that paving a road was considered to be a sign of elegance. The *vicario* did not have the *vicariato* courtyard paved (*lastricare*) until 1571. In order to make it even more elegant, he had the courtyard enlarged and a new wall put up “with a beautiful stone portal” (*con una bella porta di pietra*).⁹⁰

Ritualisation. There were many magical signs in Anghiari: coats of arms on the Taglieschi house, on Sant'Agostino and on private houses (57 Via Garibaldi). Balconies are to be found on the fort (*cassero*; 1334) and on the Abbey church (17th century). In a small number of places we find niches and cult figures, as on the *vicario*'s palace (1398) and Mercatale chapel. It was not until the 19th century that small statues of the Madonna appeared here and there. The corner of the Taglieschi house (17 Piazza Mameli/Via Garibaldi) has a slender column topped with a capital – a sign of distinction.

A drama in several acts is how one might describe the succession of scenes unfolding before a pedestrian's eyes as he walks along the various paths.

People have not long been historically aware of these things. We may assume that for a long time they focused almost exclusively on the functionality of their surroundings.

If we are to examine the drama, it will make sense for us to trace the two sequences that cropped up most frequently in historical everyday life.⁹¹

The oldest way over the hill. People used to start off at the vast square, cross the drawbridge and pass through a narrow gate. The path then bends (Via Giordano Bruno) and widens. After a second bend, it narrows again for a few paces. It then widens again into a kind of square (Via Garibaldi), narrowing slightly once more as it goes uphill. Suddenly we are standing on an elongated triangular square. We cross it on its narrowest side and go on climbing up a fairly steep slope. When we have almost reached the top, we see an ancient gate. The path narrows and is built over. There comes

another sharp bend. The path levels out somewhat and then opens out on to the oldest square (Piazza del Popolo).

We cross the square and walk down the path (Via del Castello Antico), which narrows under a superstructure, bends sharply, widens a little, then falls steeply to the valley, tracing an S-shape path (Via delle Mura di Sopra) to Porta di Sant'Angelo.

If we start from the *stradone*, we come via the deviation point of Piazzetta della Fontana to a ramp (Via Carlo Corsi), and proceed up to Porta Fiorentina. It is no longer possible to work out its original state. The contrast is there: wide and narrow. The path bends (Via Garibaldi), followed by a surprise. There is a small square. The path bends again, opening out gradually. The scene is almost that of a fairly broad square. If we cast our eyes sideways, between the tall houses, a downward look reveals a narrow and exciting flight of steps. The path narrows again a little in front of Sant'Agostino. A high-walled ravine, but there is light beyond it. Suddenly the triangular square opens up. Our view widens, as does the space. We enter it, walk along and up. It narrows. At the crossroads, we turn off in a south-easterly direction. The way leads us through a ravine to a gate on the south side of the wall and out into the southern area. Our view broadens. The scene changes dramatically.

These are probably the two most important dramatic sequences in the long history of this small town.

Tourists have developed a sense of how to work out new pathway dramas for themselves. The labyrinthine old town offers many opportunities for this, especially on its northerly side (Via delle Mura di Sopra and others).

The contrast between the three-cornered square and the tunnel sloping downwards on its northern side is particularly exciting. At the end of the tunnel, the path bends, and we open our eyes wide to look over the wall into the valley that soon widens into the expanse of the Tiber Valley. The path continues along the wall (Via delle Mura di Sotto), in a broad semicircular arc around the Old Town to Porta Sant'Angelo.

The distances are not great. Starting at the Mercatale, we can reach Piazza del Popolo in the Upper Town within a space of just under ten minutes. It takes about the same length of time to walk up the long straight road to the arcades.

Squares

Markets were not everywhere. They were privileged places. Farmers travelled for hours to gather there and sell their produce.

Market places were mainly there for producers from the surrounding area. They carried their wares into town on market days, and the municipality allotted them a space.

Exchange took place in various directions. The peasants used the money they made to buy artisans' products that were only available in the market town – either because they were manufactured there, or because the town functioned as an entrepôt.

Thus, crafts established themselves in the market town alongside jobs in trading. For centuries, there was a large community of highly skilled artisans in Anghiari.

Differentiation in the market. The busier the exchange, the greater the feeling that a special place should be assigned to the market. As a result, special areas were allotted to the most important types of trading, which gave rise to a chain of marketplaces.

In Anghiari, this happened within a confined space. All this is an indication of the size and importance of Anghiari in the later part of the Middle Ages – it was a middle-sized town.

The Piazzuola. For centuries, there were three small market squares in the Upper Town, the Piazzuola being the people's square. The castle had a courtyard, and the monastery too. To be more precise, since 1359, once the monastery had moved, it was the courtyard of the *vicario's* palazzo (*atrio*). The public square was once the smallest of the important town squares.

The *vicariato* courtyard was walled and gated. It was enlarged in 1571. We can see how large it was from the extent of the present tiled pavement.⁹²

A large cistern was put in front of the chapel.

We cannot now tell precisely where the castle square began and where it ended.

Piazza del Borghetto (Piazza Mameli). A road, originally a footpath, led to the Upper Town. Everything was utilitarian in the extreme, nothing was the product of careful consideration. There may already have been houses on the eastern side.

The crossroads took up rather more space than usual. What for? For carts to turn? Or because the townsfolk and the authorities agreed that such points were a “scenic attraction”, or a meeting place? There may even have been a tree for people to meet under.

The square used to be bigger on its northern side. In order to give Sant'Agostino church a courtyard, a wall was built in 1468.⁹³ Water could be drawn from the well (1323) on both sides.

Let us read the square like a story. A heavily laden man would walk home from the market. When he reached the level of the square, he was relieved to rest there for a moment. What did he find there? What did he feel on entering the square? What uses was it put to?

The Latin word for square, *platea*, indicated level ground. In hilly terrain, a flat space is not the rule, but rather the exception. It was either created by chance or by earth works. In Anghiari, all the roadways to the square are on an incline, or even a steep slope. Our man climbing the hill on his way home was grateful for some flat ground, which he could walk over more easily and with less effort.

He also experienced the fact that this quarter of the town was densely built up, full of dwellings, every available space was put to use, with the town wall acting like a corset.

There were families and children galore, a huge amount of social density, with a minimum of free space and only one alleyway. Many people would be standing around; some artisans would be working in the open air.

A pedestrian emerging from the narrow alleys was in for a sudden surprise – his view would suddenly broaden. The square was like a forest clearing.

This feeling could be even more extreme when a townsman was climbing up the northern side, between the houses, passing through the tunnel created by the buildings spanning the alleyway. In this case, the space was put to use at different levels.

Our pedestrian experienced something else – the square covered a limited space. The townsman felt protected, safe. Intimacy meant other people were nearby. An impression like this cannot be created if everything is on a larger scale.

He was bound to gain the impression that a large number of people lived here. It was a densely populated neighbourhood (quite unlike a large Parisian square created in the 19th century).

We can understand and empathise with the townsman. His feelings were paradoxical, but very real. We are dealing with many layers of experience.

The square would affect the townsfolk in different ways, depending on their original states of mind.

It intruded on feelings of various kinds, and answered them in different ways.

The square is a complex phenomenon and cannot therefore be described in a few sentences.

The individual as a public person. The square challenged the townsfolk not to become introverted, but to expand their lives outwards. It gave them the chance to make public appearances. Whether they liked it or not, people were seduced by the square into going “public”.

Many of the conditions under which this happened no longer apply, but many of them still do, and many wishes are as yet unfulfilled. We should not underestimate the conditions arising from a person's psyche – children want to be seen, theatre and cinema goers want to be spectators, but also to be a spectacle.

Two thousand years ago, Seneca made an observation that is not only of historical interest: “The first thing that philosophy undertakes to give us is fellow-feeling with all men; in other words, sympathy and sociability.”

Such conditions give rise to communication.

We may assume the willingness of the townsfolk of Anghiari to communicate with each other throughout the centuries gave rise to many public squares. In return, this led to an increase in communication, which still exists, although people have been communicating with each other less frequently and with less intensity since the 1980s.

Public life and density. A further aspect of the expansion of life into the public domain is the fact that it happened within a small area. It could therefore be experienced in very concrete, dense and tangible ways.

The town planners of the 20th century rarely understood the connection between public life and spatial density – they made squares larger. They fell into the trap of mass transportation, using means of transport that require totally different spatial conditions.

Changes in the use of squares put an end to the old ways, but the impact of the old squares remains, all over Europe. People do not gather on the streets beneath multi-storey buildings, but on densely populated squares.

Town planners will only begin to learn their lesson when they give up prioritising their coarse grids and start asking questions based on precise empirical observations.

Freedom = free speech. The concept of freedom is understood in Central Italy to be the opportunity to talk politics freely and cheekily. Freedom is understood to constitute free speech.

Niccolò Machiavelli pursued this motif throughout his history of Tuscany. He was explicit on this subject, because he wanted to draw his readers' attention to their own times (1520 or thereabouts). Time and again, freedom in Tuscany was controversial, challenged, fought for and won, was threatened, lost and restored. Machiavelli was writing during an era of rule by princes, at a time when the Medici had their spies everywhere, and there were secret prisons.

Niccolò Machiavelli cites an example from the Florence of around 1340: “The loss of this city [Lucca], as in like cases frequently happens, exasperated the people of Florence against the members of the government; at every street corner and public place they were openly censured, and the entire misfortune was laid to the charge of their greediness and mismanagement.” They therefore requested assistance from Robert, King of Naples. “He sent them Gualtieri, Duke of Athens, who … arrived in Florence just at the time the undertaking against Lucca had entirely failed.”⁹⁴ The Duke of Athens exploited his power. “For this reason, when Matteo di Morozzo … revealed to the Duke that the Medici family with some others were conspiring against him, the Duke not only failed to investigate

the charge, but inflicted a cruel death on the discloser. ... He also had Bettone Cini's tongue cut out with such great cruelty that he died of it (1343), because Bettone railed against the taxes imposed on the citizens. This incident increased the anger of the citizens and their hatred for the Duke, because those who were accustomed to doing and speaking everything with the utmost latitude could not endure to live with their hands tied and their mouths shut tight. ... Consequently, many citizens of all ranks resolved either to deliver themselves from this odious tyranny or die in the attempt. Three distinct conspiracies were formed; one of the great; another of the people; and a third of the working classes. ... The chief conspirators ... resolved that the next day, which was 26th July 1343, they would raise a disturbance in the old market place . . ." ⁹⁵

Designs for the Mercatale in 1340 will be discussed later.

Market days. In 1480, the cattle market (*mercato delle bestie*) moved from Via del Borghetto to the dry moat in front of the town wall.

In 1388, Florence gave its permission for markets to be held on Wednesdays. The market was freely accessible, and no dues (*gabelle*) had to be paid.⁹⁶

Florence gave thanks for victory in the Battle of Anghiari (1440) by granting the town an annual fair on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul. Every kind of trading was allowed, and no dues (*gabella*) or customs (*dogana*) were levied.⁹⁷

Florence also laid down Wednesday as market day in Anghiari, and so it has remained to this day.

The market area for wood of all kinds lay outside the town gate (Piazza della Legna).

The peasants who came in from the countryside and the townswomen going shopping had difficulty in crossing the squares to see the full range of goods on offer. Unlike on other days, the squares were no longer free spaces, but overcrowded bazaars.

Market bell. The market was also a public ritual. A bell used to be rung to denote the beginning and end of trading. It hung in a segment of the wall built like a tower next to Porta Fiorentina in the south of the town.⁹⁸

Customs. The politics engaged in by the Florentine *signoria* with regard to the territory of the Republic aimed at removing any remaining traces of feudal customs duties and restrictions in trading with foodstuffs of all kinds.⁹⁹ This gave a boost to the market.

A place for the recruitment of military personnel. Soldiers met on the piazza.¹⁰⁰

Paving the Mercatale. For centuries, the ground of the cattle market remained uneven. In 1324, the ruler of Anghiari, Bishop Guido of Arezzo, had the square levelled in conjunction with the building of the long straight road. This was done with the help of a retaining wall.¹⁰¹

In 1510, Piazza del Mercatale was paved with tiles. The reasons given for such a costly surface were "respectability" (*honorevolezza*) and cleanliness (*politia*). The design was supplied by Florence. It was financed by means of a new tax (*gabella*) on cattle crossing the square. Any person damaging the pavement with carts, ladders, stalls, stones or wood was fined 50 florins.

The roadworks were very lengthy, not being completed until 1549.¹⁰²

Shops in the substructure. The year 1472 saw the renovation of the retaining wall in the square. In connection with this, three shops (*botteghe*) were built, providing the municipality with income from rents. The shop ceilings were shaped like barrel vaulting.

In 1478, the town built a fourth shop in the substructure on the western side of the square.¹⁰³

In 1535, trouble occurred in the form of water seeping into the three vaulted rooms in the Mercatale substructure. The municipality therefore had the square paved with tiles (*amattonar*) laid in

herringbone pattern along the length of the loggia.

This allowed the authorities to increase their income by raising rents.

In 1548, they had a fourth shop built next to the Petrone.

In the course of time, butchers (*macelli*) rented these shops.

In 1591, the town sold the shops to neighbours as vaulted cellars (*cantine*). The selling price was used to finance other butchers' shops.¹⁰⁴

The arcades are discussed elsewhere.

The lion. A statue of the Florentine lion, Marzocco, was erected on the north-west wall of the piazza. It was evidence that Anghiari belonged to Florence and, simultaneously, a visible sign of the application of market rights.¹⁰⁵ The lion is also to be found in the *vicario's* palace, in a corner niche of the *vicario's* hall.

Unlike the imperial symbol, the eagle, the lion was the symbol of the people's movement, or rather of the *capitano del popolo*, the people's symbolic representative. The intimidating motto beneath the lion reads "The lion hath roared, who will not fear?" (*Si leo rugiet, quis non timebit?*).

The late 14th century original now stands to the rear of the ground floor in Museo Taglieschi.

The model on which it was based, sculpted by Donatello between 1418 and 1420, stands on the balustrade (*ringhiera*) in front of Florence City Hall. The mighty beast with its paw supporting the coat-of-arms was crowned on feast days.

The Marzocco got its name from its original location at the foot of a column of the god Mars. It is an emblem of the Republic of Florence. The Republic kept a real lion in an iron cage in the courtyard of the City Hall.

The towns of the Florentine Republic adopted the symbol of the lion as an expression of their allegiance.¹⁰⁶

When the people of Anghiari looked at Marzocco, did they think of the real lion in Florence?

The market column. Around 1323, the town ruler erected a stone column on the west side of the grand arcades (it is no longer there).

It stood at the entrance to the piazza, at the pivot point of the sequence of squares. An ancient column, it rose from a round base built in the form of steps. It was destroyed in the 19th century. Columns like this one had a material value, and were therefore a sign of grandeur.

We find similar market columns in many other places as well.¹⁰⁷ Official weights and measures – binding on everyone – were marked on it. Anyone who had his doubts could check a measurement.

In a functional and symbolic way, this was a unifying means of control. It was set up and monitored by those in authority, who thus identified themselves as arbitrators. Let us not forget that the entire dispensation of civil law had its origins in the marketplace. This was where negotiated settlements started.

The administrative authorities also used to attach official notices to the column.¹⁰⁸ A servant of the administration would read the notices out loud for the benefit of the many persons on the market square who could not read.

The stocks. The market column was also a place of public punishment and disgrace. Persons found guilty of crimes were bound to it and put on public display.¹⁰⁹

Unlike our present-day punishments, those of former times were to a considerable degree public in character. Nowadays the public are only involved in checking the legality of actions carried out by the State in the context of the enforcement of punishment. In the Middle Ages and the early modern era, it

was an expression of society's control over persons found guilty.

Visits to the square. Everyone went to the square at certain times, meeting others and swapping news.¹¹⁰

Even now, people set great store by exchanging gossip by word of mouth. This explains why local journalism is underdeveloped in Central Italy.

There are two times of day when people go to the piazza whenever possible: before lunch and before supper.

Nowadays this is between noon and 1pm, and between 6pm and 8pm. The time people meet for a *passeggiata* is above all early evening, when the day's work is more or less done.

Familiarity. "What I like is their natural behaviour. Everyone is always out of doors, sitting around, so you get to know other people so well." Goethe discovered this widespread characteristic on his travels in Italy.¹¹¹

Physical appearance. "I have noticed they look at you from top to toe, and seem to make an accurate assessment of the look of your clothes." (Goethe¹¹²)

The way out of the town. It was not until the 19th century that Central Italians seemed to feel the urge to go outside the town in search of the countryside. The people of Anghiari never seem to have developed this urge, even in our time, because the topography determined by hill and valley only allows for a short avenue to the north of the theatre. When going for their evening stroll, people do not wish to exert themselves, they want a pleasant and easy walk, as has always been their wont.

Viewpoint. Several paintings by Piero della Francesca (c. 1410/1420-1492), who was apprenticed in Anghiari to the master painter Antonio, and who spent a large part of his life in nearby Sansepolcro, are based on missing sketches that Piero must have done on the east side of the piazza, on this unique high terrace overlooking the valley. He would have stood beneath the arcades and cast his eye over the valley.

We may conclude from this that Piero made frequent visits to Anghiari, which could be reached from Sansepolcro in an hour or an hour-and-a-half.

The wine bar (*osteria*). The mercenary leader Mazzone di Gregorio, who had obtained a large amount of booty through his soldierly misdeeds, invested much of it profitably in Anghiari. In 1488, the municipal authorities gave him a plot of land next to the fountain east of the Mercatale, on Piazza della Fontana. He built a wine bar (*osteria*) on it.¹¹³

It was called the "big wine bar" (*osteria grossa*; Codice Taglieschi, 1624¹¹⁴). Several large arches opened on to the square. They were shut at night by means of heavy wooden doors.

What must this wine bar have been like? Probably it looked like the inns of Antiquity, with barrel vaulting so wide that it more or less formed halls (take a look at Bar Baldaccio on the upper square).

The farmers coming to buy and sell at the market drank a tumbler of wine there, either during a break, or before setting off for home. This was part of their town experience. When Franco bumped into Agosto, he invited him for a drink – a ritualised way of showing his respect for him. The bar tender placed a glass of wine in front of each of them. The same happens nowadays: Pavone (Domenico Rossi) invites Annibale del Sere to have an espresso with him in the coffee bar. Pavone says, "*offro io*" ("it's my treat").

Fellini – if he had been alive at that time, and if there had been such things as films – could have found material in the tales told at the tables or in the many small groups of people standing around. To some extent, they were always the same dull and banal stories that were being re-told. Talking was not

the point, it was just an excuse for hanging around together. There were a number of reasons for this: some people wanted company, some wanted to be acknowledged, some wanted to get something off their chests. From time to time, Fellini would have got to hear the most interesting stories, some told in a witty and lively way, some recounting sad events.

The Tuscans are masters in story telling, Dante and Boccaccio being the greatest among them. They would not have existed but for the minor virtuosi in these bars and squares.

In the 15th century, in nearby Sansepolcro, an hour's journey away, there lived one of the greatest storytellers among painters, Piero della Francesca. From time to time, he would have been seen on the square in Anghiari, and then in the bar here.

Food was served in one area of the big inn – both simple fare and some fine food as well. Many sumptuous weddings took place there, prosperous family clans gathering in public, showing themselves to the town and its surroundings.

The confraternities and guilds held their banquets there, and the municipal authorities as well. It is hard for us to believe how much Florence spent on such banquets, and Anghiari can have spent no mean amount either.

The Poggiolino (hillock) is the most scenic square. The terrain linked Via della Misericordia and Via delle Mura di Sopra.

The sequence of squares. A historic sketch (Codice Taglieschi 1624) allows us to conclude that one of the most interesting sequences of squares in Tuscany was to be found in Anghiari. Nowadays it is unfortunately subject to considerable disruption resulting from an unnecessary traffic management system. One whole chapter is devoted to its restoration.

If we interpret the topography of the sketch, our guess will be that the upper square was the grander, on account of the dignifying capital letters used. This assumption is borne out by the fact that important arcades were built here. They not only had their practical uses, but their form added to the dignity of the square.

Lower-case letters were used to indicate the two areas in front of the shops on the long straight road. They were also thought of as piazzas. The upper area did not have such a steep incline, as a wall had been built across it, giving it the appearance of a terrace. It was less important as a point of transit, but was rather a place for stopping and spending a little time.

On its northern side, there was a track for carts.

There was a fourth square in front of the fountain: Piazzetta della Fontana. Unfortunately it has now been badly spoilt as the result of a thick layer of asphalt and a car park.

Let us reconstruct it: it stretches beyond the *stradone* northwards. The house on the right was built at an angle to it, so that the street opened here to form a kind of square. Walls on either side of the *stradone* stressed the terrace-like nature of the square.

The market symbol, the column, was set up in such a way that it connected the various scenes to the two squares. The link to the lower piazzas was stronger than to the main square.

People always in motion. Some old folk were sitting still in front of the *osteria*. Still? Their eyes were moving, following the people entering the square, crossing it, disappearing, or meeting someone. They were associating them with stories they knew about them. In the twinkling of an eye, they had retrieved stories from the backs of their minds, often recalling ancient yarns. This was the matter of a moment, because the next happening mostly came hard on its heels. The elderly would play this game for many an hour.

Some children were busy in front of them. They had next-to-no toys, but were serious about what they did have, reusing it again and again, repeating their games with new variations. For the adults glancing at them, this was nothing new, but it was new for the children, even though they had played it thousands of times before.

All of a sudden they would be at loggerheads and start calling each other names. An old man would get up and tell them off angrily. In this society, manners were treated like laws.

Why were all these people for ever on the go, the children physically active, the old people active in their minds? Life is full of action. There is nothing that is not moving.

Do the stones stand motionless? No. The eyes that are following their sequence are moving.

Does this discourse on piazzas belong in academic writing or in novels? In my view, both. Life is the same in each case, and we make the same observations. Academics can only begin to understand when they at least have an inkling of life in all its abundance.

There is no square without people using it. Squares are made for people. We experience them with this knowledge in mind, even if we cannot see anyone after lunch, say, or at night.

Who is the flooring intended for? We take it for granted. True, but stating the obvious must not distract us from observing it.

The town is full of the obvious, but such facts are not irrelevant. The obvious, as it is now, is the product of many years of cultural history. Man has arranged things in the way we see them now.

The square does not look the same now as it did in its early days, when the farmers with their beasts met in front of the town gate, to barter, or to buy and sell. The ground, in those days, was dry in summer, and the wind blew dust into their rough clothes. In the winter, mud stuck to their feet. Men and animals made their way through puddles.

Later, they arranged the square in such a way that they could walk across it elegantly – as we can now. Elegance was not taken for granted. Many did not know what it was, others refused to practise it. Practice was necessary, because no-one could turn up for the evening's *passeggiata* and walk elegantly without training.

Thus, nothing exists without people arranging things according to their purpose.

A range of possibilities is open to them. Everything has its potential, but sometimes it takes time before they can work it out.

Culture reveals itself through the way in which men have made use of the options open to them. You cannot ignore the people. Culture is the stones and the way people took them to compose the piazza, using their heads and their hands. This is culture as people have encountered it down the ages. It is the culture we encounter – I, the author, and you, my readers.

The dead of long ago created the history of what we now think of as fixed. They have not disappeared, but only seem to have gone. Their wise eyes are there all the time, we are made aware of them again and again. This is mostly apparent in the things we say we take for granted. They are only “obvious” if we look at them superficially. In actual fact, if we have our eyes wide open, they are exciting.

People are constantly in motion, dreamers, children and the elderly as well. They are active in their different ways, alone or with others.

The power of the moment. Many people lived as though they never had to die. They abandoned themselves to pleasure and the power of the moment.

There was no future, apart from the next generation of one's family. It was not until the 20th century

that we flew the flag for the future.

There were feelings for the past in moderation, for the family tree and traditions that were worth respecting. The educated classes reached for the writings of authors from ancient days, visited ancient ruins and looked at statues.

And what about change? We have been the first to think in such terms, as a result of the culture of engineering in the 19th and 20th centuries.

“... I am infinitely interested in the people. I spent a long time at the fish market today and watched them haggling and buying; I can hardly describe how avid, attentive, clever they were.” This was an entry in Goethe's diary during his journey to Italy in 1786.¹¹⁵ “Once again, it is the people that are the foundation on which everything stands. The whole, and not the individual. Buyer and seller, beggar and sailor, neighbour, counsel and opposing counsel, all are alive and active, caring deeply, talking and protesting, yelling and bidding, singing, scolding, cursing and generally making a noise.”

Arcades

The popular movements in the towns copied the churches in building arcades, such as the long one on the marketplace. They were obviously meeting points “... where merchants and citizens could happily retreat to, avoiding the discomfort of a shower of rain”. (Thus Francesco di Giorgio Martini, writing in about 1472¹¹⁶).

The grand arcades on the Mercatale (1324).

The vicariato arcades (after 1385). It seems likely there once stood a covered hall in front of the arch on the right side of the *vicario's* palace.

Borgo's columns (1466). Private individuals also built colonnades too.

In 1466, the Council allowed the wealthy citizen Borgo di Matteo dalla Rocca di San Casciano, a member of the Mannini family, to erect a portico in front of his house on the Mercatale, for his own use and convenience, and as an adornment for the square (*per utile e comodo suo e per ornamento della piazza*). The portico was incorporated into his house (*sotto la sua casa*) and had three columns of stone (*columne di pietra*).

People called it “Borgo's columns” (*le colonne del Borgo*).¹¹⁷

Not only was the construction useful to the public, not only did it give added prestige to the town, but it also increased the prestige of a distinguished family.

Avant-garde expression. Artists such as Bruneschelli, Michelozzo and Rossellino, working in the Florence of the 15th century, gave new expression and new intensity to spaciousness by their use of avant-garde forms. The same spaciousness was to be found in the large wooden arcades (no longer standing) on the Mercatale. The old diffuse and approximate mode of expression was replaced by exact human dimensions, room to breathe, exact co-ordination.

Nevertheless, this was but a small avant-garde group, and many years passed before their mode of expression spread. It took a long time for it to arrive in Anghiari. The first examples of it in these parts were the façade of Castello di Galbino (reconstructed in about 1550), with its two columned halls, and the arcades of Santa Croce, the Franciscan church at the top of the long steep street.

Loggia Santa Croce (1565).¹¹⁸ Arcades in front of the Franciscan church of Santa Croce made it the crowning and focal point of the *stradone*.¹¹⁹

Loggia di Sant' Antonio (1507). Members of the Compagnia di Sant' Antonio built a colonnade

with wooden pillars in front of their church on the Mercatale in 1507, for the convenience of the general public (*per pubblica comodità*).

However, two of their neighbours wanted it have it demolished, arguing first that the colonnade stood on the piazza, and second that it blocked out their light.

The municipal authorities did not agree.

The neighbours took the matter into their own hands and set fire to the wooden construction, making it collapse.

The *Compagnia* complained to the municipal authorities, who punished the neighbours by ordering them to rebuild the colonnade with fire-resistant stone pillars. They did so, in order to avoid a more severe punishment.

It turned out the new colonnades were shoddily built, perhaps deliberately so. The structure fell into disrepair. In 1625, the *Compagnia* demolished it.¹²⁰

Gallery for Borgo Mannini (1513). As a punishment, the Republic of Florence ordered peasants on the Montaguto de' Barbolani farm (*corte*) to build a gallery or roof on the house of Borgo Mannini. Merchants and others were to use it for their gatherings. The expenditure was to cover fines imposed in two court cases.¹²¹

Loggia della fontana, on Piazzetta della Fontana, was built on to the substructure under the large square in the 19th century. It was a typical arched hall.

Other examples of arcades. Arcades next to the fortifications tower were built in the first half of the 15th century (13 Via XXV Luglio). One set, built by a landowner, has been walled up (62 Via delle Mura di Sopra). Access to the southern side-alley is via a small loggia at 19 Via della Torre.

Water systems

The water system is clearly illustrated on a map of the surrounding district issued by the municipal authorities of Anghiari.¹²²

The River Sovara crosses the whole territory from south to north. Many streams, cutting deep into the hills and mountains, flow into it. The result is a herringbone-type pattern.

Water management in Antiquity. In Roman times, the River Tiber was regulated to some degree. In later Antiquity, the system of water management collapsed.¹²³

The old course of the Tiber. For a long time, the Tiber flowed across the plain, passing quite near to the foot of the hill Anghiari stands on, and through the village of San Leo.

It carried debris with it all the time, sometimes depositing it and filling the river bed. In rainy seasons, water overflowed and flooded the fields, where it often became stagnant, forming swamps and pools. All this was harmful.

The people living there were always talking about it, but were powerless to do anything.

The new course of the Tiber (about 1197). Water experts were called in. This was the first example of co-operation between several municipalities in their search for a solution to the existential problem of the Tiber, with all its far-reaching consequences.

They found a solution that involved an enormous amount of work and considerable investment. A consensus was reached, above all with the help of the Count of Montedoglio. The Tiber was given a new bed in 1197, in the lowest lying part of the land, where it still flows today.

The water was also to be used to irrigate the fields.

Since the people of Sansepolcro now had the Tiber flowing near their town, they ceded about a mile and a half of their territory to Anghiari.¹²⁴

Shortly after the year 1227, one and a half generations later, a further wide-sweeping action was started: a canal and a series of mills.

Water management. The monks from Camaldoli learnt how to manage water in the swampy Tiber Valley. They dug canals, drained the marshes and made the land fertile.

How slow was this process? Did it last for generations? How was the project – which cannot have been cheap – funded? How did the monks and the people working alongside them divide up the land? Did the people of those days consider it a tremendous achievement?

Below Anghiari, on its north-eastern side, it is still possible to see where land was acquired through water management in the area around a hamlet called Viaio. It was divided up into regular-shaped parcels.

During the Roman colonisation of ancient times, the occupying Roman forces had developed a pattern for parcelling out land. It is still clearly visible in the area around the *Via Aemilia* in the Po Basin.

Disasters. Serious disasters included continuous rain, flooding and lack of rain.

After the floods of 589, much of the land could no longer be cultivated. Famine resulted and mortality increased. Popes, citizens and farmers all called on God for help.

Trees and vines withered in the drought of 1119, followed by a famine. What is more, men and cattle fell victim to the plague.¹²⁵

In 1269, heavy rains fell, the land was flooded, houses and mills were damaged, and famine ensued.¹²⁶

In 1295 great damage was caused by rain.

In 1302 it was the turn of drought.

There was a long dry period and hunger in the year 1307. Grain was brought in from Arezzo and distributed among the poor, who would otherwise have died.¹²⁷

The floods of 1318 washed away houses, people, cattle and land. The flooded fields remained barren, and two years of famine ensued. Bishop Guido of Arezzo donated 200 sacks of grain to the poor of Anghiari. The price of grain rose, speculators became active. The bishop had more grain delivered to the piazza and set a maximum fixed price, to prevent speculators from taking advantage of the disaster.¹²⁸

In 1330, not a drop of rain fell over a period of five months. On 25th October, there was a sudden downpour. This was considered to be a divine miracle.¹²⁹

In 1332, a new disaster hit the whole of Tuscany: torrential rain caused flooding all over the place. The news spread that bridges and many shops were ruined in Florence. In Anghiari, the waters carried away houses and cattle. Many fields lay barren.

Major flooding again occurred in 1353, followed by a hot southerly wind that burnt part of the crops. The whole of Tuscany suffered from famine.

There were floods again in 1379.

It rained for months in 1418, from September to the beginning of January, causing floods. Farmers were unable to sow their crops. The famine lasted for several years, resulting in a high mortality rate. Florence, having gained the supreme authority over Anghiari in 1385, had to help by supplying

grain.¹³⁰

In 1442, not a drop of rain fell over a period of five months. The peasants went in procession and prayed that the heavens might open.¹³¹

The year 1471 saw a great deal of rain and flooding. The bridge over the Sovara was undermined and collapsed. The cost of a new bridge was 35 florins.¹³²

Astrologists predicted serious flooding and in people's minds they were proved right, as the floods came in 1494. The force of the water was so great that all the bridges were destroyed. The mills on the Sovara were under water, and many houses ruined.¹³³

The whole of Tuscany suffered a terrible famine in 1495 as a result of the floods. The Council issued an order to prevent the poor, who could not afford the rising cost of grain, from dying of hunger. They decided that the confraternity should sell some of their property to buy grain and distribute it among the poor "for the love of God". The parish also put measures in place and many gave alms.

Nevertheless, people still died of hunger and some fell down dead on the streets.

A rumour also spread that people had been seen flying between Arezzo and Anghiari. They were said to be riding through the air on large horses, beating drums and making terrible sounds. This story filled many people with horror, racked as they were by famine and armies on the march.¹³⁴ This is the type of hallucination that hunger produces.

Floods, a meagre harvest and famine came in 1544.

In 1557, it rained so hard that the water on the plain stood seven ells high, seriously damaging buildings and bridges. Mills, including the fulling mill, were washed away.¹³⁵

The years 1579/1580 saw periods of incessant rain. Farmers were often unable to tend their fields. People went hungry and many died. The confraternities tried to help.¹³⁶

There is a sketch depicting the Tiber flood disasters of 1624.¹³⁷

Whereas the River Tiber is now furnished with dykes, it used to be wild and untamed. A map of 1634 shows¹³⁸ its tributaries and islands. When it flooded, it destroyed roads, as did its tributary streams. The bridge carrying the *strada maestra* across the Tiber stands on eight stone arches.

Abundance of water. There were many mountain springs on the hillsides; most of them were used for watering cattle.

Water was less frequently found on the hilltops, where many deep wells were dug.

Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote (in 1614) about many streams (*rivoli*), springs (*fonti*) and water veins (*vene*), ample for domestic animals and wild ones.

Public wells (*pozzi*). The provision of a water for a district of the town was an important infrastructural achievement.

In 1323, as part of his important infrastructural projects, the ruler of the town supplied the *borghetto* with water. An underground water vein ran beside the monastery of Sant'Agostino on the piazza (Piazza Mameli). The *signore* spared no expense, and had a deep shaft sunk.¹³⁹

The access was closed with a grating. As the well lay behind a bend, it was not visible.

This *pozzo meraviglioso* is an excellent piece of engineering. The shaft, with a diameter of 3.5 metres, was sunk to a depth of 30 metres in ground like broken stone (*breccia serrata*). The area at the very foot was lined with hewn stone. All this was described by Taglieschi.

Originally, the well stood on the square. The present wall was not put up until 1468, when they built a courtyard for the church of Sant'Agostino.

In 1534, it was the only public well in the whole of the town, which meant people on the east side

of the town had a long way to go for water. The municipality therefore had a second well dug between the two gates of Porta di Sotto (Porta di Sant'Angelo).¹⁴⁰

A third well was dug outside the fortress ring, on the long straight road, at the foot of the substructure below the Mercatale. The square was given the apt name of Piazzetta della Fonte. The farmers also watered their beasts of burden here before entering the town. There was probable continuity between the old wells and the standpipes of the post-1925 public mains water system. One example of this on the Poggiolino.

Cisterns. Under the Mercatale, there was a water storage tank connected to the well. This cistern could provide water in the event of the springs drying up in times of drought.

For centuries, this *tempio dell' acqua* supplied a large part of the town with water, until the mains water system was built between 1923 and 1925.

Wells as meeting places. Most people met at the watering places, especially the women, as this was where the majority of families fetched the water for their household needs.

They did this in the mornings and evenings, but often in the daytime too.

People congregated around the wells, swapping news. We can imagine how very lively it must have been round one of these wells.

Young courting couples went there too, for a quiet talk. At home and on the square they were under observation, but they could not get caught out at a well.

The cattle were watered there as well, drinking from troughs at the side of the well.

In the entrance hall of Museo Taglieschi a picture in ceramics tells the story of Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well.

Wells in private houses. Wealthy families had their own water supply laid on in the cellars of their houses – their own wells. A well of this kind is clearly visible in the basement of the Taglieschi house (Museo Taglieschi). The well is very deep – the deeper the well, the better the water.

Murder at the well. At the bottom of the Taglieschis' well, there used to be a sculpted relief of a skull. It is an example of how stories go to make up a big house.

But what do we know of them? Is academic research such an advanced medium that it is able to process stories?

The skull was put in place at a later date, as a reminder of a particular happening. There had been a long-standing feud between two family clans. One party lured an opponent of theirs into this room and threw him into the well. His death was described as an accident.

How did Anghiari society solve the mystery of this crime?

How did people deal with the water resources? It rained a lot in the first few months of the year. What arrangements did they make to ensure they had enough water all the year round? Did they store it in cisterns?

What did they need water for?

For drinking?

How did they use it to wash their bodies?

How did they use it to clean their houses?

To what extent, and in what way, was it used by trades and crafts?

What signs do we see of a culture of water?

We can get some idea of how they dealt with water from clues in the Taglieschi house (Museo Taglieschi).

Water was fetched in pitchers. Fetching water required a great deal of effort, as the pitchers and their contents were heavy. Even if the distance was not that great, steep stairs had to be climbed from a well in the cellar to the floors above.

Water was stored in jugs of earthenware or pottery; copper cans were also used from the 18th century onwards.

People have always known that earthenware jugs act as water filters.

They washed their dishes in a similar way to us. We can see niches containing sinks with drains on the window sills.

Access to wells. Public wells were always freely accessible to everyone.

It was inconceivable for a private person to supply his neighbours with water on a regular basis. Of course, they could help each other out from time to time, especially when the quality was good, but this was not institutionalised.

From wells to the mains supply. The wells came first. Then mechanisation made pumping easier in the early industrial age. Finally, in 1923/1925, water was supplied to all parts, by means of a wide-reaching network of pipes. It seemed incredible at the time, but was thoroughly logical in its construction.

The people of Anghiari celebrated the convenience of the water pipes, as can be seen from the cast iron plaques with the year 1925 next to the standpipes.

However, the tradition of the old public wells continued as part of the idea of the mains supply. The name *fontana* remained, but it now denoted the new cast-iron standpipes.

Standpipes of this kind can be found at Porta Sant'Angelo; in front of the town wall on Via di Circonvallazione; on the corner of Piazza Mameli and Via Taglieschi; on Via della Misericordia (Poggiolino); on Vicolo della Piazzuola (in front of the *Badia*); on Piazza E. de Amicis; behind Galleria Magi, where Via Bozia crosses the *stradone*.

Nowadays, Anghiari gets its water from the *Regliacaccia*. In addition, there are two wells for 4,200 inhabitants. In 1980, the Water Management Plan (*Piano Regolatore Generale degli Acquedotti*) was updated (*attuazione*).

Washhouse. In 1493, the Grand Council (*general consiglio*) decided to set up a washhouse (*lavatoio*), as the women had a hard time walking all the way to the rivers Tiber and Sovara when they wanted to wash their sheets. It was built on the long straight road, at the foot of the hill, in front of San Girolamo's spring.¹⁴¹

Sewage. For centuries, water of all kinds accumulated in paths, alleys and streets. Rain water ran straight off the roofs on to the ground. Household waste water was tipped outside the front doors.

The series of mills

The year 1227 saw the appointment of the first *podestà* from Arezzo, where certain structures and ideas had already been put into practice.

At this time, the municipalities of Anghiari, Sansepolcro, Monterchi and Citerna, together with the Counts of Balbino and Montedoglio, sat down to discuss an important communal project. It was a huge investment. This was the second instance of inter-communal co-operation and consensus building.

What was the point of it? Grain production had come to be so successful that farmers had achieved surpluses beyond what was needed for the subsistence economy. They were able to sell their surplus

grain on town markets, where people had ever greater purchasing power. In order to produce flour in a more efficient way, and thus more reasonably, they had to increase the capacity of the mills.

The only sensible place to build a mill was next to running water. As the wild water of the rivers was too unpredictable, it had to be tamed. They did this by channelling it through a lock and into a canal.

The River Tiber had been redirected a generation beforehand, around 1197, and wide stretches of land had been drained. This was a new and similar project. Day labourers were engaged to dig a canal from the Tiber to Montedoglio in the river basin. It was called Fosso di Rimaggio, south of Molinella Canale della Reglia, or Aquaviola.

The canal ended near Citerna, where it flowed into the Sovara. The diversion of the water with a mill stream made it possible to control, or calculate, the inflow of water.¹⁴²

Eleven water mills (no longer standing) were built along this canal. In their day, they represented state-of-the-art technology of the most expensive kind.¹⁴³ Further mills were built later on.

All of those involved in the consensus owned mills along the canal.

These were the mills, enumerated from north to south, built after the lock (*chiusa*): Molino di Albiano, or Molinaccio; Molino di Viaio di sopra o di Cantorcio; Molino di Valle; Molino del Comune; Molino della Querciabianca, or Molino Bianco; Molinello di Sopra; Molinello di Sotto; Molino di San Leo; Molino di Spino; Molino di S. Festa; Molino di Pistrino.¹⁴⁴

Later, a second mill stream was diverted from the Tiber, downstream from Viaio, and the following mills built: Molino di Falegiano, Molino di Casa Prato and Molino di S. Paterniano.

These flour mills were joined by another eleven in the Sovara Valley (including Molino di Sorcio o Molino di Tavain). Molino del Caccia was built on the tributary Rio della Teverina. In 1614, the two rivers provided water power for 17 mills in all.

The millers were known for their rough ways, for their ability to outwit anyone. They had nicknames like Giovagnolo, Giangui, Merendello, Testagrossa, Catorcio, Guaragnie.¹⁴⁵

The mill at Castello di Sorci. In 1508, Ottaviano da Pichi da Sorci was given permission to build a mill below Castello di Sorci, and to divert water from the Sovara for this purpose.

The Republic sent him an architect, the engineer (*ingegnere*) Antonio da S. Gallo.

Water was always a source of conflict, because of occasional water shortages. Neighbours would then be accused of using too much water, and disputes would ensue. In the 18th century, the water of the Tiber belonged to the two communities.¹⁴⁶

Some people tried to stop the mill from being built at Castello di Sorci. However, as they failed to prevent this by legal means, on the morning of the feast of Saints Peter and Paul they walked, fully armed, on to the piazza and hurled insults at their opponents. One man killed another, and a regular battle ensued.

The trial was held in Florence. It ended in a tough sentence for all those involved: each participant was fined 130 florins.¹⁴⁷

Dry mill. In 1440, as the surrounding area was so insecure due to the presence of numerous enemy troops, the municipality had a mill (*molino a secco*) built in the courtyard of the *vicariato* (town hall), that could be powered by men or beasts.¹⁴⁸

On the subject of water in the industrial age (system of dykes, dams).

The mountains

Italy is shaped by its mountains, which seem never ending.

Fernand Braudel speaks of the freedom conferred by mountains. A mountain is an “obstacle, but also a place of refuge; it is land for the free”.

“Dense and suffocating populations, wealthy clergy, arrogant aristocrats, efficient jurisdiction, all these are to be found in the plains. The mountains are the place of refuge for those who seek freedom, democracy, peasant ‘republics’ ”.¹⁴⁹

Up to the 20th century, the plains were, however, sparsely populated on account of their health hazards, above all malaria.

The ideal height for Mediterranean settlements was between 200 and 400 metres, as this enabled their inhabitants to avoid the pathogens of the plains. Mountain and hill water guaranteed irrigation and allowed horticulture to flourish.

The Italian hills and mountains had a density of hamlets that was almost unparalleled in Europe. The area around Anghiari is a particularly good example of this.

Life in the hills was not easy, but there were regulations governing the use of such things as pasture land, forests, wood, timber and sowing.¹⁵⁰ Hill farming is hard work. The soil can be washed away. The farmers therefore formed terraces with dry walls, making it easier for them to work the narrow level patches.

Various kinds of riches can grow on hills: “from the olives, oranges and mulberries of the lower slopes, to real forests and pastures on higher ground. Not only is there arable farming, but also the raising of livestock – both sheep and goats, and also cattle. ... Mountains and hills are thus the realm of dairy produce and cheeses ...” (Fernand Braudel).¹⁵¹

The forests also supplied the hill dwellers with foodstuffs of many kinds. The farmers could make flour of chestnuts, to replace wheat flour.

Olives are picked from the beginning of October to November. The harvest is meant to be over by Christmas. The owners of olive groves brought the olives to the mills, where oil was produced at the rate of one litre of oil for every 12 to 14 kilos of olives. The miller was paid in kind – he was allowed to keep 12 to 15 per cent of the oil for himself. Olive oil contains unsaturated fatty acids, which make it particularly healthy. It is especially good for the human metabolism and skin.

Civilisation in the mountains is different from in the plains, as Braudel points out.¹⁵² It is not always easy to get along with mountain folk. They have the reputation of being violent, barbaric, predatory.

Land in the mountains was a limited resource. Only a certain number of animals could feed off it. There was no point in producing meat unless there was demand for it in the town. The farmers' own consumption was low; they tried their hand at other activities.

There were very many shepherds. In the Florentine cadastral records of 1427, there were several places along the Upper Tiber where sheep counted for more than land.¹⁵³

Charcoal burners produced charcoal in the forests for sale in town.

The market was controlled by the town.

Many men from the mountains, who went to the town to look for work were unable to find jobs. They joined the military as mercenaries.

The Tiber Valley had a certain degree of autonomy in the Middle Ages. Anghiari could not be easily kept in check.

Notes on:

Life in the Late Middle Ages (8.)

- 1 Cherubini, 1984, 58/92.
- 2 See Braudel, *The Wheels of Commerce* (in German: Handel, 1990, 275 ff.).
- 3 Examples in Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 43.
- 4 Weber, 1992, 364.
- 5 Weber, 1992, 367.
- 6 Weber, 1992, 518.
- 7 Weber, 1992, 514.
- 8 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 117/118.
- 9 Landucci, 1978, 4.
- 10 “Anghiari, per i buonissimi vini che ricoglie, de' quali scrive il capitano Niccolò Giustiche non occorre usare diligenze così esatte per farli buoni, perché solo basta metter l' uva ne' tini o canali e per otto giorni non si toccino e dopo si pertino e si lascino posare nelle vinacce sin che riscaldato si rischiari da per sé, e lasciato il bollire, si imbotti: et in questa maniera i vini d'Anghiari riescono migliori di Toscana e quei di Montepulciano li vanno appresso.” (Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 296).
- 11 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 65.
- 12 See: Tempio Malatestiano in Rimini, Palazzo Ducale in Urbino.
- 13 It is no coincidence that a major figure in the history of music, Guido Monaco (born some time after 1190 and died around 1250) was active in nearby Arezzo, where he was immersed in well-established and long musical traditions. He developed a system for musical notation to replace singing from memory. Ottavio Petrucci was responsible for the “Gutenberg moment” that was the first printing of music in Fossombrone, near Urbino, in 1473.
- 14 Landucci, 1978, 203.
- 15 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 258/259.
- 16 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 197.
- 17 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 319.
- 18 Many people who have gone down in history are remembered by their nicknames. For example: Sandro di Mariano Filippi, otherwise known as Boticelli (“little barrel”). For examples from Anghiari, see Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992. The author writes in his introduction that he lays no claim to scholarship, but he has nevertheless written a very interesting book. Bartolomei investigates the origins of various families, based on their names.
- 19 Landucci, 1978, 3.
- 20 “La quale opera sarebbe stata tenuta buona, se non fossero queste arpie state comportate per tutto Anghiari da chi haveva autorità di castigarle.” (Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 205). In 1342, the Duke of Athens moved all the prostitutes into one street in Florence. – See also: Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 324.
- 21 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 246.
- 22 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 345.
- 23 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 43.
- 24 Machiavelli, *Istorie fiorentine*, III, 1523-1525.
- 25 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 204.
- 26 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 295. Tommaso Fanfani, 1983.
- 27 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 206.
- 28 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 211.
- 29 Amintore Fanfani, 1935. – Cf. Francesco Datini in Prato, who had incomparably greater assets (Origo, 1985).
- 30 Polcri, 1992. – Claudio Cherubini, 1998, 75/90. Pinto, 1997, No. 37/28.
- 31 Landucci, 1978, 27.
- 32 Gillmann, 1992.
- 33 Landucci, 1978, 60.
- 34 The Municipal Archives have a list of market prices from 1546 to 1870 (Inventario 997/1024).
- 35 Landucci, 1978, 18.

- 36 See Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 199.
- 37 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 307/308.
- 38 On the subject of weddings, see: Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 345 (1587).
- 39 Landucci, 1978, 17.
- 40 Landucci, 1978, 11/17.
- 41 Landucci, 1978, 18.
- 42 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 83.
- 43 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 83.
- 44 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 176, see also 199/200.
- 45 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 235.
- 46 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 236.
- 47 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 297.
- 48 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 313.
- 49 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 299 (on the birth of the successor in 1540), 362 (on the birth of the successor in 1610), 313 (on reconciliation with Siena), 328 (on the declaration of the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany).
- 50 For the following see: Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 99/100.
- 51 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 189.
- 52 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 192.
- 53 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 229.
- 54 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 201/202.
- 55 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 192.
- 56 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 95.
- 57 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 95.
- 58 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 300. – In the Florence of 1450, Luca Landucci “about fourteen years of age, went to learn book-keeping from a master called Calandra; and, praise God! I succeeded..” (Landucci, 1978, 3).
- 59 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 204.
- 60 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 319, with details.
- 61 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 252/253.
- 62 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 237/238.
- 63 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 48.
- 64 Willy Wittschier, 1977, 37/39.
- 65 Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1972, Illustrations 26, 27, 28.
- 66 Goethe, Tagebuch der italienischen Reise 1786. Notizen und Briefe aus Italien, edited by, and with explanations from, Christoph Michel, Frankfurt 1976, 174. (Goethe's “Letters from Italy” is available in English translation.)
- 67 On the subject of terraced houses, see Andrea Simon, Bautypen: Raumstruktur und Nutzung eines Reihenhauses. In: Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcic, 1995, 143/152.
- 68 Was it on account of his nickname that Matteo placed a dog's head over the Taglieschi coat-of-arms (with the date 1437 below it) on the corner column between the house façade and Via Mameli? Or did the people, or he himself, derive his nickname from the sign of the dog?
- 69 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 201/202.
- 70 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 195.
- 71 Castiglione, 1986 (written in Urbino c. 1507).
- 72 The house was subject to a number of conversion measures on this account. After 1945, the group of buildings was used to house the poorest families. The process of restoration that began in the 1960s laid bare the building fabric of the 14th to 16th centuries.
- 73 See also Thomas Wirth, Der Übergang von Innen nach Außen. In: Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcic, 1995, 125/142. On the related subject of the analysis of communication in public spaces (the Burano method): Dellemann/Günter/Nothdurft/Schlegentdal/Sporleder, 1972. Burano-Gruppe, 2002, 85/101.
- 74 Goethe (1786), 1976, 102.
- 75 On the following, see also: Gref/Winter, Die “ummauerte Stadt”. Topografie, Wegenetz und Schließungssystem. In: Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcic, 1995, 65/75.
- 76 This situation was discovered by Stefan Köhler, Die Piazzuola. In: Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcic, 1995, 75/84.
- 77 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 142.
- 78 Newbigin, 2002, 41/266.

- 79 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 64.
 80 Braunfels, 1966, 104/105.
 81 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 231.
 82 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 234.
 83 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 284.
 84 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 297.
 85 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 299.
 86 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 304.
 87 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 344.
 88 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 316.
 89 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 343.
 90 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 328.
 91 See also: Sascha Jenke, Zwischen Piazza Baldaccio und Piazza del Popolo. Eine Sequenz-Analyse. In: Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcic, 1995, 101/123.
 92 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 328.
 93 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 86.
 94 Machiavelli, 1520/1987, 129.
 95 Machiavelli, 1520/1987, 137/138.
 96 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 143.
 97 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 178.
 98 Bartolomei, 1992, Illustration p. 208.
 99 Di Pietro in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, XXVII.
 100 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 314 (1555).
 101 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 87.
 102 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 215.
 103 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 87.
 104 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 284.
 105 Nowadays a replica stands at the top of the corner house on Piazza Mameli. The original is in Museo Taglieschi opposite.
 106 A simplified replica is now in place. The original sandstone Marzocco is in the National Museum in Florence.
 107 For instance, in front of Santa Maria Forisportam in Lucca, and in front of the Baptistry in Florence.
 108 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 87.
 109 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 87.
 110 On the subject of the piazza, see Landucci, 1978, 57/59. For an analysis of communication on Piazza Baldaccio, see Christian Flory/Tanja Mai/Henriette Singrün, Städtische Räume bei Tag und bei Nacht. Stadtraumbeschreibungen anhand von Tätigkeiten. In: Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcic, 1995, 166/191.
 111 Goethe (1786), 1976, 77/78.
 112 Goethe (1786), 1976, 73.
 113 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 218.
 114 Fanelli, in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, Illustration 61.
 115 Goethe (1786), 1976, 104,115.
 116 Francesco di Giorgio Martini, 1967 (built shortly after 1472).
 117 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 204.
 118 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 323.
 119 Later walled up, exposed again 1985/1986.
 120 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 232.
 121 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 236.
 122 Ansgar Uwe Lenser, Stadt und Umland – Strukturen und Elemente einer Kulturlandschaft. In: Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcic, 1995, 41/53, illustration p. 41.
 123 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 36.
 124 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 65/66.
 125 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 56.
 126 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 74/75.
 127 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 82.
 128 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 85.

- 129 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 92.
- 130 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 154.
- 131 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 187.
- 132 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 209.
- 133 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 221.
- 134 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 222.
- 135 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 315/316.
- 136 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 343.
- 137 Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, illustration p. XXVI.
- 138 Vivoli, 1992, Tav. XIV.
- 139 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 86.
- 140 It cost 112 florins and 50 bushels of grain (Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 283). Information about wells is obscure. In 1440, a well (chiamata di Pregianni, and in 1614 del Paganella) was to be found at the foot of the Palazzuolo slope (Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 299). According to Taglieschi, the municipality dug a well in 1487 for troops to use at Porta di Sotto. In Taglieschi's day (1612), there remained no trace of it (Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 218).
- 141 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 219.
- 142 Claudio Cherubini, 1998, no. 6, 61/78. P. 64: Near Anghiari, there were 18 mills on bodies of water associated with the Tiber, and 11 on the Sovara. – Benedetti, 1971, 164. Milling as an agricultural industry.
- 143 See also Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 69. A map from 1782, drawn presumably on the occasion of a dispute, is to be found in Vivoli, 1992, Tavola XV and Tavola XXXXIII (1782).
- 144 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 36/37. He names further mills as: Molino della Badia, Molino del Convento, Molino di San Giovanni di Tempio, Molino da Fossa, Molino sopra la Caviella, Molino di Alfano, Molino del Maestro, Molin d'Agnolo (also known as di Giusti), Molino della Murella (or di Testagrossa), Molino del Chiuso, Molino di Antonello, Molino di Mazzone, Molin dell'Isola. – Claudio Cherubini, 1998, no. 5, 75/90. Mills in Anghiari on p. 84/85: Fossa – Lungo la via chiamata La Fossa. From Anghiari to the Sovara. There is a mediaeval mill at Castello di Sorci, pp. 84, 86.
- 145 Giuseppi Bartolomei, 1992, 37.
- 146 See Vivoli, 1992, 74/75 for a long-drawn-out dispute regarding the series of mills.
- 147 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 232.
- 148 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 178.
- 149 Braudel, 1979, 52/53.
- 150 Bichierai, 1994. On Anghiari: pp. 57/58. Literature and archival material.
- 151 Braudel, 1979, 56.
- 152 Wickham, 1990, 15/32. Including bibliography.
- 153 Wickham, 1990, 19.

9. Religion and social culture

Magic, disasters, miracles, piety

Piety in Antiquity. Both Etruscans and Romans believed the whole of nature – earth, water, trees, plants, animals, mountains, the sky – was sacred.

They attached greater meaning to these words than we do today. Each word conveyed the unknown in its entirety, was suggestive, expressed fascination and sometimes fear.

Town and country were full of sacred places, symbols of an omnipresent holiness.

When Lorenzo Taglieschi attempted to explain the origin of the name Anghiari in 1614, he thought of Bacchus, the god of wine, and of the ancient tradition of promoting fertility by processing through

the vineyards with a statue of Bacchus.¹

We can associate all these elements with the Christianity that was to come later: the link to an existential problem, the appeal to a personal god for protection, a procession.

Christianity superimposed itself on pre-Christian structures, overcoming them and taking them over (Vittorio Dini).² We can see this in a whole range of things, from the many and various holy personages – the saints of Christianity replaced the gods of Antiquity – to the clear identification of the sacred with secular power.

After the year 1000, Christianity departed from the traditions of Antiquity, which had left space for the joys of living, and placed a great emphasis on fear. It stressed the gloomier aspects of life, calling the world a vale of tears. It persistently referred to sin – and offered forgiveness – but the sinner, once pardoned, was quick to sin again.

Holy places remained holy even in the transitional years between Antiquity and the Middle Ages and on to the Age of Enlightenment, as Vittorio Dini has shown. In essence, they were the same, even if they were spoken of in a different way, and if other meanings were attached to them. The things they were associated with – for example diseases – remained unchanged.³

Holy places survived nearly everywhere where rational thought developed alongside a belief in sacred things. This was a peculiarity of Central Italy. Put simply: magic and reason co-existed.

The people who gathered in the holy places were mainly those who were suffering a cruel fate and eking out a miserable existence. A hands-on *caritas* often came to be practised. Hospices sprung up in the Middle Ages. The poor frequently received bread and soup.⁴

Many of the poor who lacked a roof over their heads wandered from one holy place to another.

These sacred places played an important rôle in regulating the human psyche, by providing comfort and explanations in times of distress, and guidance on the many occasions when people were fearful. On the other hand, they also reminded the wealthy not to take their good fortune for granted, and of their duty to stand by those who suffered adversity.

The mother. The central rôle accorded to the mother is a clear indication of how archaic people's beliefs were at heart. In former times she was the Great Mother; later she lived on as the Christian Madonna. A mother, a person's own mother, also played her part in the consciousness of every man and woman.

Hope. Christianity replaced the gloominess of Hades with the “good news” of the Gospel. This was one of the reasons why Christianity spread in the later years of the ancient world.

Above all, it was the poor who were comforted by the promise of paradise in compensation for their miserable existence on earth. Niccolò Machiavelli wrote: “[They] have recourse to the help of God, in whom the unhappy hope for relief.”⁵

Exploitability. However, the Christian concept of the stories of Jesus of Nazareth – stories of great simplicity, although rich in ideas – were soon to be re-interpreted in the light of all sorts of additional elements. This dramatic process went on for many centuries. In the course of time, Christianity has been grotesquely used to justify exploitation, cruelly belying the intentions of its founder.

This has chiefly come about through the preaching of sin and punishment. It was not until the second Millennium that preachers used and embraced such topics with enthusiasm, presenting their listeners with texts from the writer of the Apocalypse, a past master of doom and gloom. The frequent portrayals of the Day of Judgement formed the climax of this movement.

For centuries, people were made aware of their finite nature, they became depressed, felt their nothingness. They were willing, in the culture of death, to accept the symbols of the end of the world and the Day of Judgement. They called the things that hindered their human development “the devil”. They feared hell would be the destruction of their positive existence.

Power over minds. The powerful took these existential experiences and fears, using them to devise a system, and the weapons, for holding sway over minds and souls.

In the second Millennium, Christianity was turned into a religion that offered one set of ideas to the rich, and another to the poor.

It secured domination by depicting the mighty as sent by God, in accordance with the will of God.

The Roman Emperor Constantine the Great adopted Christianity with this purpose in mind. He transformed it according to his own scheme, building meeting rooms that looked like his own throne room, and embellishing hitherto simple Christian rituals with the ceremonial of the imperial court. The people were given wondrous rooms and ceremonies, and a festive atmosphere. For centuries, the faithful were assured by the church that this was what paradise was like.

Christianity ritualised power to a much greater degree than had been the case in ancient times, when it was merely the emperors who had been quick to establish the cult of their own divinity, a cult that had its origins in the east. In the Christian world, all those who held power claimed its divine origin. Even the most minor rulers used such rituals.

Christian rulers, both just men and scoundrels, gave themselves a godlike appearance, allowing themselves to be treated as saint-like. (Some of them were indeed officially canonised.) This is clear from pictorial representations, even pictures of petty rulers.

Modification of power. In the 12th century, and even more so in the 13th, people became increasingly self-assured. Christianity developed another strain at this time, one that took greater account of people's personal needs, and provided them with the appropriate symbols. Christ, the man of sorrows, took his place alongside the mighty Lord God. Christ endured the sufferings of this world, as did mankind. The undercurrent of Mary, the *magna mater*, became even stronger, turning into a cult that was both widespread and officially sanctioned. Both these tendencies effectively softened the long trend of cruelty in religion.

The long age of enlightenment that started with the 13th century was able to ease – to a greater or lesser degree – the absurd mixture of personal existence and domination.

However, those without any power were mostly resigned to their lot, not caring what happened outside their small circle. We have no evidence of this in written form, but we must assume that it existed, and was important.

Intellectuals learned to make subtle distinctions, believing that a thinker's ability to differentiate would enable him to escape from what was perceived to be a tortuous all-embracing labyrinth.

In 15th-century Florence, some courageous men started to develop a way of looking at things that was strictly based on facts, using appropriate language, and no longer explaining absolutely everything in terms of divine intervention. They launched a process that was later termed the secularisation of thought.

Religion turned into a legal system. The Catholic church underwent profound structural changes when theologians started to think like lawyers, believing they could draw boundaries between ideas like land registry officials parcelling out plots. Religion thus became the domain of dogmatism and sophistry, excluding rather than being inclusive.

At a lower level, people were free to think as they wished. Their unwritten thoughts were elusive, so no-one could take hold of and condemn them.⁶ Outwardly, they appeared indifferent, or simply feigned belief. The same could be true of priests who were forced to take up a career they were unable to give up.

Religion was a means of escape for all those who found things that surpassed their understanding.

Network of churches. Christianity occupied pre-Christian holy places nearly everywhere. People understood the new to be a continuation of the old.

Making use of ancient walls was not merely a question of saving money, it also showed respect for magic places.

Christian theologians suggested name changes, or other ways to use a place.

The many old and reconstituted shrines formed networks of chapels and churches.⁷

Religious caste. Christian holy places required a large number of people to perform the services that were held there. In this way, a particular caste was established. This involved far greater expenditure than ever before.

In the Middle Ages, an extensive hierarchy of priests and monks made its living from the fear of sin. Benefactors donated land to churches and monasteries for the sake of their own salvation, providing priests and monks with an income, all of which required administration.

Buildings. Great sums were also spent on basing the furnishings of many of these magic places on ancient Roman models. The rooms they built were like medium-size or large Roman halls, with a semi-circular east-facing wall.

Funding. In place of barter, which functioned alongside the discredited money economy of the ancient world, Christianity departed in the Middle Ages from its religious predecessors by acquiring extensive real estate. The property it owned was its only means of paying for building works and services. Magic places could only operate and exist through earnings from landed property.

Thus, the church became the greatest landowner on the Italian peninsula. In 1614, Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote that one third of the land in Anghiari was in the hands of ecclesiastical organisations – the abbey, parish churches and confraternities.⁸

There was no means of earning interest as a stable source of income until the industrial era.⁹

The integration of migrants. Superficially, the centuries-long waves of migration appear straightforward, but in actual fact, the peoples involved were subject to profound and complex changes in structure, as were the local populations they interacted with.

Max Weber wrote: “The century-long wanderings of conquering warrior-associations of the Germanic tribes before and during the Great Migration (*Völkerwanderung*), their mercenary soldiering and their war expeditions under elected leaders, must have resulted in an equal number of impediments to the rise of taboo and totemic ties.

Even though they are said to have settled, wherever possible, according to real or fictitious *sibs*, other forms of association were much more important. The legislative-judicial and military association of the “hundreds”, the “hide”-system as the basis for the allocation of public burdens, later the relationship to a prince: following and vassaldom – these were the decisive elements, and not some magical clan ties which never developed, perhaps precisely because of these circumstances.

When Christianity became the religion of these peoples who had been so profoundly shaken in all their traditions, it finally destroyed whatever religious significance the clan ties retained. Perhaps, indeed, it was precisely the weakness or absence of such magical and taboo barriers which made the

conversion possible.

The often very significant rôle played by the parish community in the administrative organisation of mediaeval cities is only one of many symptoms pointing to this quality of the Christian religion which, in dissolving clan ties, importantly shaped the mediaeval city.

Islam, by contrast, never really overcame the divisiveness of Arab tribal and clan ties, as is shown by the history of internal conflicts of the early caliphate; in its early period it remained the religion of a conquering army of tribes and clans.”¹⁰

The town as a “cultur” association and secularism. In those places that were re-developed in line with Roman communal patterns, Christianity raised public matters to a higher level, stipulating that each individual should play his part.

On the one hand, Christianity formed its own structure alongside the municipal one. On the other, it helped with the development, stabilisation and ritualisation of a communal municipal structure.

These were the origins of a structure that, from the 14th century on, tended to result in the formation of a secular community.

We turn again to Max Weber, who said: “The mediaeval city ... was still a cultic association. The city church, the city saint, participation of the burgher in the Lord's Supper, the official celebrations of the church holy days – all these are obvious features of the mediaeval city. But the *sib* had been deprived of all ritual significance by Christianity, for by its very nature the Christian congregation was a religious association of individual believers, not a ritual association of clans. ...”

In spite of all this, the mediaeval city, just like the ancient city, was a secular foundation, even though it still required the bond of a shared cult and ecclesiastic parishes were often (perhaps always) among its constituencies. The parishes acted not as ecclesiastic associations nor by means of ecclesiastic representatives, but rather through the lay elders of the parish communities who, together with the purely secular board of *Schöffen*, and at times the merchant guilds, participated on behalf of the burghers in the legally decisive acts.”¹¹

“The Occidental city – and especially the mediaeval city ..., was not only economically a seat of trade and the crafts, politically in the normal case a fortress and perhaps a garrison, administratively a court district, but beyond all this a sworn confraternity. In Antiquity the symbol of a confraternity was the joint election of the *prytaneis*. In the Middle Ages the city was a sworn *comune* which had the legal status of a corporation ... Everywhere ... the burgher associations of the emerging cities were initially treated by the political power, the lord of the city, as passive liturgical associations of urban land owners, who shared in specific tasks and duties as well as privileges: market monopolies and staple rights, rights of practising and controlling the practice of certain trades, participation in the city court, special military and taxation treatment.”¹²

The *Badia* (abbey). The Camaldolesian monastery played a very important rôle in the history of the early Middle Ages in Anghiari.¹³

Many people lived in an abbey of this kind. Ordained priests were in the minority, being greatly outnumbered by lay brothers. There were also servants, stable boys, goatherds and cowherds.

Every evening, after supper, the building – which was huge for its time – was shut for safety reasons, and to give its inmates a sense of psychological security.

Things that were forbidden were underlined by threats. Every punishment was a threat and a deterrent to others.

Every monastery was subject to an inner ambivalence. It could be a place for contemplation and

effective action in matters of vital importance. On the other hand, if it was badly run, it could become a breeding ground for sluggards and parasites.

A small monastic universe could have its particular speciality, stressing piety and learning or concentrating on the transmission of skills to its immediate surroundings. Alternatively, it could set about enlarging its property by crooked means, in collaboration with cliques of the powerful. This variety is reflected in the history of the various institutions.

Religious houses as infrastructure. For a long time, religious houses provided the most important infrastructure over a wide area, being structured and organised in a much better and more complex manner than other associations, of which there were but few.

Since every religious house was part of a comprehensive network, it was able to gather and circulate a wide spectrum of knowledge. This meant that even Anghiari, small as it was, was able to participate in events happening elsewhere, via the abbey.

Other religious houses, with different characteristics, were set up alongside the abbey.

Property and power. The basis for the abbey was land. Monastic property had to be organised and administered. Time and again, the abbey was forced to defend its property, while its administrators tended to enlarge it. Christianity was thus caught up in power struggles.

Documents contain constant references to ownership and hundreds of property disputes. The priestly caste did not behave any differently from other land owners in this respect.

Religious property and the town. The property in religious hands was mainly unencumbered. It was also immune from all kinds of official acts on the part of the town authorities and other agencies. Religious houses were exempt from the personal and military duties that were imposed on other citizens.

The property owned by religious houses grew as a result of pious endowments, but because of this, revenue from municipal taxes decreased. Religious houses in Tuscan towns had considerable revenues in the form of perpetual annuities from covered markets, sales outlets of all kinds, shambles (butchers' stalls), mills etc. They were exempt from taxation.

Church institutions were subject to canon law, which differed from municipal law. "In some cases the [town] clergy simply remained outside the city corporation, but even where this was not the case, it formed an uncomfortable and unassimilable alien body with its ineradicable status privileges".¹⁴ The Reformation put an end to this situation north of the Alps, but in Italy it still exists.

Shelters. Religious houses also provided shelter for many solitary persons, who entered as lay brothers or sisters. A convent or monastery offered them a secure, well organised and orderly existence with a decent standard of living.

The network of churches. There was a system to link the churches throughout the area in a hierarchical network.

Twelve parish churches belonged to the *pieve* of S. Maria di Micciano, which stands at the foot of the hills to the north of Anghiari: S. Angelo di Montedoglio; S. Martino; S. Lorentino; S. Pietro del Colle; S. Girolamo; S. Paterniano di Viaio; S. Crescentino; S. Croce; S. Leo (later taken over by the Franciscans of primitive observance); S. Donato di Tubiano; S. Maria di Corzano; S. Stefano.¹⁵

In the western valley, the *pieve* di Santa Maria alla Sovara was the first (*primicerio*) among eleven parishes.

The Franciscan experience. Second only to Assisi, the area around Anghiari is Franciscan territory. It was here that St. Francis walked (between about 1182 and 1226) from Assisi to San Leo, on

the other side of the Apennines, and on to the mountain of La Verna. Montauto Castle and Anghiari lie on this route.

Let us see imagine the axis of the *stradone*, and lengthen it in our mind's eye to the opposite side of the valley, where it will climb into the Alpe della Luna (Apennines). It will reach a place associated with St. Francis, the Franciscan monastery of Montecasale (it now belongs to the Order of the Capuchins).

This was where St. Francis stopped on many occasions on his way to La Verna.¹⁶ Other famous Franciscans like Saints Anthony of Padua and Bernardino of Siena spent the night there while following the Franciscan way.

Umberto Eco's book "The name of the Rose" (published in Italian in 1980, and in English in 1983) is set in the nearby monastery of La Verna.¹⁷ "Viewed from below, the cliff seemed to extend into heaven."

Contradictions. The fiercest and most numerous conflicts that were played out within the church, and between the church and the outside world, were rooted in poverty as opposed to wealth, and human power as opposed to impotence.

This became especially clear in the changes brought about by the Franciscans and the movement they founded.

St. Francis stood for the complete renunciation of power. People were free to interpret this in their own way, as in the contemporary movement associated with the culture of mystics in cities north of the Alps. This was a new step on the ladder of civilisation – people became the subjects of their own history, like the citizens of the free towns.

St. Francis' radicalism did not defer to (petty) bourgeois behaviour. However, because his radicalism was uncomfortable, he was cheated and defrauded behind his back by those within his circle. For the most part, this did not reach his ears.

Immediately after his early death, his followers split up. The "Spirituals" were principally guided by poverty and the renunciation of power. The "Observants" had a more pragmatic outlook within the old order of things.¹⁸ As the Franciscan order became more attractive and spread, the Observants tended towards the lowest common denominator. Earthly goods and influence increasingly took hold of them. They joined the establishment by adapting to the ecclesiastical institutions that the earliest Franciscans had turned against. They neglected to act as an opposition.

This was how the two movements within the order drifted apart.

The Spirituals. Some Franciscans came across the writings of the Cistercian abbot Joachim of Fiore (c. 1130 to c. 1202), who had taught in Calabria at the beginning of the twelfth century. He had prophesied the impending dawn of a new age, saying that false apostles had brought about the degeneration of the spirit of Christ, but that it would be renewed.

Many Franciscans found these writings gave implicit support to their own message.

However, theologians at the University of the Sorbonne in Paris condemned Joachim's works as heresy. There was a simple explanation for this: they felt the Friars Minor were becoming too influential, both inside and outside the university. They tried to silence them by accusing them of heresy.

"Which just goes to show that confused ideas were circulating in Paris too, or at least that someone was trying to cause confusion for his own ends. This is in fact the evil that heresy does to Christian folk: it muddles their heads and tempts everyone to turn inquisitor for selfish reasons. And the things I

experienced in the abbey in those days ... convinced me that it is often the inquisitors that produce the evil of heresy.”¹⁹

At the Council of Lyons in 1274, St. Bonaventure (1217-1274), Minister General of the Friars Minor from 1257, achieved “reforms” that allowed the order to own property.

In the region of the Marches, when members of the order revolted against this, they were imprisoned in Ancona for life. Their release was secured by the later Minister General of the order, Raymond de Gaufredi.

One of the prisoners, Angelo da Clareno, allied himself with Ubertino of Casale and the Provençal Petrus Johannis Olivi, who was preaching in southern France on the subject of Joachim of Fiore. This was the beginning of the movement of the Spirituals.

Pope Celestine V. In the course of a long debate on renewing the church by increased spirituality, and ridding it of the evils of bureaucracy and business mindedness, the hermit Pietro Angelieri da Morrone (c. 1215-1296) was elected Pope (Celestine V). The Spirituals welcomed his election, seeing in him a fulfilment of their prophesies. However, he was quickly worn down by Mafia-like church rulers, so that he retired a few months later on 13 December 1294, a disappointed man.

Dante in his turn was disappointed in Celestine, and consigned him to hell (*Inferno* III, 60): “Who by his cowardice made the great refusal”.

His successor, Boniface VIII (Pope from 1294-1303), immediately sent him into exile, where he died two years later. Celestine was canonised in 1313 by Pope Clement V (Pope from 1303-1316) at the suggestion of the Angevin court in Naples – partly in order to unmask the power-hungry Boniface VIII. According to a myth that was chiefly put about by the *Fraticelli*, Celestine was an “angel-like pope” (*mito del papa angelico*).

Power or poverty? In complete contrast to his predecessor, Boniface VIII was a pope who sought political power, principally the primacy of the papacy over all rulers. (Dante consigned him to hell too.)

He took rigorous steps against the Spirituals and *Fraticelli*. The latter were to be found all over Italy, and were widely regarded as dangerous, because they called wealth and power into question. Boniface made a sweeping attack in a papal bull on all monks who did not live their lives according to strict ecclesiastical discipline – in other words, all mendicants, itinerants or hermits.

The French Pope John XXII (pope from 1316-1334) pursued them with even greater rigour. He condemned the view that Jesus had owned no property, and burned a number of monks at the stake on this account.

In the 1322 General Chapter of Franciscan Friars in Perugia, the General of the Order, Michael of Cesena, brought his order in line with the teaching of the Spirituals, raising Christ's radical poverty to the status of an article of faith. Christ, he said, had owned no worldly goods.

In 1233, Pope John XXII condemned the Franciscans' proposition in his bull “*Cum inter nonnullos*”.

Emperor Louis of Bavaria viewed the recalcitrant Franciscans as enemies of the pope and lent them his support. Pope John XXII excommunicated the emperor, who, in his turn, called the pope a heretic.

There have been endless attempts to purify Christianity and free it from its connections to power and money. Right up to the present day, accusations have been repeated that “*La chiesa è una mercanzia, una bottega*”. (The church is a business, a shop.)

The attempts at purification failed when they came up against the bulwarks of power, if not before.

Popes residing in Rome felt they were the successors of the emperors of ancient times. They built up a church that was a state with the potential for military might. Since 1870, lacking any military force, they have relied on their vast connections.

The direction taken by the Observants. In 1440, the famous preacher Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444), a Franciscan and Vicar-General of the Order from the noble Albizeschi family, gave the Observants the “reformed” rule of their Order.

The heresy of the Spirituals, it stated, consisted in the fact that they valued poverty above all else.

This was a sophist argument – it ignored the radical nature of St. Francis of Assisi. Bernardino claimed that obedience was the elder sister of poverty. Among other things, obedience required friars to “put up with” (*supportare*) living in certain magnificent places. To preach poverty might be interpreted as a sign of intellectual pride, the opposite of true Biblical perfection, he said. The future motto was to be a denial of radicalism, but rather moderation in all things. Nowadays we might say “being all things to all men and causing offence to none”. This had virtually nothing to do with the thoroughly radical St. Francis of Assisi.

Personal problems and the family. Everyone faced existential problems. One of these was the survival of the family tribe. In a society dominated by men, it was always the woman who was blamed if she remained childless. She was a source of great worry to all concerned. Mary with her Child not only determined relations between mothers and their children, she was also turned into a fertility cult.

Women practised Marian devotion in order to ensure their fertility, establish their identity and magnify the rôle they played.

Mary thus became a complex figure.

She was also used to exercise control – many people were terrorised by the Church's demands for chastity and its hostility to the body. These demands were mainly made of women by a Church that used theological and literary means to raise the tone. In the Book of Wisdom, wisdom is described as an “unspotted mirror”. The Song of Solomon speaks of his beloved as “a garden inclosed”, “a lily among thorns”.

Statues of the Virgin Mary with her Mother, St. Anne, and the Child Jesus came to be a symbol of the extended family.

In the 14th century, wealthy people took such articles of devotion into their homes, in the form of small altars for their houses. Their origins lay in the domestic gods, the Penates, and their immediate models were the portable altars that the higher clergy and princes took with them on their travels.

The uncertainties of life. When a person died, his final illness was often unknown. Little was known about the efficacy of medicines. If someone fell ill, others went to church to pray for him. If he died, they said he was going to a better life.

In such a context, the important rôle played by the Church should come as no surprise. Thus, Lorenzo Taglieschi, writing in about 1600, said he went to Mass nearly every day.

“St. John the Baptist is the advocate and protector of the city of Florence. San Donato is the protector of the city of Arezzo. St. Bartholomew is the advocate and protector of Anghiari and its surroundings. St. Anthony the Abbot and St. Francis of Assisi are the protectors of the Taglieschi family.”

Lorenzo Taglieschi was an educated man, but he was enlightened only to a limited degree.

Disasters. Natural disasters in the form of floods or famine and man-made disasters in the form of war made the population extremely timid and susceptible to almost any plausible explanation for such

happenings.

Religion came into play, profiting economically and transforming earnings into buildings, salaries and many other things.

Religion caused people to humble themselves. The mighty then used this humility for their own ends.

Contrasting motives. On the other hand, various motives and experiences of a different kind were to be found. Pride, born of egotism, pugnaciousness or an upbringing that engendered trust, gave many people a sense of their own dignity.

Moreover, the Middle Ages, mainly the 15th and 16th centuries, were characterised by waves of enlightenment.

It was not long before a wealthy class evolved with no inclination for humility. They accepted the Church as it was, but kept their distance.

Women had always tended to support the Church, treating it like a magic insurance policy. Men used it rather to confirm the status quo.

In the 15th century, and even more so in the 16th, the wealthy took a large number of churches in the town into their own hands.

They embellished the architecture to reflect their self-confidence. The avant-garde forms they used had originated in Florence and were introduced into Anghiari with the help of Florentine artists.

Tensions and ambivalence. These complex feelings and thoughts that touched on the heights and depths of every aspect of human existence were full of tension and ambivalence.

Individuals were selective and inconsistent. Many strands of thought existed side by side.

All this was even more true of the people in the town.

The various factions were constantly trying to organise the group dynamics and introduce uniformity. In the main, it was writers who attempted to iron out any contradictions.

How did individuals and society deal with such tensions? Where were the cultural norms leading them?

A feeling for pluralism emerged, probably following on from the traditions of Antiquity. Pluralism was wanted, cursed, fought against and defended, but it was not wiped out at the informal level. We may assume that people learned at an early stage to keep their thoughts to themselves, in order to avoid conflict. This did not mean, however, that they stopped thinking them.

Society was seldom radicalised. Radical trends were mostly restricted to times of disaster.

This made them very ambivalent.

Self-inflicted punishment. A hermit appeared on the squares of Perugia after the bloodbath that was the Battle of Montaperti (1260), fought between Guelphs and Ghibellines. He said the Holy Ghost had inspired him, and that God demanded repentance. The people would be punished most terribly, he claimed. If they failed to repent, they would all soon die of the plague.

Such rhetoric touched his listeners' hearts. Many men threw off their shirts and flagellated themselves. They walked in processions, calling on the Virgin Mary, as though she were their own mother, pleading with her to ask for mercy on behalf of them all.

They forgave their enemies and embraced them in public.

They moved around the country, visiting Sansepolcro and then Anghiari, where they remained for two days. On they went to Arezzo. The chroniclers tell us that this radical form of piety spread through Tuscany, the Marches and Romagna "like wildfire".

The effect was indeed a desire for peace.²⁰

Heaven intervenes. April 13th, 1309, was a day of huge existential tension.

Soldiers from the Tarlati and exiled Ghibellines from Arezzo attacked Anghiari by night. They tried to climb the walls, apparently with success.

But they were detected at the last minute.

Bells were rung. People shouted.

Those citizens who could bear arms dressed quickly and rushed to the walls and gates.

The attack failed.

Success at such a moment of extremity was ascribed to divine intervention. It happened on the feast day of St. Martin (Pope Martin I from Umbria). People immediately said St. Martin had intervened, he had sent a white cloud from heaven.

Probably there were banks of mist on that day, such we often find in spring or autumn.

A thanksgiving procession was immediately announced.

People discussed what had happened. One topic dominated thousands of conversations – a demand that contained echoes of both magic and enlightenment. It concerned the welfare of many poor and old folk. The result was the building of a hospital in one quarter of the town. Of course, its patron and protector was St. Martin.

And the poor received a gift of bread.²¹

Stories were invented that no-one could verify. Most people were not interested in verifying them.

If they were good, such tales took on a life of their own.

People's only option was to talk when they wanted to air their imaginings. They talked and talked. Their vocabulary was limited; they liked to repeat themselves. They had little or no feeling for novelty as yet.

The worth of the stories lay in the phenomena that cropped up in them: weird and wonderful personages, peculiar happenings, things to be spiteful about, figures of hate, gossip galore, wishful thinking, wishes that would rarely come true.

If there were ever any logic in the tales, it was not one of cause and effect. Their final logic was the feeling of protection afforded to those who believed them.

The stories varied every time they were told.

Present-day stories follow a similar pattern. You can hear groups of people standing on a corner of Piazza del Popolo swapping stories on a daily basis.

It was not until the written form became prevalent that accuracy in facts and arguments became subject to scrutiny. In the 15th century, concern for accuracy was restricted to a small group of people, based mainly in Florence. Their influence did not extend far, but it did exist, as we can see from the artist Piero della Francesca (c. 1410/1420-1492) from the neighbouring town of Borgo San Sepolcro.

Miracles. For these reasons, it is easy to see that stories were like miracles in the minds of many people. And they wanted to believe in miracles.

Thus, it was claimed as an incontrovertible fact that the body of St. Augustine was carried through Anghiari on its way from Africa to Pavia. Why? Because this was (or would be) nice. They did not yet differentiate between “is” and “would be”, and it flattered their local pride.

This story did the rounds, and it was said that eight days later a monastery was built for Augustinian Friars. They spread the word of all the miracles wrought by St. Augustine in Anghiari.

Lorenzo Taglieschi expressed his doubts in 1614, not because he did not believe in miracles, but for

an academic reason: he had found no confirmation of these happenings in the writings of other authors.²²

White processions for peace. The following story is also ambivalent.

A new form of piety arose during times of war in 1395.²³ White-robed persons walked from place to place, calling for peace and mercy.

As a rule, they walked for ten days, living on nothing but bread and water. They said they were atoning for their sins and forgiving all the wrongs done to them.

Processions of this kind had originated in the Alps of Savoy and spread throughout Italy.

The first Tuscan processions went from Lucca to Florence. The Florentines walked to Anghiari via Arezzo, and on to Umbria. Thirty men from Anghiari joined them.

The men from Anghiari came back with a standard (*stendardo*) of St. Anthony the Abbot, which they revered as a sacred object.

One of the men, Andrea del Pecora, had a house on the big square, Piazza del Mercatale. He had donated this as a chapel and changing-room dedicated to St. Anthony. As the group returned home on the feast of St. James and St. Christopher, they re-dedicated the chapel to all three saints.

This made a great impression on the populace.

The pope, however, who was always busy waging war, had the French monk who started these peace processions arrested in 1398. He accused him of heresy and superstition. Heresy was anything that diverged from one's own views. Superstition was anything that did not fit in with one's own scheme of things. The monk of peace was therefore burnt to death on one of the squares in Rome, surrounded by crowds of onlookers. No 20th-century pope has ever apologised for this.

The people, however, continued to hold processions despite the death of their initiator. Thus, the Hospital of Sant'Antonio fuori del Ponte (by the town gate on the farther side of the drawbridge) was established in Anghiari next to the Piazza del Mercatale.

There followed the founding of St. Anthony's Confraternity.

The wars of 1398 continued unabated, despite the peace processions. This was mainly due to the fact that the military had taken on a life of their own. Commanders and soldiers were incapable of doing anything other than plundering.

The building of the church was interrupted in 1411 by a terrible outbreak of the plague.²⁴

A relic and a fair. Those who think in concrete terms appreciate visible objects, above all if they are something special.

Abbot Andrea had a finger of St. John the Baptist. He claimed it was the finger the saint had pointed at Jesus in the desert when he said "Behold the Lamb of God".

He kept this sacred relic in a crystal case in the abbey church.

We do not know how he came by it. In 1440, a pilgrimage took place, with many pilgrims entering the abbey church to see this magic finger.

The many visitors quickly created a business opportunity. "for the convenience" (*per la comodità*) of pilgrims, runs the source, a fair was to be established. It took another three years for Florence to give its approval in 1407.

With a feeling for drama, it was decided the fair should be held on the feast day of St. John the Baptist.

A plea for the rains to stop. Societies dependent on agriculture have always been dependent literally on what falls on them from the heavens. On 9th May 1413, they held a procession, as by that

time the rain had been falling ceaselessly for two months. As in ancient times, they called upon Heaven, pleading for the rain to stop.²⁵

Contradictions. Christianity's temporal-minded leaders had little interest in certain forms of radical thought and conduct.

In 1417, Manfredo, a Lombard and Dominican friar, appeared in Anghiari with 400 men and women dressed in white. They received a warm welcome from the confraternities, both white and black.

They met for penitential exercises on the piazza.

They spent the night with members of the confraternities.

They had come from the Marches and were on their way to Florence, where they appeared before Pope Martin V, who was on a visit there. He treated them with distaste, as beffited a popular uprising.

They walked on to Rome, and the Pope assigned them a place where they could stay, separating the main body from their leader. He had the leader hung for saying the Antichrist had been born and for claiming his (the monk's) followers wanted him to be pope.²⁶

The culture of death. Churches had provided services in connection with the culture of death since earliest times. We have evidence of this from the payments made and the results put on show, often to the glory of the church.

Gregorio d'Anghiari, the notorious mercenary leader, donated 100 florins to the Abbey church in 1446 for the embellishment (*abbellimento*) of the main altar. Together with Selvestro Taglieschi, he had a room built on to the back of the church, as an extension to the sacristy.

Piero di Lorenzo, a Florentine artist, completed the painting over the altar, which was framed in a gilded wooden frame in the Greek style (*alla greca*).

At the heart of Gregorio's and Selvestro's donation was the family tomb beneath the floor of the church. These were the first tombs to be built in the *Badia*. In 1458, Luca de Selvestro Taglieschi placed the inscription: "*Talieschi de' morte ad vitam*".²⁷

In 1461, another mercenary leader, Matteo Cane, paid for a family tomb under the church floor. He was buried there in 1497.

An altar with columns and arches (built in 1461) in honour of St. Mary and St. Matthew (his patron saint) forms part of it. The sculptor was Maestro Santi di Benedetto di Santi da Settignano, who had settled in Anghiari.²⁸

In 1990, Vittorio Dini said "A graveyard indicates a society's degree of civilisation. Remembrance is an act against death. Every person is born to die. The culture of death is a pact between mankind and God."

Good reputation. Everyone knew the identity of the donor as a matter of course. The good reputation of a family was always linked to such donations. Prestige was founded on magic, permanence and presence in a place as public as a church.

Detachment. Not everyone was pious by any means. Large groups of people kept themselves aloof from Christianity and, above all, from the power associated with it.

Detachment of this kind was most frequently the result of battles between the papal mercenaries and those of the Republic of Florence. The pope became the bogeyman.

Many events made the contradictions apparent, setting in train a process similar to that in Northern Europe: incessant debates on reform.

Florence was a centre of the move towards the profane. This process took place at many levels. Its

effects were felt deep within the territory.

Usefulness. The 15th century intensified the long tradition of enlightenment.

Father Dionisio dal Borgo San Sepolcro was living in the monastery of Sant'Agostino around the year 1416. He wrote commentaries on such writers as Valerio Massimo and fables written by poets. He explained their relevance to people, and showed them how useful they could be.²⁹ They were popular, and he had many readers.

Anti-clericalism. There was a long Tuscan tradition of deep-seated anti-clericalism. One indication of this was that after bridges, roads and ditches had been destroyed in the wars, the *priori* imposed one half of the costs for repair on the clergy, in the form of rigorously levied taxes.

This was the source of many conflicts and debates.

The clergy complained. For diplomatic reasons, this degree of anti-clericalism was too much, even for anti-clerical Florence. In this particular case, they limited the authority of the commune.³⁰

An atheist physician. In 1450, an excellent scientist lived in Anghiari, a man of “*profonda scienzia*”, a doctor by the name of Giovanni Canini. He denied that the soul was immortal and cursed the Madonna.

A number of people attempted to change his mind, some praying for him, others threatening him. The doctor, however, stuck to his views.

In the end, Archbishop Antoninus of Florence, who was later canonised, ordered him to appear before a secular court in Florence. The judges imposed the death penalty on him.

Debates flared up on all public squares, as Florence provided space for people with dissenting opinions, those persecuted and branded elsewhere as “heretics”, for centuries. This liberal atmosphere explains why many people, very influential ones too, were outraged.

But their protests were unsuccessful. The doctor was publicly hung from the gallows, and his body later burnt.³¹

The case reveals the pluralisation of society and its deep-seated polarisation.

This may be a particularly good illustration of the climate of opinion in 15th century Central Italy.

Doubts among the clergy. Many destined for this profession had been separated from their parents at a very early age. Later on, unable to quit, they practised it without conviction.

The Council of Trent ended in the year 1563. The clergy lost considerable freedoms. Duke Cosimo I ordered this news to be broadcast from the piazza.

However, there were a number of clergy who were unwilling to submit to decisions affecting their lives.

The Bishop of Arezzo handed the matter over to the temporal *vicario*, in order to force them into obedience.

The *vicario* had Giovanni di Brizio Marzi and Andrea di Maso della Valle arrested for failing to wear the tunic (*tonica*) and a black hat (*cappello*) and for bearing hidden arms. They were fined 200 scudi.

As they were unable to pay this fine, they were imprisoned for 14 months, until they were able to raise the sum in question, maybe with the help of relatives.³²

Fasting to ward off the plague. Many people found themselves in the grips of great and incomprehensible disasters. The worst of these was the plague. It broke out repeatedly and wrought havoc in town and country.

During the outbreak of 1464, a farmer from near Maiano said the Madonna and “the Saint” had

appeared to him and demanded of him twelve days of fasting.

This news spread rapidly throughout Tuscany, partly because the Archbishop of Florence promised a plenary indulgence to all who fasted. Many fasted, calling on San Donnino, who offered his particular protection to those living in an agricultural society.³³

Crusade. Christianity became radicalised particularly at the level of power.

In 1464, Pope Pius II attempted to set out on a crusade against “the Turks”. He told the Italian states to provide mercenary forces. The costs of the crusade were to be shared among the whole population of Italy.

His first demand was for one-tenth of all church income. His second was for one thirtieth of the income of lay people over a period of three years. He, the guardian of the one true faith, also demanded that the Jews hand over one twentieth of all their possessions.

In that day and age, however, such undertakings could not take place smoothly.

Florence feared that its merchants in Istanbul might be at a disadvantage, so it refused to provide any mercenaries. It was content to force its subjects to pay.

Anghiari was supposed to pay 30 florins. The population refused and sent two envoys to Florence. Lorenzo Taglieschi believed their mission would have been unsuccessful, but the death of the Pope in Ancona on 12th August meant the undertaking was abandoned.

Was his death divine judgement?

What did the folk on the piazzas say?

Marian miracles. War threw human relationships into disarray more than any other form of disaster. In their helplessness, many people came to believe in miracles.

In 1479, a blacksmith from Anghiari and several farmers claimed to have seen a vision of the Madonna in the church at Corzano. Many immediately went there with gifts. Since the Order of Franciscan Observants was very popular in that area, these people wanted to contribute to the founding of a Franciscan monastery there.

Nevertheless, no monastery was founded.³⁹

Veneration of the Sacred Host. Fra Cherubino da Spoleto, a Franciscan Observant, touched the hearts of many with his fiery sermons. He encouraged them to venerate the Sacrament of the altar.

Confraternities were established in many places. Acting as torch-bearers, they accompanied the priests when they went to administer Holy Communion to the sick.

Beatification. In 1510, Francesco di Giovanni Magio, a Franciscan monk from Anghiari, was beatified. Taglieschi noted down the grounds for his beatification: the monk humbled himself, despised his body, was obedient and lived in extreme poverty. He would make an interesting case study in the psychology of religion.

The cult of the rosary. In 1532, an itinerant Dominican friar preached on the cult of the rosary in San Martino church in Borgo della Croce.

Miracles and church building. In 1536, Arietta del Mazza, a 12-year-old shepherdess, claimed the Madonna appeared to her above a chestnut tree.

This caused a sensation.

People immediately planned to build a chapel, and did in fact set to work. They collected 14,000 scudi within a short space of time. Contributions were so generous that funds sufficed for the upkeep of ten chaplains, monks and priests.

Niccolò Soggi, who had a reputation as a well-known Florentine painter, was charged with copying

an apparently contemporary painting of the Madonna in the house of Mariotto di Luca Ciarperi. The shepherdess said the Madonna looked as she did in the painting, and this was how she wished to be revered.

The painting was removed from the Ciarperis' house and carried to the church by the chestnut tree in solemn procession. The Ciarperi family were given the copy.

Conflict broke out concerning the building of the church. It was argued by some that a church and monastery like this should be erected in the *castello* in Anghiari.

On 11th July, the first anniversary of the apparition, a crowd of 20,000 turned up. The commune decreed that this feast be celebrated with bell ringing, a procession, and fireworks every year.

In 1542, the monastery was handed over to Franciscan Observants, but for some unknown reason they returned it to the commune as early as 1545. For three years, no order could be persuaded to move in, until Carmelite friars from Mantua decided to take possession in 1548.

Wealthy families built numerous chapels in the church; some used it as a burial place.³⁷

There is a procession to the Madonna del Carmine in May, but for a time the route taken was via Micciano, as the Count of Montauto blocked its path.³⁸

Nowadays, parishioners from the Propositura process along the ridge and cross the *aquedotto* to the Carmine church.

The procession is on Ascension Day. The faithful bring a picnic with them and spend the whole day there.

Another miracle. In 1575, a Lombard decorator fell from scaffolding while he was trying to whitewash a section of wall above a door and obliterate a fresco of the Madonna.

This happened three times. Each time he ended up in a critical condition.

On each occasion, he said, he saw the splendour of the Mother of God and a company of angels.

The news of this miracle spread. A crowd gathered. Within a short space of time, they had collected enough money to build a church dedicated to the Madonna of the Visitation.

A confraternity, ranked eighth, was founded. Its members wore white.

As always, several wealthy families joined the project. Pirro di Mazzone Mazzoni funded the portal, with the aim of putting his coat of arms on permanent display, for all to see.³⁹

Cursing was a pre-Christian means of driving away demons. Etruscan farmers cursed incessantly to scare evil spirits off their fields while they were ploughing. Customs of this kind remained alive over the millennia, even if the form they took changed. Sometimes measures were taken to counteract them. In 1542, Duke Cosimo I strictly forbade cursing by law.⁴⁰ Did anyone abide by this law?

Birth of a monster. In 1606, many people, including Lorenzo Taglieschi, believed the following tale that happened in the village of Topo. Cleria, wife of Maruffo Maruffi gave birth to a young goat (*capretta*). As soon as it was born, the kid jumped around the room.

All those who were present determined this monster (*mostro*) should be killed at once, as there was nothing human about it, and before it could bring disgrace on the family.

Taglieschi attributed this solely to the mother's disbelief. He said it was a sign that the parents had sinned, or maybe the fatherland had sinned, or indeed they were living in sinful times. He summed up by saying it was a warning of God's punishment.⁴¹

Believers in miracles and doubters. A picture of the Madonna, affectionately known as "little Madonna" (*madonnuccia*), was painted on the wall of Santa Maria Hospital. It began to work miracles in September 1607. The sick were healed. This news spread immediately.

However, Lorenz Taglieschi wrote in 1614 that among those “who were responsible for such matters” there were some who were unhappy about the popular fervour. They were sceptical.

Taglieschi complained that the *priori*, with the support of the Bishop of Arezzo, wanted to remove the picture of the Madonna. They also wanted to return the many contributions made by the faithful.

Nevertheless, many wished a church to be built in honour of the painting. They discussed where it should be built and what form it should take. They actually built the foundations.

Their opponents mocked them, saying the site was near the water course (*fabrica del fosso*) and the construction work poor.⁴²

Arguments about income. The churches earned a steady income from the land they owned, which was a source of their wealth. However, from time to time, this income became rather a source of conflict and even disaster.⁴³

The conflict regarding Santa Maria in the hamlet of Corzano resulted in the previous owner, Gherardo Ricciardeschi, sending armed men to occupy the church, with the aim of re-possessing it. Fifty armed men from the Marzi family, the new owners, responded by breaking into the church to get it back. Many were injured and one man died in the fray. Florence confirmed the Marzis' ownership and had the leaders of the opposing troops hanged in front of the church.⁴⁴

Favouritism. In 1503, Pope Pius II drew up a brief (*breve*) condemning the great wealth of the Camaldolese order. His successor Julius II formally took possession of the twelve richest abbeys in Tuscany, including that of Anghiari, following a meeting of the Consistory and in the name of the cardinals in 1505.

The pope appointed Cardinal Niccolò Flisco of Genoa as Titular Abbot. The appointee did not appear in person, but sent a representative (*procuratore*).⁴⁵

This incident shows that the pope was not worried about rich versus poor. If he had been, he would have had to remove himself and all the cardinals from office. What he was interested in was the disposition and use of wealth.

This re-distribution was sheer robbery, and that was how it was viewed in Anghiari.

The populace refused to allow a crime like this to be committed without protest.

The cardinal himself did not turn up to take possession of the abbey, but sent the man who was to hold office in his stead. When the representative arrived in Anghiari he made his way to the church, where he was greeted by Abbot Antonio Rampini and the townsfolk, who had taken up arms. When the representative pushed his way through the crowd on the small square and tried to enter the church the people, in their fury, inflicted injury on him. He was seized by panic and fled to Città di Castello.

The cardinal ordered the rebellious abbot to Rome and excommunicated the entire population.

They took no notice, however, and lived with this situation for three years, receiving encouragement from Florence, the pope's enemy.⁴⁶

It is not quite clear how the story ended.

When the abbot and townsfolk gave in, the excommunication order was rescinded. The Bishop of Arezzo's representative performed the corresponding rites on the piazza. Some of the people did penance, others cursed and swore.

We do not know if the cardinal himself ever turned up, but he did put his coat of arms on display.

The Abbey owned many houses, four mills, six estates and many other assets besides. It also had an income from a number of churches.

The cardinal had to use this income to support six monks and their prior (formerly their abbot), five

priests, one altar server, one cook, the sacristan, an organist, three other members of the clergy and one preacher.

The abbot and three rebellious monks were banned from the diocese for life.

This did not mean the conflict was at an end. It went on for decades, and many reports and complaints were sent to Rome and Arezzo. The cardinal's successor was his nephew (presumably his illegitimate son). He too became involved in the conflict, and rumour had it that he had Abbot Bernardino del Bene murdered in 1531.⁴⁷

Rank and livings. In 1576, Abbot Girolamo tried to turn the Abbey into a commandery of the religious and military Order of St. Stephen.

The Council immediately sent envoys to the duke, describing the plan as impertinence (*impertinenza*) on the part of the abbot. They said it would alter the whole system, ancient and historic values and links, the patronage of the town, pastoral care, burial places and donations. In short, it was a complete betrayal of duties and of the confraternity. Moreover, they accused the abbot of neglect.

The duke listened, and decided to leave things as they were.⁴⁸

In 1583, many accusations were made against the detested abbot. Taglieschi listed a whole catalogue of his deficiencies and omissions. At this time, 1805 persons were living in the municipality.

Despite this opposition, or maybe because of it, the abbot again tried to turn the Abbey into a commandery of St. Stephen's Knights.

He lost the first round. Rome told him to correct his mistakes.

Nevertheless, the abbot was clever. He made friends in Rome, where he declared the accusations coming out of Anghiari were a pack of lies. He said the inhabitants were scattered across the countryside, and the municipality did not have sufficient income for all the demands made on it.

As a result, he was freed from the obligation of residence, could live where he pleased and could delegate his duties to his deputy. He was even allowed to reduce the number of curates from six to two in order to increase his own income.⁴⁹

Sacred places

The salaries for church employees were paid out of the income from endowments of landed property. The clergy therefore mostly associated with the wealthy who had something to bequeath, rather than the common people.

Such property had to be administered by the clergy so, as with the seats of the nobility, every parish church had a number of farms to run. The administrator (*fattore*) had the task of collecting dues from the tenant farmers and getting produce to market. The money earned was used to pay salaries and maintain the churches.

Venality. The invention of Purgatory was a stroke of genius as far as the merchants in the developing urban money economies were concerned. The church would have alienated this class if it had simply consigned them to hell, but it got them to pay their way to heaven. It was widely believed God's favour could be bought. The system of indulgences was only the culmination of this belief.

For many years, a movement of enlightened persons opposed it in vain. It was not until Martin Luther came on the scene that the conflict escalated.

This movement only achieved moderate success among the populace.

The work of men. Many years would pass before writers like the philosopher Baruch Spinoza

(1632-1677) were able to claim they could no longer see the hand of God in the biblical story of creation and to state publicly that the Bible's arguments were after “the manner of men”. Obedience was achieved by means of religious commandments, he said. “When people declare, as all are ready to do, that the Bible is the Word of God ..., they evidently do not mean what they say; for ... we see most people endeavouring to hawk about their own commentaries as the word of God, and giving their best efforts, under the guise of religion, to compelling others to think as they do.”

The middle classes as owners of churches. Anghiari and its surrounding area were home to a priory, a commendary of the Knights of Malta and six filiations or dependencies of the Order of St. Stephen. The owners were middle-class families living in the town: the Stufi, Alessandri, Pichi, Mazzoni, Musetti, Chieli and Ducci.⁵⁰ Their property, like that of the old nobility, was to be found all over the countryside.

In Central Italy, unlike in countries north of the Alps, town and country were closely intertwined.

Insurance. The churches were places where ordinary folk and the upper classes could seek the protection of inscrutable powers in uncertain times – a form of “insurance policy”.

Landed property and church economics. The churches received donations in the form of landed property in an age when the money economy was in its infancy.

This gave rise to a model based on the economic system employed by the Lombard lords in their dealings with their vassals – the church allowed tenant farmers to work the land it had received as bequests. In return, the farmers handed over their produce to the church. The clergy who administered the churches lived off the fruits of the land.

Church buildings. The various churches attained a level of importance in line with the donations they received. Important churches received more donations.

This enabled them to demonstrate their prestige using a given language of symbols.

Ancient structures. They were following an ancient tradition. We find churches with large hall-like structures; in principle these were covered meeting places.

The usual form was a simple hall. Smaller halls (aisles)⁵¹ could be constructed on either side to enhance a church's importance. In special cases, a transverse hall (transept) could be built near the front.

The striking feature of such ancient halls was their spaciousness. They owed this to the structure of the walls or the use of ashlar, a building material which was not disguised, but was rendered as smooth as possible. The result was not only elegant, but it emphasised the structural shell, allowing spaciousness to predominate.⁵²

To this day, it is the spatial dimension that is preponderant in Central Italy, as against other building styles favoured north of the Alps that used vertical supports.

The continuation of this tradition was especially significant in the history of 15th century design. The way in which space was perceived facilitated the development of perspective.⁵³

Signs of grandeur. It was not only the breadth and height of a hall-like structure that conveyed a sense of grandeur. It was also particularly apparent in pillars, those hardest-to-form of building elements.

In the days of Antiquity, pillars were not only a sign of grandeur, but also a source of fascination on account of their attractive material, the structural engineering involved and, more than anything else, their dimensions. In ancient times, pillars were basically anthropomorphic in character, an aspect that largely fell into neglect in mediaeval times, but was re-discovered in the twilight of the Middle Ages.

Pillars are a rarity in Anghiari, although no reason for this has yet been put forward.

Decoration and space. Antiquity traditionally gave priority to space over decorativeness.⁵⁴

Types of building. There were three types of structure: a simple hall, a three-naved space (basilica) and a centrally planned structure.

The hall was the normal type of Christian sacred building. Most churches were built as large halls.

An early example of a hall church (mentioned in 1349 and dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel) was to be found in the village of Upacchi.⁵⁵ Originally, Sant'Agostino was also built as a hall, as was the Carmine church and the church at Pieve di Micciano. The latter was reconstructed in the 17th century, however, and of the earlier building, only the tower – built around 1500 – remains.

Halls in miniature are to be found in oratories, for instance in St. Francis of Assisi's prayer house in the grounds of Castello di Montauto.

In the 16th century, the Florentine hall was considered to be a more modern form of hall church. Examples of this are the Franciscan church and the Propositura (built in 1639, but not consecrated until 1788).⁵⁶

In the Middle Ages, it was a rare sign of distinction for a church to be built in the form of a basilica. Pieve di Sovara earned this distinction.

Centrally planned structures originated in the mausoleums of Antiquity. They were mainly to be found in capital cities and were popular with artists in the 15th and 16th centuries. Santo Stefano (7th to 8th century) is the only such structure in Anghiari.

We frequently find churches that are a combination of a basilica with transept and a centralised structure. In such cases, a cupola was built over the crossing of nave and transept, which was especially common at the time of rule by absolute monarchs. There are no examples of this in the Anghiari area.

San Giovanni Battista. The church of St. John the Baptist was built over the temple of Janus (the present-day town hall) in 470. In 1139, the hall-like oratory was transferred to the abbey and incorporated into it.⁵⁷

Santo Stefano (7th to 8th century) is the oldest church in Anghiari still in existence.⁵⁸ We can only guess at why the building has a centralised structure.

It was built by a suffragan bishop of Ravenna based in Città di Castello. The architectural forms were modelled on those found in the centrally planned churches of Ravenna, which in turn followed examples from ancient times. It has two pillars on each side joined by an arch, behind which there is in each case a short rectangular space with a round apse. However, a rectangular vestibule replaces the apse at the entrance to the church. The plan is thoroughly geometrical. In the middle of each side, very high up, we find a window with a rounded arch, flanked by two round windows. The space is planned in accordance with principles dating from the days of Antiquity. It allows us to experience the proportions in a spatial expanse.

Pieve S. Maria di Micciano. The word *pieve* derives from *plebs* and denotes a parish church for the people. Its structure is the common one of a hall. Other structures were added on later.

The church is one of the oldest in the Upper Tiber Valley. It stands at a distance of about 2km from the town boundary. It is situated, like the hamlets, mid-way up the hill overlooking the Tiber Valley.

In 1082, Pieve S. Maria di Micciano belonged to the estates (with fort and farm) that Alberigo di Raniero di Galbino gave to his brother Bernardo. The latter donated them to the Camaldoleses monks in 1104. The patronage was in the hands of the Counts of Galbino and Montedoglio.

Immediately after the Battle of Montaperti (1260), in which over 4,000 Florentines lost their lives,

Ghibellines set fire to the church because the parish priest was a Guelph. In 1261, Pope Alexander IV ordered the city of Arezzo to rebuild the church at its own expense.

An altar painting by a 16th century artist belonging to the circle around Luca Signorelli depicts the patron saints St. Peter and St. Jerome (Girolamo) and Our Lady. The church was almost entirely rebuilt in the 17th century.

Pieve di Sovara (late 7th century). The parish church of Pieve di Sovara stands to the west of Anghiari, in the Sovara Valley⁵⁹. Franceschini presumes it received the status of parish church (*pieve*) and baptistery in the 9th or 10th century.

In the second half of the 12th century, it was built anew in the form of a basilica, which gave it a distinctive appearance. It was built in the form of three parallel naves or aisles, linked by openings in the walls. The congregation could look through the openings and walk through them, passing between round columns topped by capitals and soaring arches. The ceilings are flat and are supported by beams. All three aisles have an apse, a mark of grandeur.

When the parish priest of Sovara, Simone di Duccio, died in 1484, he left behind him a reconstructed and almost completely new church.⁶⁰ [...]

San Girolamo (St. Jerome). In 1100, Count Bernardino laid the foundations for San Girolamo (it was later demolished) to the north of the long road, half-way up the hillside.⁶¹

The Abbey (Badia). The first abbey was built in 1105 in accordance with Count Bernardino's will, but was moved in 1359. In the context of the refurbishment of the fortress, the town ruler Magio Tarlati⁶² had a new abbey built. He died in 1380 and was buried there.

Church and Abbey had to make do with cramped quarters. The strangely irregular shape of the interior of the church was determined by buildings already standing and by unalterable pathways. The complicated history of the *Badia* buildings is there for all to see. It is hard to imagine a more bitty room. There is nothing systematic about it.

The chancel and choir are small, with strikingly little space for the congregation in the body of the church.

The church probably used to have a raftered ceiling. The present-day vaulting was put in in the 17th/18th century, but it merely demonstrates a failed attempt to introduce some kind of system based on the usual formal clichés.

Almost nothing remains of the original design of the church. In the east wall, between the two altars, we do find one niche with a pointed arch, where it is likely the Sacrament was formerly housed.

The following data can give us some idea of what time and efficiency meant in those days: since the destruction of the old bell tower (1337), the Abbey did not have a proper campanile. The bells probably hung from scaffolding. It was not until 1436, some 77 years after the move, that Abbot Amadio da Bagno had the present campanile built.⁶³

The earliest tombs date from 1446. The mercenary leader Gregorio d'Anghiari paid for a family vault in the Abbey church and funded a new main altar. His cousin, Selvestro di Antonio Taglieschi, also paid for a family vault.⁶⁴

The entire floor in the choir and the main body of the church is made up of many families' memorial slabs. All in all, there are three rows of slabs, with eight tombs to a row. An oval stone in each slab can be removed for another dead person to be buried among his kinsmen below.

There are three altars in the main body of the church.

A cross dating from about 1300 stands on the main altar. It is a *crucifixus dolorosus*, a Y-shaped

cross like the one in St. Maria im Kapitol in Cologne.

The Madonna with her Child, a work created around 1300 by the Siena-born sculptor Tino di Camaino (1285-1337)⁶², used to stand on the left-hand side, but it is now in Museo Taglieschi [...]. This altar was re-designed in 1564.

The Counter-Reformation gave the impetus for the drama that was played out around the main altar in the 17th century. This was triumphalist architecture. Numerous saints appear: St. John the Baptist, Our Lady, St. Mark, St. Andrew Corsini.

The church was looted after the Abbey closed down in 1784; it fell into disrepair. Museo Taglieschi and the parish church (Propositura) house some of its important paintings.

St. Thomas Becket (c.1118-1170). After Thomas Becket⁶³, Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor of Henry II, had fallen out of the King's favour, he fled to the Continent. Legend has it that he went to Rome and, having received death threats, he hid for two months incognito among the monks of San Bartolomeo's Abbey in Anghiari.

The story goes that the abbot allowed him to build himself a chapel and a hut below the Porta delli Auspicij (sic!), together with some Hermits of St. Augustine.⁶⁴

Sant'Agostino. From time to time, something like a fashion crops up, even in religion. In 1614, Taglieschi put it like this: "The populace was so disposed that it wished to have a new religion." (*E la dispositione del popolo che desiderava di haver nuova religione.*) Around 1174, following a fashion of this kind, people turned to the Hospital Brothers of St. Anthony.⁶⁵ They built a chapel and living quarters on newly developed land, where the charcoal burners used to work.

On the whole, it was only possible to build a church if enough private persons donated large sums of money. It was rarely possible to fund this kind of project out of regular income. Sant'Agostino was the town church, which is borne out by the funding it received.

Every year, the Hospital Brothers of St. Anthony had to acknowledge they were subordinate to the Abbey – but this was merely a symbolic act.⁶⁶

In 1464, the municipality (*comunità*) ordered the building of a tower for Sant'Agostino on top of the former chapel of the Maimonis. The old tower over San Antonio's chapel had been destroyed by lightning. While the building works were in progress, they carried out reconstruction work on the church from the entrance to the main altar.

The families of Mazzone di Gregorio (a mercenary leader) and Milano Taglieschi were important financiers. A number of families had chapels built, including the Giusti, Ducci, Ricciardeschi, Fabroni, Mannini, Angelieri, Ligi and Maimoni families.⁶⁷

This happened in the years between the plague and the famine.

In 1492, a large bell was cast for the Sant'Agostino campanile. It was more beautiful in appearance and in tone than all the other bells in the town. The bell was inscribed as follows: "From lightning and tempest I am victorious and I am called gracious." (*A fulgure et tempestate sum victoriosa e gratiosa vocor.*) Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote in 1614: "Its sound has a miraculous effect on women in childbirth and when times are bad."⁷⁰

In 1515, Aurelio da Castiglione, an Augustinian friar from Arezzo, preached a Lenten sermon with a dramatic description of a miracle worked there by the Madonna del Soccorso. As a result, people donned white clothing and gathered in the Giusti chapel in Sant'Agostino. They had the ceiling decorated, and commissioned an altar painting depicting Our Lady of Perpetual Succour.⁷¹

Those who provided funds acquired prestige. This was carried to extremes. In 1631, the Testi family

donated a ciborium , a container for storing the sacred host, now in Museo Taglieschi. They then put their family crest on the carved wooden door.

On the first floor of Museo Taglieschi you will find a plan detailing which families the church belongs to.

St. Martin's Convent. In 1360, a convent of the Poor Clares, a Franciscan Order, was founded in San Martino's fold, but it had no connection with Santa Croce (Via Matteoti 56).

It only existed for about 40 years.⁷²

In 1400, mercenaries destroyed the convent. In 1421, it was still abandoned and in ruins. The community split up, the nuns going to Arezzo and Sansepolcro. The General Council ordered a chapel to be built (Via della Bozia, behind the present-day theatre) in 1421, so that memories of the Franciscans would not be irretrievably lost.

The Black Confraternity looked after the chapel.⁷³

In 1637 (?), St. Martin's monastery, later re-named Santa Maria Maddalena, was founded on the site of the ruins.

The chapel and the monastery are integrated in the street. The Renaissance doorway with its upper windows is an indication of its status.

The inner courtyard (16th century) has three galleries one on top of the other. Elegant, slim columns stand on the parapets, those on the top storey are of masonry. They are joined by shallow arches. The effect of the scene is one of spaciousness, because the surfaces are simple plasterwork and the linking elements are slender.

Giovanni Gorgieri di Anghiari (born in Anghiari about 1400), a Florentine painter who came from a well respected Anghiari family, painted a picture for the chapel at his own expense. He merely asked to be reimbursed for the expensive blue pigment he used.⁷⁴

Chapel on the marketplace. The Confraternity of St. Anthony, St. James and St. Christopher built a chapel on the marketplace in 1398.

In 1498, in the midst of the turmoil produced by war and famine, Lorenzo di Bartolomeo di Bazzi of the Compagnia di San Antonio del Mercatale funded the building of brick vaulting for the church. A relative funded further construction measures, so that the church was completed in 1499.⁷⁵

The small baptistery. The population believed it went against the honour of an important town when they had to take their children to a hamlet (*villa*) to be baptised. They did this because Pieve di Micciano had always had a monopoly on baptisms. After much debate, they decided in 1439 to loosen the tie with Pieve di Micciano and build their own baptistery, San Giovanni Battista.

A lot of money changed hands, but Notary Ser Giusto Giusti cleverly managed to persuade the pope to transfer the right to baptise from Micciano to the town. Vigorous protests on the part of the Micciano parish priest were to no avail.

The famous mercenary leader Baldaccio of Anghiari donated a large sum of money for the building, handing it over to the two elected persons responsible for the building project (*operai*). They bought a small house (*casalino*) from a priest in Via del Borghetto di Sopra (5 Via Taglieschi). As interest was owing on the property, the baptistery had to pay the Abbey six *denare* per year in interest repayment.⁷⁶

In 1548, the Compagnia di S. Giovanni e di San Sebastiano was founded in connection with the baptistery. The members wore green cloaks on festival days. Since the room was too small for large congregations, the bishop allowed Mass to be said on the street beneath a portable canopy. However, this practice only lasted a few years. In 1577, the *Comunità* donated a font to be placed in the centre of

the church.⁷⁷

In 1566, the church was in danger of collapsing. The baptistery was closed down and baptisms were once again held outside the town, this time in Pieve di Sovara.⁷⁸

The frescoes in the town hall chapel (Capella del Tribunale). This small room lifted the municipal administration, and specifically the authority of the court, into the realm of the sacred. All the persons and scenes in the paintings were significant for existential situations, although it is hard for us to determine the exact significance in every case. All the paintings (from around 1490) were presumably funded by the current head of the administration, the *vicario*, who was appointed for one year. It was in part a reminder of the *vicario's* term of office. The frescoes made the small room appear more spacious through the depiction of architectural features and landscapes.

St. Peter the Martyr was later joined by the patron saint who offered protection against the plague: St. Charles Borromeo, Cardinal Archbishop of Milan.⁷⁹ Nerozzo di Piero del Nero, *vicario* in 1491, had the left and right-hand sides painted. To the left we find the Annunciation (in which the benefactor also appears) and to the right, St. Francis of Assisi, a great source of inspiration for social behaviour, receiving the stigmata. We see the benefactor's coat of arms and his name: "Giorgio di Nicola di Antonio Ridolfi (1491) – Resurrection is promised instead of death – St. Joseph. Above the entrance we see the Saviour's birth and the Three Kings with the name of the benefactor: Guglielmo Altoviti (*vicario* in 1493) – St. Sebastian (pierced by arrows representing the plague) is invoked as a protector against the plague. This painting was presumably also funded by *vicario* Guglielmo Altoviti.⁸⁰

The Franciscan church, also known as Chiesa della Croce. In 1499, after the failure to found a Franciscan monastery in Corsano (near San Leo at the foot of the hill), the *vicario* of La Verna asked the people to find "a miserable shack" (*tugurio*) for religious purposes. A legacy had in fact been available for such uses since 1489. A member of the Taglieschi family, Donna Margarita, had left her estate to a Franciscan monk, Antonio da Poppi. A second legacy became available in 1499 – that of Zanobi di Niccolò Bigliaffi. As a result, the Council was able to appoint four "builders" (*operai*) and make a formal request to the General Chapter of the Franciscan Observants to look after the Cappella della Croce.

The place chosen was at the top of "Via o ruga di San Martino". Building started on 4th October 1499, St. Francis' Day.⁸¹

The Fraternity of Santa Maria di Borghetto (founded in 1349) had the church built on the heights of the *borgo*, on the spot where St. Francis had placed a cross on his way from Assisi to La Verna in 1224, and where a small chapel was erected in 1420.

The building was not finished until 1534. Initially, the church was called San Francesco, but in 1533 it was re-dedicated and known as the Chiesa della Croce. Thirty years later, in 1565, the portal (*porticus*) was added, originally consisting of one storey, but raised in 1734. It had probably been designed as a two-storey structure, but the funds available were insufficient.

The benefactors were wealthy families. It had been possible to accumulate wealth despite the many disasters. There was a growing interest in cultural matters. Maybe the citizens who were eager to acquire status intensified their rivalry by copying the nobility.

As more paintings were being commissioned, more persons were learning to be artists.

A world of pictures. At the provincial level, this church is a particularly good example of what was a complex development. The chapel is still intact. The spacious interior is full of pictures.

At the back of the room, on the left-hand side, a mural depicts a place of burial and Niccolò di

Lorenzo Bigliaffi d'Anghiari (1575?).

The family altar at the rear, on the left, has an altarpiece showing St. Catherine of Alexandria and the breaking wheel, an instrument of cruel torture, together with some Franciscan monks. St. Catherine is holding Our Lady, who is carrying the Child Jesus, by the arm. The painting is attributed to Durante Alberti of Sansepolcro (1589)⁸². The artist painted the picture under the influence of the Venetian school, particularly Titian.

The family altar at the front, on the left, has an altarpiece depicting the drama of Jesus' crucifixion and includes the figures of St. Lucy, St. Agatha and St. Francis of Assisi. It was painted in 1613 by an unknown artist⁸³.

The altar at the front, on the right, has an altarpiece (1649) depicting another dramatic scene. It shows the Assumption, and is by Antonmaria Susini of Florence. Saints Cecilia, Anthony, Lawrence, Joseph and Francis of Assisi, to whom the church was dedicated, are all present. The scene in the centre of the painting is unique in Anghiari, being a view of the town itself. We see the long road and the walled town on the promontory with the huge fortress tower (*cassero*).

Our Lady is also present in the excellent altarpiece at the back of the chapel on the right. The artist Domenico Cresti painted her in a heavenly realm.

There is an epitaph in memory of Anghiari's historian, Lorenzo Taglieschi (1598-1654), who was buried in this church.⁸⁴

On the right, to the front, there is a magnificent epitaph for Francisco Maria Benedicto Corsi, son of Benedictus Hugo Corsi, who died in 1777 at the age of 78.

Between the left-hand altars we find an epitaph in memory of Dr. Cavaliere Testi (1874). It bears a portrait in relief, a mock-ancient style of memorial that was typical of his times. Testi was being honoured for his charitable support of a children's home (*asilo infantile*) and the *ospedale* of the Misericordia Confraternity.

A hospice with four rooms, kitchen, sacristy and church was built next door, at the same time as the church. The Compagnia Nera built a Lady Chapel in the church.

Other funds became available, mainly through bequests. In 1561, a gift enabled the church to be built on a much larger scale than originally planned. In 1412, a bell was brought from La Verna. In 1539, the old Cappella della Croce, which was in danger of collapsing, was "moved" here (*fece traslatare*).

The Magi family donated the main altar. This meant they could affix their coat of arms and benefit from the long-lasting prestige this brought with it.

A number of wealthy families donated money for pictures painted by "most famous artists" (*famosissimi pittori*).

When it was completed, this church surpassed all others in Anghiari on account of its "charm" (*vaghezza*) and ornamentation (*ornamento*).

In 1563, as a result of generous donations, the Convento della Croce was enlarged. The plan and the architect's model were produced in Florence. The old hospice was turned into a "communal hearth" (*fuoco comune*) and kitchen. The vaulted choir and campanile with a large bell also date from this time. The ciborium of gold was bought in Florence.⁸⁵

In the Franciscan church of Santa Croce, in Lent 1575, a Capuchin monk and clog-wearing preacher (*zoccolante*) by the name of Giovanni da Prato founded the Compagnia della Santissima Concezione di Maria Vergine. In 1589, the Nuti family donated an altar with an altarpiece painted by Domenico

Passignano to the church.⁸⁶

In 1614, the *priori* receive the approval from the Master General of the Dominican Order for the Compagnia del Rosario.⁸⁷

In 1602, an organ was added.⁸⁸

Madonna del Carmine. On 16th July 1533, the Virgin Mary appeared to a shepherd girl called Marietta, while she was watching over a flock of sheep on the hill ridge overlooking the Tiber and Sovara Valleys. A large church and monastery known as Carmine al Combarbio were built at the crossroads that gave the place its name.⁸⁹

All the wealthy families donated money. The Santuario is said to have been designed by the Grand Ducal architect Giovanni Alberto Camerini da Bibbiena (also known as dal Vasari il San Marino). The church was finished after only three years. In 1540 it was handed over to the Padri Francescani della Verna, but it was not long before the Padri Carmelitani took over in 1548 (they remained until 1782).

The basic shape is that of a Latin cross (47m long and 20m wide). The monastery is attached to the church, but only parts of it remain. The bell tower dates from 1567.

The convent of San Martino al Cassero (known as the *Conventone*). The building formed part of the fort, but it now houses the lower classes of the secondary school.

In 1545, the Duke approved the building, which was designed by the Ducal architect Giovanbattista Camerini di Bibbiena. It was first financed by the fines that seven citizens of Anghiari were ordered to pay for violently emptying the municipal coffers 18 years previously.

The first two Poor Clares left the convent because it was damp and the air quality was poor. They tried it a second time, but after a short while the nuns fled to Santa Chiara in Borgo San Sepolcro, which did not please the people of Anghiari. In 1547, the Benedictine Order took over the convent, and planned for 40 nuns to settle there.

The convent took care of young women from wealthy families, who were unable to marry because their dowries were too small. Poor women could not enter the convent, because each sister had to pay 300 florins on entry.

The covered gallery was bricked up.⁹⁰ A fine looking portal door was fitted, conveying prestige. The following inscription was written on the lintel: "haec.est.domus.orationis" together with the date 1565.

The large hall contained a sign of the townspeople's love of music: a painting of St. Cecilia with an organ (17th/18th century).

Madonna dello Spirito Santo. The church of the Madonna dello Spirito Santo was built on Via del Terrato in the years 1563 and 1564 by young people who carried the dead to the cemetery and buried them, and who supported the poor.

One of the founder members of the group, Luca di Raffaello Taglieschi, had statues of St. Luke and St. Francis made, and stood them on either side of an older statue of Our Lady. The group was known as the Compagnia del Terrato, and it was ranked seventh among the confraternities.⁹¹ Its members wore black cloaks.

Madonna del Topo (1575).

Santa Maria delle Grazie (*Propositura*). The parish church has sometimes been known as Chiesa del Fosso, but nowadays it is mostly called the Propositura, or seat of the provost.

Building probably started in the early 18th century. The church was designed to house a sacred picture that was first mentioned in 1621.⁹² The patron saint of the church, like that of the *Badia*, was the Apostle St. Bartholomew.

The vast interior is basically in the form of a Latin cross.

Since the late 18th century, it has housed a number of objects that could no longer be displayed in their original places as a result of the complex process of secularisation, especially the abolition of the confraternities (1785).⁹³

The altarpiece (a post-1452 triptych in the style of Matteo di Giovanni) formerly graced the high altar in Sant'Agostino upper church.

The Virgin of Mercy (a late 15th century Madonna della Misericordia from the terracotta workshop of Giovanni della Robbia) came from one of the confraternities.

The 17th century painting of the Apostle St. Bartholomew, the patron saint of Abbey and town, came from the *Badia*, which was closed down in 1784).

In 1783, Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo ordered two large paintings by Giovanni Antonio Sogliani (1492-1544) – the Last Supper and the Washing of the Feet to be moved to the Propositura from one of the confraternities.

One more picture – painted in 1515 by Domenico Puligo and depicting Jesus being taken down from the Cross – was added in 1785. It was taken from the chapel of the Compagnia del Corpus Domini confraternity, formerly based in the Misericordia.

The pilgrims' hospice. Religiously minded persons take their bearings in the world from places of pilgrimage. This is often the case, even nowadays, and there are many who only travel to such places.

In the 18th century, the Franciscans built a hospice for pilgrims following in St. Francis' footsteps to the rock of La Verna. They built it on the long straight road (*stradone*), opposite the present-day car park. Accommodation was free, in line with ancient tradition.

Socio-cultural structure of the town; confraternities

St. Francis walked from Assisi to the heights of La Verna (1129m) in 1224, where he received the stigmata (marks to his hands and feet that were identical with the wounds that Jesus Christ had received on the Cross). On his way back to Assisi, he stayed at Montauto Castle, as the guest of Alberto di Guglielmo di Ranieri da Montaguto. Before moving on to Anghiari, St. Francis left his old robe with the count.

The people of Anghiari gathered to see the famous and charismatic monk. St. Francis stayed only briefly in a hut on the ridge above Anghiari, at the top of the steep slope of the *stradone*. (There is a plaque on Via Campo della Fiera recalling his stay.) Then he walked on to Sansepolcro and the monastery of Monte Casale.

The site of his hut was immediately re-named Santa Croce, and the name then came to be applied to the whole district.

This was later to be the location of the Franciscan Observants' monastery, Santa Croce⁹⁴.

Confraternities. St. Francis and his friends founded a confraternity, calling themselves the *fratelli*. He preached up and down the land, encouraging the people to form associations of this kind. This happened in many places, for instance in Sansepolcro.

The confraternities were communities in which the brothers shared their lives. In the first place, they provided solutions to problems of everyday life. Such problems, as with everything else in life, were intimately connected with magic, and therefore religious as well.

However, we must not put a 19th century interpretation on these communities. If we do, we will fail

to understand them. It would be wrong to assume they were primarily religious, like the later third orders.

It would take a surprisingly long time for the idea of confraternities to spread to Anghiari. They did not appear there until the years of disaster in the mid-14th century, when they were also found in the countryside. The idea behind them was partly to make people develop an awareness for their own feelings and to become sensitive to the needs of others.

The confraternities were closely knit socio-cultural networks. They lasted for centuries without a break until Pietro Leopoldo, Grand Duke of Tuscany, dissolved most of them by law in 1785.

Accompanying the dead. The confraternities were highly ambivalent. They were an example of how to preserve culture – the culture of death – even in times of disaster.

In the disaster of the Great Plague (1348)⁹⁵, members of two confraternities provided a service in extreme situations, organising burials and putting their own lives at risk.

An 18th century engraving⁹⁶ shows us a key scene: a procession of black-cloaked men and women, some wearing hoods, moving slowly across Piazza del Borghetto (Piazza Mameli). The hoods eerily conceal the persons' identities. They were meant to protect the wearers from the “breath of the plague” and to demonstrate that all those performing the service were equal, nobles and day labourers alike.

There are several stretcher-bearers. The bier is covered with a cloth pulled slightly to one side, revealing the face of a dead person. This was his last public appearance on the square. The door to Sant'Agostino church stands open. He will have his final resting place beneath the floor of the church. People felt a sense of togetherness.

The confraternity members also expressed their belief in the dignity of man by accompanying those who had been condemned to death to their place of execution.

They were motivated by pity.

It would be interesting to find out what effect this had on the judicial authorities. We can only guess that it greatly reduced the number of executions.

The Black penitents formed the confraternity known as the Compagnia di Santa Maria della Misericordia.⁹⁷ Founded in 1348, the members wore black hoods, which was why they were also known as the Compagnia Nera. It was the town's oldest confraternity and maintained its top ranking over the years.

People frequently left part of their legacy to the confraternity. Such funds were used by the confraternity to build a holy place, a chapel or an oratory, for the Madonna della Misericordia on Via della Vecchia (now 26 Via delle Mura di Sopra) and a headquarters for the association.

The church hierarchy was critical of the confraternities. For a long time, the hierarchy felt the confraternities were organised too independently. They criticised them for taking sacred matters into their own hands. They were also rivals from an economic perspective, as many persons remembered the confraternities in their wills instead of the usual church institutions.

One indication of this was the fact that the bishop did not allow Mass to be said in the Compagnia Nera's chapel until as late as 1545.

Fraternità di Santa Maria del Borghetto. In 1349, at the time of the Black Death, certain “good folk” (*buonomini*) helped the poorest members of the community; they organised and funded burials. When the epidemic was over, a third confraternity, the Fraternità di Santa Maria del Borghetto (also known as Fraternità di Anghiari), was established. This confraternity made use of its connections to the municipal administration, which at this time was subject to the supreme authority of Perugia. Perugia

gave the confraternity an administrative staff: six priors and one chamberlain (*camerlingo*). New elections had to be held every six months for all these posts.

Thanks to their connections to the municipal administration, the confraternity was allowed to set up its headquarters in rooms belonging to the chancellery (*cancelleria*), a short distance below Porta degli Auspici.

Thanks to generous donations made on account of the patron saint, the Madonna del Borghetto, they became the largest confraternity in Anghiari. The income from their extensive estates went to the poor.

Then there was the hospital.

The confraternity was particularly involved in health care. They also employed a teacher (*maestro di umanità e retorica*), who earned the same salary as a hospital doctor.⁹⁸

The Compagnia di Sant'Antonio, San Iacopo e San Cristoforo was founded in 1398 during a disastrous period of never-ending hostilities. It was a popular movement, a plea to the mighty to make peace at last and practise charity. It was a monk from Provence who spread these ideas throughout the Italian peninsula.⁹⁹

One of the society's members, Andrea del Pecora, donated them his property on the Mercatale, which was then used to house the Ospedale di San Antonio. A church with a façade of carefully hewn stone (*pietra quadrata*) was built on the square.

A phase of new foundations. It took a long time for the jealousy between parishes and confraternities to die down. In the 16th century, a number of societies were founded with links to parish churches.

This was an era when the town was accumulating a fair amount of wealth. There was a rise in the level of education and, correspondingly, in the sensitivity of the townsfolk.

In 1514, the Confraternity of the Madonna del Soccorso was founded. The year 1526, in which there was an outbreak of the plague, saw the foundation of the Confraternity of San Rocco; in 1548 it was the turn of the Confraternity of San Giovanni Battista; and in 1545 the Confraternity in the monastery of San Martino (in the *cassero*) was founded.¹⁰⁰ A further congregation – the Compagnia della santissima concezione di Maria vergine – was established in the Franciscan church of Santa Croce in Lent 1575 by the Capuchin friar and preacher Giovanni da Prato.

The Compagnia del Santissimo Crocefisso o Corpus Domini was founded by four citizens in 1506, with the aim of processing with the Most Holy Sacrament and burying the dead who were not registered with other confraternities.

This shows that the confraternities tended to keep themselves to themselves, only burying the dead and accompanying them on their last journey if they were members.

However, even this confraternity excluded those persons who were not registered inhabitants of Anghiari.

The Abbey gave them a building opposite the church (15 Via Nenci).¹⁰¹

This confraternity was well funded and able to showcase itself by means of special architectural features. It had a prestigious façade built, and a service point for the distribution of alms. In the interior, they created a meeting room with arches and columns on a monumental scale. It would seem the architect and stonemason was Pietro di Bernardino di Subisso of Anghiari.

The confraternity placed orders for works of art, including the Descent from the Cross (1515 by Domenico Puligo) that is now in Anghiari's Museo Taglieschi.

After this confraternity was dissolved, the Confraternita di Misericordia moved into these historic

premises. Nowadays, they house the Museo della Confraternita di Misericordia.

Compagnia dello Spirito Santo, later known as Misericordia. Four young men took the initiative and founded Compagnia dello Spirito Santo¹⁰² in 1564. Their aim was to take the Sacrament to the sick and to bury the dead who were not registered with any of the other confraternities. Its members wore turquoise cloaks.

Their headquarters and oratory were the church of the Madonna dello Spirito Santo del Terrato, built a short time previously (since demolished). Angelica di Piero Canicchi, a citizen of Anghiari, funded the chapel and equipped it. She paid for this out of receipts from tenants on her land and income from the houses she rented out.

In 1785, the Grand Duke passed a law dissolving the confraternity. In 1817 it was re-founded.

Its present-day oratory is the Abbey of S. Bartolomeo Apostolo (*Badia*), with additional dedications to the Spirito Santo and SS. Crocifisso.

In 1863, its statutes were reformed by royal decree. Misericordia was given a democratic constitution. All its council members were elected by the General Assembly.

When the confraternity was dissolved in 1785, the meeting hall on the opposite side of the street (15 Via Nenci) became the property of Giuseppe Canicchi, but was later bought by Giovanni Iacopo Tuti and Camillo Testi, both of whom were members of Misericordia. In 1865, they handed the property over to Misericordia.¹⁰³

The association is alive today, still carrying out its good work. It provided the impetus for the foundation of the Gruppo Donatori di Sangue “Fratres” in 1976, the Gruppo Donatori di Organi in 1982 and the Gruppo O.S.E., which provides aid in natural disasters, in 1983.

Museum. The monumental historic meeting hall at 15 Via Nenci is now the Museo della Confraternita di Misericordia. Its most magnificent exhibit is a four-wheeled litter (*lettiga*), or transport trolley.

An 18th-century weather vane belonging to the Compagnia di Santa Croce can be seen in Museo Taglieschi.

Administration of the confraternities. Their organisation – and that of the other associations – was modelled on the government of the town.¹⁰⁴ A *magistrato* (governing council) with *priori* and chamberlain (*camerlengo*) administrated their estates and income. Every three months, the *priori* were chosen by drawing lots, ensuring active participation. Election by lots meant there were no shirkers.

Socio-cultural fabric. The “associations” (*compagnie*) did more than serve their original purpose. They provided a social network that went far beyond the borders of a particular neighbourhood and reached out to the whole town.

There were nine associations in the years around 1615.¹⁰⁵ They owed their importance not merely to their function as a social network, but they also provided structure to life in the town.

They took on both men and women and cast their net wider than the usual “men’s clubs”. Women were often admired for the distinguished rôle they played.

Nearly every citizen was a member of one of these societies, and was thus supported by a network at many levels.

They formed umbrella groups that were inclusive of class differences. The wealthy received care, and the less well off gained opportunities and a chance to gain the respect of the wealthy.

The system of Ancient Roman patronage (*clientela*) was still alive and well.

The associations lent structure to social life through their organisation of duties, gatherings and

festivities.

The associations were also an important power factor in the town. They formed alliances, but tensions also arose between them. What actually happened? How did they come to exert influence on politics and the administration?

Notes on:

Religion and social culture (9.)

- 1 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 149/150.
- 2 Dini/Sonni, 1988, lays the foundations for this discussion.
- 3 Magnelli, 1992, 29/34. – Cherubini, 1992, 35/40.
- 4 Vittorio Dini, 1992, 11/14.
- 5 Machiavelli, 1996, 24.
- 6 The historian Carlo Ginzburg has come across a rare source providing insight into people's religious thinking – the record of Inquisition proceedings against a miller in the 16th century (Ginzburg, 1979).
- 7 Pincelli, 2000.
- 8 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 44.
- 9 This also explains why, in the pre-industrial era, families who had made money immediately invested it in real estate. This was not only for reasons of security, but it was a long-term investment.
- 10 Weber, 1922, 531/532.
- 11 Weber, 1922, 531/533.
- 12 Weber, 1922, 531/534.
- 13 Nannicini, 1944.
- 14 Weber, 1922, 582.
- 15 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 42.
- 16 In the 9th century, this was a country seat belonging to the Bofolci family, but the citizens of Sansepolcro forced the family to settle in their town, in order to keep their eye on them. A hospice for wayfarers and a house for lepers were then set up in La Verna. After St. Francis of Assisi preached in the abbey in Sansepolcro, Abbot Bartolomeo handed the area over to him in the year 1212, and La Verna became a hermitage. – In May 1213, St. Francis was lost in the mountains. On seeing a light, he came across a foresters' cabin, where he spent the night. A Franciscan monastery and a church dedicated to St. Igne were later built on this spot. St. Francis was taken to San Leo, where he held the inhabitants spellbound with his rhetoric. This caused a sensation in the small town. Festivities were held at house no. 15 on the square (there is a commemorative plaque on the wall), during which one of the guests, Count Orlando Cattani di Chiusi, presented him with the gift of similarly steep cliffs near Chiusi (in Tuscany), where St. Francis also set up a hermitage (later to become a monastery). This was not the Saint's only success. His supporters included men from the Montefeltro family.
- 17 Eco, 1982, 73.
- 18 Amonaci, 1997, 30ff.
- 19 Eco, 1982, 69.
- 20 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 73.
- 21 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 83.
- 22 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 48.
- 23 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 147.
- 24 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 152.
- 25 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 152.
- 26 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 154.
- 27 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 192.
- 28 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 201/202.
- 29 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 153/154.
- 30 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 178.
- 31 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 197/198.

- 32 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 323.
- 33 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 203.
- 34 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 203/204.
- 35 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 214, 223.
- 36 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 233/234.
- 37 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 286, 187.
- 38 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 59.
- 39 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 338/339.
- 40 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 301.
- 41 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 361.
- 42 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 361/362.
- 43 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 325.
- 44 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 254.
- 45 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 229.
- 46 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 230.
- 47 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 230.
- 48 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 341.
- 49 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 344.
- 50 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 43.
- 51 Metropolitan churches were even allowed to have five such halls, as proof of their importance.
- 52 Guido von Kaschnitz-Weinberg investigated the traditional emphasis on the “shell” in Etruscan Antiquity. *Das Schöpferische in der römischen Kunst*. Reinbek 1961.
- 53 See also Günter, 2003.
- 54 In his Encomium on a Magnificent Hall, the Greek satirist Lucian of Samosata sang the praises of a beautiful hall(in about 150AD): “ ... that the length to the breadth and both to the height are in finest proportion; and that it is furnished with windows which may be open or shut as convenient to every season of the year ...” (p. 23). “Not less will a connoisseur admire the arched roof, which with all its elegance has no superfluous ornament, with all its decorations nothing otherwise than could be desired; and the gilding is so suitable, and laid on with such prudent economy, that it enhances the beauty of the whole, without offending by an ostentatious display of richness. So a modest fine lady, in order to enhance her beauty, contents herself with a slight golden chain about her neck, with a light golden ring on her finger, a very plain pair of ear-rings, a buckle or a ribband to keep together her flowing locks: in short, she requires nothing more for setting off her shape than a purple trimming to her robe.” (In: Schumacher, 1977; complete works of Lucian of Samosata in German).
- 55 Finzi, 1994, 88 and illustration.
- 56 Bartolomei, 1992, 59/60.
- 57 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 57/58.
- 58 Nomi, 1961. Salmi, 1970.
- 59 Ascani, 1973, 26ff.
- 60 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 217. See: Franceschini, 1975/1951.
- 61 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 54, 42.
- 62 Ascani, 1973, 181/183.
- 63 The abbot died of the plague in 1464. In his will, he left money for the building of the church: for embellishments (abbillimenti), and a chalice and silver cross, and also money for two bells (Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 94, 203).
- 64 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 192. Moreover, Taglieschi says his cousin Selvestro di Antonio Taglieschi, donated a room from his property “behind the church”, abutting the high altar, in order to enlarge the sacristy. It is not quite clear what he is referring to.
- 65 Robertson, 1875. Morris, 1885.
- 66 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 62.
- 67 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 62.
- 68 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 63.
- 69 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 203.
- 70 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 219.
- 71 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 238.
- 72 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 107.

- 73 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 155. Ascani, 1973, 245.
- 74 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 155.
- 75 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 223.
- 76 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 166/167, 188. Ascani, 1973, 262.
- 77 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 305.
- 78 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 325.
- 79 Carlo Borromeo was of noble birth (Arona 1538-1584). As Archbishop of Milan, he was famous for the processions he organised during the plague. He was canonised in 1610.
- 80 Babbini 1989, 46.
- 81 Amonaci, 1997, 64/73. Illustration p. 64: ground plan and elevation in the Annali della Croce di Lorenzo Taglieschi (1647-1652). – Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1995.
- 82 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1994, 34 and illustration. Others attribute it to Jacopi Vignali (1592-1664) from Florence (p. 42 and illustration).
- 83 The picture was originally in the church of Monte Santa Maria; it was the gift of Don Nilo Conti. Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1994, 35 and illustration.
- 84 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1994, 47 and illustration.
- 85 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 323.
- 86 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 339/340.
- 87 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 367.
- 88 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 323.
- 89 Giacomo Bartolomei/De Robertis, 1985.
- 90 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 303.
- 91 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 323.
- 92 Fully restored in 1938.
- 93 On the problems associated with moving works of art from one location to another, see Malraux, 1957.
- 94 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 69.
- 95 For the following see Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 99/100.
- 96 Babbini/Benedetti, 1987, illustration p.15.
- 97 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 42.
- 98 Babbini/Benedetti, 1987, 17.
- 99 Babbini/Benedetti, 1987, 18/20.
- 100 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 42.
- 101 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 231/232.
- 102 Niccolai, 1996, 44/45.
- 103 The first ambulance was purchased in 1861, and a so-called “bed-carriage” in 1909.
- 104 Taglieschi specifically describes it thus, 1991/1614, 100.
- 105 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 42.

10. Aesthetics

Aspects of aesthetics

Topography. Towns built on hills are shaped by natural features to a much greater extent than those in lowland areas. A hill goes a long way to defining a town. Anghiari is defined by its hilly position and the fold between the two hills.

Although large parts of the Italian peninsula are mountainous, and most towns and villages are affected by variations in altitude, a town on a hill is not a matter of course, either for its inhabitants or

for visitors. We are always fascinated by the ups and downs. They are fundamentally dramatic.

The hill is the most important architect. In Anghiari, there is relatively little space to build on. Buildings have to stand close to one another, sequences vary in character.

Labyrinthine alleyways. At first sight, Anghiari is a maze of alleyways.

This came to be the butt of criticism, mainly in the 16th century. Lorenzo Taglieschi complained in 1614: “The ignorance of that time led people to commit planning sins. Houses were badly arranged, and streets were not built in straight lines, but rather haphazardly, as can be seen today.”¹

But it is possible to find one's way easily even in a labyrinth of streets.

We are dealing here with a clash of two culturally different concepts and the resulting tension.

Aiming to impress. Taglieschi's idea of town planning was based on rationalism and the desire to impress. The idea arose in Tuscany as early as the 13th century.² It is to be found in only two spots in Anghiari.

The first is a splendid part of the town, more or less unique. When Anghiari was the seat of a family of territorial lords, they had the long straight road and the terrace of the Mercatale (1323) built, with the aim to impress.

The second area is the old Via del Terrato (Via Mazzini), which is the only true Renaissance street in the town. It was built in the middle of the 16th century.

Such urban planning designs are always the product of an over-arching idea.

Socio-spatial analysis. How do we treat our bodies? Do we regard them as our friends? In old towns like Anghiari, the human body has a ready-built home. The street is a space that accommodates our physical movements. Even where the houses are large, the gaps between the walls will enable us to find out what our bodies can do.

There is contact between one person and another, a sharing of looks, gestures, movements. And people are in contact with the stones and walls.

Seeing, hearing, touching.

Anghiari is built without a centre. Piazza del Mercatale is not the centre, neither is the Upper Town, and least of all the great *borgo*. We are constantly forced to look for more in the town than a single square. We are challenged by its complexity, it arouses our curiosity. It lures us with its promises. And no one part fulfils our expectations to such an extent that the rest is neglected.

It has an unfinished character despite the fact that it is complete, and although the Office for the Preservation of Monuments has strictly forbidden any change.

Time and again, it invites us to use it in other ways, so we experience it differently. This structure of change keeps it moving.

The spatial boundary defines space as we look outwards, and as we look to the interior.

We do not look at each house separately. There is very little about them that marks them out as individual buildings, unlike houses in old towns north of the Alps. But we experience the people in these spaces as persons. The film-maker Fellini has taught us how to read their characters.

The houses are retiring; they are the servants of the space. They let the space take centre-stage.

Artist-architects picked up and carried on from here.

The idea of perspective, originating in the 15th century and spreading to the whole of the Old World in the 16th century, went a step further. It aimed to create views with certain qualities.

Perspective would appear to be objective, and in some ways it is, but it also has a subjective side to it. The most important factor is how a scene appears to the human eye. It exists as a result of how we

look at it. Space is to be perceived as space, shaped both by and for human beings, and experienced by us as subjects.

Perspective aims to produce a sensual experience. When writing about perspective in the theatre, Joseph Furttenbach the Older (1591-1667) stated in his work “The Noble Mirror of Art (Mannhafter Kunstspiegel)” (Augsburg 1663): “In order for an audience to perceive all this, the scene must be set up in accordance with the art of perspective, otherwise it will be to no avail.” Viewing is intensified. “It is not only the unwitting viewer, but even the master himself, who is so deceived – nay, so taken aback – by convergence at the point of sight, that imperfect Man is simultaneously rendered speechless and his senses charmed.”³

Labyrinth versus orderliness. Our first impression is that of a labyrinth. In one way, a labyrinth is a delightful experience, especially in an old town that has grown naturally over a period of time, but it also rouses the opposite feeling, a strong desire for orderliness. Grid is pitted against labyrinth.

An axis is an artificial movement. It redirects movements.

The long straight street (*stradone*, 1323) is a curve that has been artificially introduced into the landscape, exposing it to the fundamental tension between labyrinth and orderliness.

The power to impress. Anghiari stands on a promontory overlooking the Tiber Valley. It has commanded this impressive position for two millennia. The fortress wall intensifies its power to impress. The four towers – the town tower and those of the fortress (*cassero*), the abbey church (*Badia*) and Sant'Agostino – add to its impressiveness.

The tower as a sign of status. The *castello* was given a high tower.

Citizens climbing the social ladder copied the nobility and built tower houses in the *borghetto*.

Once successful, the social climbers became domesticated. Writing in 1614, Lorenzo Taglieschi reported that citizens were allowed to build towers in about 1200, which was a great privilege. The towers were later disarmed, lowered and converted into dovecotes.⁴

Grandeur. There are several strands to the history of construction. One such strand is the representation of grandeur. By this, we understand that someone or some idea is elevated to a higher position, expressed in a way that can be experienced by the senses.

It can be done in ways that differ from place to place, depending on resources and capabilities, and can be enhanced over time.

In the 16th century, however, there was also renunciation. The tide can turn against grandeur.

There had been previous differences. The mendicant orders demonstratively used few elements of grandeur, but at the same time it flourished in other places.

The substance of grandeur changed too. It could be very rough and ready, and also very bold, even aggressive. There were refinements. From time to time, its structure underwent alterations. When internalised, it became gentler. It could turn intellectual – scholarship could don a cloak of grandeur and become abrasive.

Houses and space

Houses and space. The houses are seamlessly attached one to the other. Indeed, many share a common dividing wall. The façades are plain. In this way, the space between them appears joined up.

“Lucchese-type” houses. In the Middle Ages, houses were mainly built as follows: the only compact walls were the side ones. Wooden cross-beams were lodged in them to form the floors of each

storey. The workmen built the façade by starting on the wooden cross-beams and raising the wall storey by storey, often using bricks. Brick nogging walls like this require less material and are lighter. They can be altered more quickly.

I call houses of this kind “Lucchese-type” houses, as they particularly evolved in the Tuscan city of Lucca.

My hypothesis is that many houses were reconstructed as “Lucchese-type” houses in the 13th and 14th centuries, but this type of construction disappeared in the 15th century.

I base my theory on the following clues: older masonry was often used for the ground floor, and Lucchese construction for the upper storeys, maybe because it was lighter. Brick nogging walls are finer. This presupposes that bricks were affordable and readily available.

“Lucchese-type” houses are especially visible in the terrace of houses that was built at the time of the first enlargement of the Upper Town (Via Nenci).

Here are some examples of “Lucchese-type” houses on Via Nenci: number 5 (a very narrow house with ashlar down to the foundations); number 7 (ashlar; exposed wooden beams preserved like number 11; shares a wall with number 9; very small windows); number 9 (ashlar; shares the left-hand wall with number 11). Number 11 (ashlar from the foundations; the beams of each storey can still be seen). A numberless house on the opposite side of the road facing number 13. Number 4 (bricks at the top); numbers 6, 8 and 10.

Houses numbers 2 and 3 on Via Garibaldi are of ashlar. Number 6 Piazza del Popolo is of the same type. Numbers 8/10 Via delle Mura di Sopra (bearing walls of ashlar). Numbers 26 and 42. Number 14 Via del Castello Antico (suspended on the right-hand side in number 16). Number 16 has an upper storey of ashlar. Number 20.

Number 14 Via della Misericordia (ashlar down to the foundation; cross-beam of the upper storey visible at the side). Number 24 (ashlar below; two storeys).

The Taglieschi house, 17 Piazza Mameli (ashlar above); number 18 (ashlar above). Numbers 4/5 Via Taglieschi (ashlar above).

Numbers 2 and 6 Via Taglieschi (both later Palazzo Testi). Numbers 7/9 (ashlar). Number 12. Number 16 (smooth ashlar below, ashlar columns on one side above). Number 16 (Lucchese-type above). Number 22 (brick nogging wall). Number 27 (ashlar down to the foundations). Number 15 Via Garibaldi (from the upper storey). Number 8 Via Giordano Bruno (a very wide-fronted house). Number 29 Via della Torre (from the upper storey).

The façades are plain in appearance, but they make use of a few signs to differentiate between the status and prestige of one family and another within the confines of middle-class society.

A limited variety of building materials is used in the town, but this has a very positive effect.

The roads are surfaced with crushed rock, brick pavement and hewn paving stones (*lastre*).

Only three types of material are found in Anghiari: 1) *pietra serena* – a kind of sedimentary rock 2) walls made of flat bricks 3) round pebbles of various sizes collected from the river by the townsfolk themselves.

Ceramic building materials and plaster are also to be found.

Materials as signs. In the first place, materials have a physical nature with a practical value. Secondly, they tell us something about their use and durability.

Materials are phenomena.⁵ They are perceived by all the senses. Like textiles, their effect comes from their surface texture. This creates atmosphere.

How people have dealt with these phenomena is a part of cultural development. They are used as signs. The choice of a particular material is significant. The owner reveals himself and indicates how much money he has spent, which allows others to draw conclusions regarding his wealth.

Nothing is private in the outside world, everything becomes public. Thus, the choice of one material over another is a public gesture. A sign of this kind serves to make distinctions in the social sphere. A material may signify wealth and create prestige.

The more expensive and the rarer a material is, the greater its magical properties. Magic thus also becomes a status symbol.

Plastered façades. For many years, the façades in the Old Town were completely unpretentious. The people gathered rubble stones or debris from ancient ruins, as they felt fit. Walls were mostly finished with a coat of plaster, but this has not been preserved.

There is more information on the decisions by the Office for the Preservation of Monuments with regard to the restoration of façades later in this book.

There was very little differentiation.

A lot of brickwork was used in the 14th century.

Anghiari did not have anything like the Sienese Communal Statutes of 1309-1310.⁶

Plastering was widespread in Tuscany from the 15th century on. A smooth surface was considered elegant. The colour was yellow ochre.

An aesthetic movement started among fashionable house owners in the 16th century. Houses were given a prestigious exterior. However, plaster continued to be used as a rule, and high-quality stones were rare.

Wall paintings. Painted arabesques became fashionable in Tuscany as a result of the work that Bernardo Buontalenti (1536-1608) did for Bianca Capello.

Timber framing. Many half-timbered houses were built over a long period of time.

We know this from a decree issued in 1387, two years before Florence assumed sovereign rule, under which newly built houses were not allowed to have timber frames.

Florence became a powerful model⁷. It decreed that future houses were not to be built of wattle (*cannici*) and wood (*legname*), by which they meant timber-frame houses. Roofing was no longer to be of broom (*scope*), bracken (*felci*) or straw (*paglia*). Houses had to be roofed with tiles (*lastre*) or bricks.

If a person had a house already built of the forbidden materials, he had to have it inspected once a month as a fire-prevention measure. Failure to comply resulted in a fine of 20 *soldi*.⁸

The appearance of the town was altered drastically by the change in materials.

Not a single half-timbered house was left standing. If you go out into the countryside, leaving Anghiari far behind you, you will have difficulty in finding such a house in a state of preservation.

Houses of stone. All houses were built of stone here – unlike in large parts of Europe – a fact that is seen as a sign of widespread wealth. Stone was much more expensive than half timbering, and it has always been interpreted as a sign that Central Italy was wealthy.

The most important criterion within this field is to distinguish between one type of stone and another.

Simple construction. Anyone could search the river for stones, which were plentiful, and use them as building material. With some effort, he could carry them home by himself. At best, this would cost him nothing. He had to pay for lime for his walls, and for the most part he had to pay a mason.

Bricks. Bricks were considerably more expensive. True, clay (*crete*) was to be found all over the place, but firing required energy, and the brickworks needed wood (*legna*) for their fires. Much larger quantities of lime had to be paid for too, and the masons had to be more skilled and work more precisely when building a brick wall.

Ashlar. The third category of building material, ashlar, requires even greater time and effort, and also skilled labour. Ashlar is expensive and the stones have to be carefully selected. Transport costs are high. Stonemasons have to hew the stones with care and assemble them properly.

Plaster on the walls. Were the old houses with their pebble walls plastered? Gianfranco Di Pietro, Professor for Construction History at the University of Florence says: “Probably. It mostly flaked off in the course of time. Frequently it could not be re-done, because the people in the old towns became poor. Whenever window or door surrounds protrude slightly, people always say this was done to make room for a layer of plaster.”⁹

The houses in the Old Town of San Giovanni Valdarno were all plastered. As far as Anghiari is concerned, there is no entirely satisfactory answer to the question.

Mediaeval rustic. After the fall of Ancient Rome, the new rulers who arrived in the city found it in ruins. The inhabitants had removed the marble plaques from the walls and ground them down for lime. The scruffy substructure remained – often stones that had only been hewn in a rough and ready way, in order to save time and money, as they would be covered up by another layer.

This led to a touching misunderstanding that lasted for centuries: rustic was interpreted as being an ancient sign of dignity, and was used for many buildings.

In Anghiari, some examples of this that have been preserved are: the edge of the house on the corner of Via Giordano Bruno and Vicola del Poeta; the archway over the door of 8/10 Via Taglieschi; the archway and portal with two animals at 8/10 Via Garibaldi.

Corbels. A right of way only secured space for pedestrians. For centuries, the space in the air above a street was at the disposal of house owners.

In order to enlarge their living area in the cramped quarters of the town, they often built corbels on their upper storeys.¹⁰ As a result, their houses did not rise smoothly from top to bottom, but jutted out.

Some examples of this are: 12/14 Via delle Mura di Sopra (wooden beams); the Taglieschi house, Piazza Mameli (number 15 has four elegantly reset corbels of ashlar below a wooden beam and number 16 has been elegantly reset with two arches from the 16th century); 18 Via Taglieschi (corbel, elegantly redone in ashlar; 9 Via Giordano Bruno (leaning against the wall, maybe 19th century).

In later times, corbels were felt to be inelegant, and some were removed.

Superstructures similarly involve an overlapping of different rights, storey by storey.

Here are some examples. The most spectacular superstructure is the long tunnel between Piazza Mameli and Via delle Mura di Sopra. The main Abbey building is connected to house number 8 across Via del Castello Antico. The *Badia* built a second superstructure over Via del Castello Antico to connect it with house number 20/22, in which the abbot and later representative of the cardinal probably lived, and where the cardinal had an elegant apartment. There is also a superstructure connecting house number 24 on the corner of Via Garibaldi with Via Nenci.

On Via della Torre, house number 18 connects to number 19 (wooden beams, maybe 20th century), and number 8 to number 18 over the northern alleyway that crosses it (originally wooden beams, then an arch, later a concrete slab).

We find a complex area of superstructures on Via della Torre/Via di Circonvallazione.

Number 34 is connected to number 35 on the corner of Piazza Baldaccio across the narrow alleyway (Via del Pratino).¹¹

Interconnected houses. The town dwellers dealt similarly with house ownership. The situation at number 8 Via Giordano Bruno is such that from time immemorial the owner has owned the ground floor of the first house and the first floor of the next-door house, which he reaches via a staircase. A further staircase brings him to his property on the second floor of yet another house.

Such layers of property in different houses were anathema to the liberal-minded of the 19th century. Their way of thinking led to the development of 20th century detached houses, separated from their neighbours by open space.

Nowadays there is almost a surreal feeling about these interconnected properties. From the outside, it is not possible to work out who owns what. It looks mysterious. The interior world is different from the exterior one.

The Testi family bought up a number of houses over a period of many generations. The interior of their palazzo in the western part of Via Taglieschi is labyrinthine.

Porches are found over many doorways.

Examples are to be found at numbers 2 and 21 Via delle Mura di Sopra; 13 Via delle Mura di Sotto; Piazza Edmondo de Amicis; 6 Via dell'Intoppo; 3 Via della Torre.

Smooth walls. A smooth outside wall was considered elegant. The rich could afford walls of large carefully hewn stones.

The following examples have been preserved to our day: the three-storey house at 12 Via Nenci (14th century) with the remains of a shop counter and two entrances of ashlar; the *vicario's* palace (now the town hall), which is partly built of ashlar.

We can see an excellent example of a fine wall in the form of a smooth shell of large hewn blocks at 57 Via Garibaldi (now the Istituto d'Arte). The stones are large and well assembled. The entrance still has its lintel, a gently curving semi-circular arch, coat of arms and an inscription bearing the date 1437.

The two-storey Taglieschi houses (15 and 18 Piazza Mameli) are also both built of smooth hewn blocks of stone.

A smooth surface was a form of distinction. Only the façades that give on to the square were finished in this way, whereas the side walls on Via Garibaldi are of normal masonry.

In 1472, the entire façade of Sant'Agostino was given a smooth finish.

The wall of the chapel (1398) at 26 Piazza Baldaccio is of ashlar, with two Gothic recesses.

The use of smooth ashlar to construct walls probably ended in the 15th century. Plaster, pale yellow ochre in colour, was used instead. It also gave a smooth finish, but was cheaper.

The way the town saw itself

A beautiful town. This was the time when the popular movement in Tuscany developed a scheme to create “beautiful towns” for all.¹²

For many years, beauty was linked to usefulness and the desire to impress.

Paving. Pavements encouraged townsfolk to walk. There is a link here to people's inclination to perform before an audience – especially during their late afternoon stroll (*passeggiata*).

The smooth surface of the pavement intensified the spatial effect of the large and interconnected surfaces of the houses.

Since the 18th century, wide paving stones in the Ancient Roman tradition have everywhere come to replace tiles.¹³

Beauty, strength, size. Fra Giordano da Pisa, preaching in Santa Maria Novella in Florence in about 1304, said, “Behold the beauty of a city that is well ordered and embellished by manifold art forms. Order is a wonderful thing in a city. Orderliness confers three characteristics on a city: beauty, strength and size. An orderly city with many artisans, each working alone and in collaboration with the others, is a wonderful thing.”¹⁴

The meaning of these words at the time they were spoken was somewhat different from their present-day meaning, because the context was different.

The word beauty meant the ability of a town to impress.

The word strength signalled the fact that a mediaeval town was marked by the fears of its inhabitants and their will to defend themselves. This led to the building of fortifications and towers.

The word size referred to the competitive spirit between the various towns and each town's need to prove itself.

The word orderliness implied that a large population had difficulty in creating synergies.

Moreover, the text indicates that the various clans, roads, neighbourhoods and quarters each lived their separate lives. The town as a whole was the linchpin that held the elements of the structure together.

Burgundian luxury as a model

Tuscan towns rose to economic prosperity in the 14th century. During that time, Upper and Central Italy, together with Flanders and Burgundy, grew to be the most prosperous regions in the world.

For a long time, prosperity was not reflected in luxury. Houses and furniture were simple, especially in medium-size towns like Anghiari. The inside walls were plastered to a smooth finish and given a pale ochre wash, such as we see in many places nowadays.

Burgundian luxury. In the 15th century, many people, especially the well-off, came into contact with Burgundy. The Burgundian model attracted them to strive for greater luxury in their furniture and fittings.

Three things provide evidence of this in Anghiari: the murals in the houses of the Taglieschi and Canicchi families, and in the *vicario*'s palace, which is now the mayor's office.

In the Canicchi house (now Saletta degli Archivi in Museo della Misericordia, 15 Via Nenci), the illusion of expensive wall hangings was created by means of frescoes with tendrils painted in the early 15th century – painting was the cheaper option. The upper edge comprises ornamental moulding. Tendrils decorate an alcove.¹⁵

The *vicario*'s walls were decorated in his palace shortly after 1385. They were painted to create the illusion of wall hangings. The *vicarios*' coats of arms fitted neatly in the huitfoils.

The Burgundian model is apparent in a second-floor room in Museo Taglieschi. The walls were painted to convey an impression of richly decorated textile hangings.

Illusion. Why paint the walls? What was the point? Was it deception? Or did the inhabitants aspire to a sign of dignity they could not afford? What justified their illusion? Why was it accepted?

We may assume that both populace and skilled workmen, with their down-to-earth way of thinking, had thorough knowledge of the materials at their immediate disposal, in the same way as they knew the

materials used in preparing their food. However, they had little apparent interest in setting up a hierarchy of materials. It did not matter to them what something was actually made of. The important thing was its appearance. If it looked good, they did not care how it was made.

If we take a look at the plentiful arts and crafts in the region, we will find ample food for thought on the subject of imitation.

From the point of view of social history, this is always an indication of self-confidence. It means a thing can be appropriated even when funds are at a low ebb. It also means the general public probably relishes such conduct. At any rate, it is unwilling to punish it.

The sign system of the Florentine avant-garde in the 15th century

There were a number of reasons why the Burgundian model did not prevail. Anghiari was not wealthy enough. It could not afford Burgundian luxury, but it did not want to do without it either. It therefore took up the option of imitation through painting.¹⁶

Furthermore, local traditions persisted at two levels.

The first, and more important of the two, was the fact that the locals largely shared their tastes in common. Their preferences developed from their specific situation.

At the second level, an artistic avant-garde was gathering in Florence shortly after 1400. It provided a vigorous opposition to fashions from northern Europe and had significant influence on the wealthy, particularly in the large cities. This movement expressly challenged Burgundian good taste, calling it barbaric and resorting to harsh defamatory statements.

At the same time, the avant-garde formulated its own theory of aesthetics and put it into practice.

Among others, its members numbered Brunelleschi, Ghilberti, Donatello, Alberti and – in the immediate vicinity of Anghiari – Piero della Francesca from the neighbouring town of Sansepolcro.

I shall link these two levels in my discussions below.

The large stone cuboid, which forms part of everyday life all over Tuscany, gives an impression of spaciousness.

Ornamentation. A visitor from north of the Alps is struck by the fact that there is little or no decoration on the façades of the houses. It is a fact that Central Italians have a different attitude to ornamentation from Northern Europeans. They decorate very sparingly.

The decorative forms that the Central Italians adopted from France and Germany at the height of the Middle Ages were not applied to an entire façade, but were fixed like brooches to its smooth surface.

The same applied to the way men and women dressed. Their robes were nearly always of one colour. A contrasting piece of jewellery was added to make a splash.

The elements of design described above were sufficient to lend a building prestige – to give it an elegant appearance. The prestige it achieved in the eyes of the public derived from both its functional and its cultural value.

Confidence. The idea behind this was apparently the way Roman Antiquity dealt with decorative forms. Connoisseurs were confident enough to be restrained. Financial savings were a by-product that pleased urban society's economical turn of mind.

Avant-garde. There was another way in which the urbanised avant-garde citizenry of Florence cultivated this restrained use of decoration. Their architects merely used it to mark transitions from one structural element to another.

Sant'Agostino. This important building for the urbanised avant-garde citizenry was constructed in Anghiari in 1472.

It was probably the work of the sculptor Maestro Santi di Benedetto di Santi da Settignano, who settled in Anghiari¹⁷ and received a number of commissions (including the altar of Our Lady and St. Matthew, funded by Matteo Cane; he was probably also commissioned to convert the Taglieschi house). He brought avant-garde art from Florence to the provincial town.

Antonio di Giovanni Canigiani, a Florentine administrator, was *vicario* in 1472. It was he who ordered a new façade to be built on to the old one of Sant'Agostino.

Antonio Canigiani (1429-1487) was the scion of a Florentine family of Guelph party oligarchs. His father, Giovanni, was one of Lorenzo Medici's most important counsellors. In 1464, the pope bestowed on him the title of *cavaliere*. Antonio was actively engaged in Florentine politics from 1462 until his death in 1487, acting as *gonfaloniere di compagnia*, *gonfaloniere di giustizia*, *vicario*, *capitano*, *podestà* and, on many occasions, as an envoy. He was sent, for instance, to the French king Charles VIII, who made him a *chevalier*, and to Pope Innocent VIII. He was a highly educated man. Marsilio Ficino called him “*familiaris*” and “*confabulator*” in his letters. He dedicated two pieces of writing to him: “*De magnificentia vel De virtutibus moralibus*” and “*De voluptate*” (both 1457). This was literature written in dialogue form, set in the Canigiani villa in S. Stefano a Campoli. Other works he dedicated to Canigiani were “*De quattuor sectis philosophorum*” and “*De musica*”. Cristoforo Landino dedicated “*Carmen de primordio urbis*” (on the origins of Florence) to Antonio Canigiani. Landino made Canigiani one of the interlocutors in his “*Disputationes camaldulenses*”. The state archives in Florence contain several letters written by Antonio to Lorenzo Medici.¹⁸

The form of presentation is one of elegance expressed through the smoothness of a wall. Another important characteristic is precision, which symbolises a significant mode of conduct that evolved in an urban environment.

What in fact is ornamentation? A coat of arms and a festive bow. A lion's head as a subconscious symbol of authority.

Elegance is not time, money and effort put on display. It can be the smooth and spacious surface of a wall, a gesture of underlying confidence.

This way of dealing with ornamentation stems from Antiquity. In around 150 AD, the Greek satirist Lucian of Samosata sang the praises of a beautiful hall in the following words: “ ... What admirable judgement has been shown, too, in the structure and decoration of the roof! Nothing wanting, yet nothing superfluous; the gilding is exactly what was required to achieve elegance without empty display; it is precisely that little touch of adornment with which a beautiful and modest woman sets off her loveliness; it is the slender necklace about her neck, the light ring upon her finger, the earrings, the brooch, the fillet that imprisons her luxuriant hair, and, like the purple stripe upon a robe, enhances its beauty. ... ”¹⁹

In my opinion, it is not enough to say that lavish adornment adds nothing to feminine beauty: it actually takes away from it. Dazzled by gold and costly gems, how should the beholder do justice to the charms of a clear complexion, to neck, and eye, and arm, and finger? Emeralds, bracelets and necklaces claim all his attention, and the lady has the mortification of finding herself eclipsed by her own jewels ... ”.¹⁹

Reticence. The Abbey church (*Badia*), that was moved from the fortress (*cassero*) to its present location in 1359, initially conformed to local custom. Its façades were without ornamentation.²⁰

Interiors. The interiors of the Taglieschi house are decorated only to the extent that they highlight a feature, or bear a brooch-like ornament.

Balance. Up to the 16th century, influential persons in this society acted as if they were not particularly powerful. Demonstrating power could have been dangerous, it could have cost a man his head. They were living in a society in which others made sure that, if possible, no-one became too high and mighty.

On the other hand, the powerful did try to put on a show, more than elsewhere, but they could only do this by means of an underhand strategy, by frugal and artful means.

This was reflected in the expressive language of their buildings. They aligned their houses with the other façades in an almost understated way. They stood out from the crowd, but did not make a song and dance about it.

Wide expanses. To come into contact with simple folk architecture in Central Italy, as it developed throughout the centuries, is to experience wide expanses.

The Etruscans tended to form walls like a thin skin. The Florentine avant-garde cultivated this idea. This was how the light and expansive wall surfaces came into being in the interior and on the exterior of their houses. They were an excellent means of creating spaces.

In this way, nearly every space was turned into a kind of *piazza*, from the smallest room to the long street (*stradone*), a perfect reflection of this kind of design. The two-dimensionality is rendered more intense as a result of slender cornices and a simplicity of form, which has a slight tendency towards the geometrical. The cornices divide the surface up into geometrical shapes. At the same time, we are aware of sweeping gestures.

Very little was added, and this is why it is so strongly emphatic.

In the 16th century, this type of conceptual arrangement was to be found everywhere.

The buildings that were built in Anghiari at that time were representative of Tuscan design, but they were of a high standard.

The courtyard of the Franciscan monastery (probably built in 1536) is floored with paving stones, which rise gently to a well – like a flattish pyramid. This creates a fascinating spatial effect. There are ground-floor and first-floor galleries, and the curve of an arch between one plain pillar and the next is like breathing out and in. The dimensions on the top floor are smaller.

The straight lines of the pillars extend delicately beyond the ledge of the capitals and then curve elegantly. Balustrades, columns and walls are arranged in a two-dimensional way. A splendid and refined space is formed using plain and simple measures.

The arcades in front of the church (1565) are similarly designed: space is created through surfaces and a small number of simple forms, gentle in their expression.

The forms in the Carmine monastery (built after 1536) are equally effective.

Simplicity plus status logo. The town hall (built after 1385) is a civic building through and through. It has the usual plain façade, finished with a surface of smooth, yellow-tinted plaster, which was a cheaper solution than getting stone masons to work with ashlar.

There is a simple reason behind the present richly ornamented surfaces: every *vicario* sent to Anghiari as chief administrator by Florence was allowed to put his coat of arms on the town hall – on the façade or in one of the halls – once his period of office, which was restricted to one year, was over. Over time, quite a collection was built up of these brooch-like ornaments.

Prestige and aesthetics. Thus far, we have largely been able to trace the criteria used in

construction back to ancient local traditions.

But now a type of design was visible, as in the façade of Sant'Agostino. It too was nurtured locally, but was essentially a novelty. Prestige alone was no longer enough, it was supplemented by what we now refer to as aesthetics.

For centuries, functionality and prestige were the guiding principles. The signs on the wall of a public building were used to draw attention to the dignity of the client and/or the town, which is why we mainly see versions of columns, beams and gables in such places, all familiar since the days of Antiquity, all indications of prestige.

These signs were more or less arranged according to the rules of good taste, but they were basically decoration.

The culture of *dispositio*. The keyword at the heart of the aesthetic movement started by intellectual artists in Florence around 1400 was “*dispositio*”, or disposition, an orderly arrangement. From this time on, the parts of a building were arranged in relation to each other in accordance with specific rules. This new idea gave rise to criteria for buildings, objects and pictures that were no longer based on prestige but on design itself.

This meant they were arranged harmoniously. In such an arrangement, one individual effect is co-ordinated with every other effect. This is known as proportion.

A connection was established between psychological impressions.

The innovators also stepped up their attempt to introduce objectivity by applying the science of mathematics. Things that were generally valid were held to be superior. Intelligence claimed victory over prestige.

This type of formation by *dispositio* signalled the start of what we may call unity of design.

Everything that had gone before it can be described as agglomeration. Some things were planned systematically, as in northern European buildings during the heyday of the Middle Ages. But it was not until the days of *dispositio* that a single view appeared as a unity before the spectator's eyes.

A further logical consequence of this way of thinking was the development of perspective.

There was an increased input of rigorous thought in the aesthetics of the avant-garde. They aspired to work along scientific lines.

This avant-garde design was grounded in the tradition of artisans. We may call it “simplicity with intellect”. It was generous. It breathed.

Here are some examples: Brunelleschi's buildings; sculptures by Donatello and Desiderio da Settignano; the Ducal Palace in Urbino.²¹

Nowadays, we find it quite hard to appreciate the fact that this form of aesthetics arose so late. We are used to viewing the historically visible world through the lens of aesthetics. In actual fact, this key to reading the past spread in the form of a historical process.

The illusionary wall. Plaster as a means for creating smoothly elegant façades was relatively cheap. The effect achieved was then heightened, the surface becoming like a geometric calculation. The specific, tangible form took on an intellectual appearance.

The avant-garde long failed to have any impact on the provinces, where traditional building went on as usual during the 15th century.

Conventional forms continued to be used in a large number of ordinary houses: rectangular openings on the ground floor, flashing – for weatherproofing – in the form of broad beams, and rectangular windows with wooden lintels.

Some refined houses had additional round arches made of bricks.

The wealthier houses had arches made of ashlar.

Plasticity. The avant-garde not only cut back on ornamentation, it transformed it. It changed it into tangible forms. We see this above all in windows and portals. Ledges, round windows, coats of arms and festive bows were added.

Up until 1500, sculptured forms were integrated in lined-up buildings and in their surfaces. This contributed to the spatial development of the street.

Windows looked like smaller doors in the 14th century. We are dealing here with the principle of a standard form. It can be enlarged, if necessary, depending on its function.

This happened in the 15th and 16th centuries with arched doors and windows, and portal doors and windows.

Examples: next-door to house no. 5 on the south side of Vicolo del Poeta. On the northern side of the first floor there is a medium-size Gothic window with corbels under the lintel. On the western side there are Gothic windows on each of three storeys.

There is a solitary remaining example of a divided-light window, such as we see all over Northern Europe. It is on the upper floor of 4/6 Via della Torre.

Round-arch windows in a smooth wall. Taglieschi house, 13/15 Via Taglieschi.

Round windows – so-called children's windows. Every upper storey in the Taglieschi house (3 Piazza Mameli) has a round window. They are so high, one might think they were not suitable for children, but maybe they could use them by standing on a chair.

A further example is to be found in Palazzo Corsi (105 Corso Matteotti).

Round-arch windows in hewn stonework. Examples of these are to be found at Piazza Mameli (house numbers 1; 3/4/5; 6/7; 8/9/10; 14 (an elegant round window). Further examples at 16 Via del Castello Antico (a magnificent round-arch French window); 18 Via della Misericordia (ashlar; upper storey); 8/10 Via Garibaldi (a round window on the left-hand side of the upper floor); 12/14/16 Via Garibaldi four round-arch French windows on each of the upper storeys); 53 Via Garibaldi (round-arch French windows – maybe not original – two coats of arms above). Number 31 Via della Torre (French window, ashlar at the sides, bricks above). Number 7 Vicolo del Poeta (rear side of the Tagliechi House; masoned round window). Numbers 20/21/22 Piazza Baldaccio (very beautiful arched windows from around 1500); 30/32 Piazza Baldaccio (ashlar); 33/34 Piazza Baldaccio (ashlar). Numbers 12/14 Via Giordano Bruno (large round-arch French windows on the upper floor); 15/17 (round upper windows; ashlar); 5/6 Via dell'Intoppo; later on numbers 4 and 3 next door (maybe 19th century).

French windows (door-high casement windows) in ashlar work. French windows are mostly very plain.

Examples of these are to be found at: 12 Via delle Mura di Sotto; Palazzo Taglieschi, 14 Piazza Mameli; the main abbey building, 1 Via del Castello Antico (two elegant French windows); 2 Vicolo della Piazzuola (the lintel is upside down – the name Pantoleus is visible); 2 Via Nenci; 21/13/24 Via Garibaldi (forward part of the building that spans the road; French window and door); house on the corner of Piazza del Popolo and 1/3 Vicolo della Piazzuola (mid-16th century); courtyard wall of Sant'Agostino, 49 Via Garibaldi (two French windows above); 8/10 and 19/21 Via Taglieschi (16th century; now PCI office).

For many years, French windows were a sign of distinction. The French window built to the rear of the cardinal's house (as viewed from Via delle Mura di Sopra) was only a plain one.

At a later stage, four French windows were installed in the *vicario's* palace.

Other such windows can be seen at Palazzo Testi, 4/6/8/10 Via Taglieschi (plain windows); the Misericordia Confraternity, 15 Via Nenci, with the inscription “Panem an[gelorum]” 7 Vicolo del Poeta (over the entrance to the cellar of the Taglieschi house); 20/22 Via Giordano Bruno; 23/24/25 and 37 Piazza Baldaccio.

Round-arch doorways. An arch over a doorway is superfluous, it has no utilitarian function. But it confers a psychological benefit on those entering and leaving: they have “room to breathe” above their heads.

Examples are to be found in Via Nenci at: number 8, number 10 (ashlar), number 12 (two basket arches), number 13 (with dressed stones; 1st half of the 15th century) and number 18 (masoned arch). We also find them on the balcony of the Palazzo del Vicario (now the town hall); at 12 Via della Misericordia (with ashlar); 12, 3 and 17 Via Taglieschi; 12/14/16 Via Garibaldi (16th century) and 41 (ashlar) in the same street; 20/22 Via Giordano Bruno (ashlar) and 24/26 in the same street (with small mezzanine windows above).

Doors from the 14th century mostly have two corbels underneath their lintels.

Examples of these are to be found at 16 and 18 Via del Castello Antico; there are two Gothic doors to the *vicario's* palace (present-day town hall); 11 Via della Misericordia (a reconstruction); 23 Via Taglieschi (two doors); the Taglieschi house at 18 Piazza Mameli; 20/22 Via Giordano Bruno (later topped by a Renaissance lintel).

Portal doorways in dressed stone. An embrasure of blocks of masonry was frequently added at a later stage to the doorway of a simple type of house.

Three examples to be found on Via delle Mura di Sopra are: number 26 (a doorway with a French window above it); 32 (a splendid portal that might have come from a church); 54 (two doorways, a French window and a coat of arms). Sant'Agostino has a great portal doorway, a doorway with two French windows and the entrance to the monastery garden (a doorway that used to bear an inscription, surmounted by a pointed supporting arch) all at 49 Via Garibaldi. The *Badia* doorway on Vicolo della Piazzuola bears the inscription “Lexi Card. Falgonerius AA. Comma”. There are two coats of arms at the side and, further up, a balcony with a French window. Further examples of such portal doorways are as follows: Number 2 Vicolo della Piazzuola; on Via del Castello Antico: number 16 (next to a Gothic door); number 18 (with a plaque and coat of arms); number 22 (only an ashlar frieze with the words “Spero lucem” carved in it); number 9 Via Nenci (a great gateway to the Misericordia Confraternity's house); number 15 Via Nenci (a great portal doorway); number 24 Via Garibaldi (a portal doorway and French window in the protruding section); number 53 Via Garibaldi (a doorway, presumably from the mid-15th century, with wreaths carved in the lintel); the doorway (number 12) to the *cassero* courtyard (monastery doorway with lintel and an inscription bearing the date 1665, two coats of arms and a portrayal of the Madonna); Palazzo Taglieschi: 5 Vicolo del Poeta and 13/15 Via Taglieschi (ashlar; a stone presumably intended for a painted coat of arms; a window; a studded door). Palazzo Testi, 2/4 Via Taglieschi. Numbers 24/26 Via Giordano Bruno (a plain French window above; the house is huge); 20/21/22 Piazza Baldaccio (a magnificent portal doorway from around 1500).

Taglieschi house façade. The most important example in Anghiari is the reconstructed Taglieschi house.

The builders aimed, as far as was possible, to create a unified façade. Horizontally, this was achieved by means of unbroken cornices across the whole width. The windows were built in a uniform

style.

The stonework remained plain at the side (on Via Garibaldi).

The fourth floor on the side of the piazza was presumably reconstructed in the 16th century, when a gallery was built on the roof.²²

A 16th century sign system

A new form of prestige. Limitations were placed on artists, since architecture and nearly all art forms were the result of commissions. It was not long before compromises were made.

These started with sculpted elements. Doors and windows were particularly suited to demonstrating prestige. Their size and number were given, so it was their frames that became significant.

The study of Antiquity yielded a new code of signs of prestige. Such signs proliferated in the houses of the well-to-do in the 16th century.

Many buildings were converted in Anghiari during this century, bringing them into line with changing taste. They retained their outer walls – their link with the previous century. However, sculpted elements were now added to the walls, shaping windows, doors, corners and cornices. This resulted in individual houses standing out from the fronts of the other houses lining their road.

The windows were framed in a more striking way, and entrances made of rustic (rough or pitted masonry). Openings became larger. On the other hand, security devices were on the increase: ground-floor windows were enclosed in iron cages and gates became mighty constructions of wood.

We can judge how far this was dictated by a desire to impress by the differentiation that took place. Simple houses stood in side streets (like Via della Bozia) and alleyways. They were narrower than the houses of the rich and mostly only had two windows. Such houses hardly ever had sculpted doorways and windows. The rooms had lower ceilings.

Cultural norms in the field of aesthetics. The avant-garde language of expression did not become commonplace in Anghiari until the 16th century, when it made its appearance on the new houses built by the wealthy, particularly along the *stradone*.

The masters of the avant-garde would have been critical of what their followers produced, whose aim was to make things easier to handle. We might even call this trivialisation.

Nevertheless, many formulae coined by the avant-garde were retained in Anghiari until 1950.

A prestigious suburb. If we read the signs correctly, it becomes clear that, in the 15th century, the most prestigious parts of the fortress town were the present-day Piazza Mameli and Via Garibaldi.

After 1500, any house owners who wished to impress their neighbours made their buildings more elegant by adding certain features.

From this time on, the town hardly developed within its own boundaries, which is why it has remained more or less unchanged. Any development took place along the long straight road. It was here that old houses were converted, two or more houses knocked into one to form a *palazzo*, or new ones constructed. While the road was indeed built in 1323, it assumed its shape as we know it in the 16th century.

Increase in volume. People changed their views on measurements. New yardsticks appeared. It was as if people had grown taller, while their rooms became larger.

Parallel to this, images of people in pictures also increased in size during the course of the century.

Via Mazzini is the most obviously Renaissance street of all.²³

The most important building in the countryside was Castello Galbino (converted around 1550), with its characteristic loggias.

In Via Matteotti, most of the houses have windows arched like doorways. This is a sign that their owners were aiming to impress, but that they did not dare to take things too far.

Corbels. In 1612, Grand Duke Cosimo II visited Anghiari. While he did not actually order the townsfolk to remove their corbels (*sporti*) from their houses – especially those on the piazza and in Borgo della Croce – he encouraged (*lasciosi intender*) them do so.

For a long time, the guiding principle had been a broad, smoothly plastered surface. This was considered elegant.

However, around 1600, this view obviously no longer went unchallenged. One reason may have been that it had turned into a cliché. In his writings, the contemporary historian Lorenzo Taglieschi shows clearly that other aspects should be taken into consideration beside elegance, for instance vulnerability and practicality. Taglieschi is critical of the fact that the Prince's advice was immediately put into practice by some wealthy persons. Many believed they were adopting the measure in order to beautify (*abbellire*) the town, whereas in fact they were “stripping the town of its ancient character” (*tolsero via l'antichità del paese*).²⁵

Furthermore, on the practical side, Lorenzo Taglieschi claimed they were damaging the foundations, putting the cellars (*cantine*) and watercourses (*fosse*) at risk.²⁶

The locals did not all act alike. In fact, a number of corbels remain to this day.

Blocks of rustic masonry (16th/17th centuries). Roughly hewn rustic was increasingly being used in military architecture. It was a defiant signal of powerful authority.

As the avant-garde system of signs spread during the 16th century, it came to be trivialised – which is the fate of all sophisticated systems of signs when they come to be applied by large numbers of people. The use of rustic also became trivialised. Its widespread use caused it to lose the fine nature that had characterised it in the 15th century. It was not merely rough in form, it also became coarse. House owners believed this gave an expression of power to their façades.

At this time, not only the corners of a building came to be built of rustic, but also the surrounds of windows and entrances.

We can see that we are not merely dealing with a simple and rational form by the fact that these entrances built of rustic frequently rose to a point, echoing the buildings of the 14th century.

Unlike in Florence, not one single building in Anghiari was built with a ground floor made entirely of rustic. This is indicative of the fact that the owners were unwilling to adopt a form of prestige that seemed too powerful to them.

Here are some examples of the use of rustic at the corners of houses: 26 Via Giordano Bruno/Vicolo del Poeta; 4/5 Piazza Garibaldi; 17 Via Taglieschi/Piazza Mameli (16th century); Via Mazzini.

One exception to this is the Loggia della Fontana (built much later in the 19th century) below the Mercatale.

Rustic also puts in an appearance in a somewhat muted form, where it has been painted on corner masonry. One example of this is 15/17/19 Via Matteotti, where blocks of rustic have been painted on to the lower parts and corners of the walls. It is possible that the wall to the cloister-garth of Sant'Agostino (49 Via Garibaldi) was painted with diamond-shaped blocks of rustic (maybe 16th century).

Doorways of rustic. Some examples of these are: the main Abbey building at 1 Via del Castello

Antico; 59 Via Garibaldi (now the Istituto d'Arte); 19/21 Via Taglieschi (now the PCI building); 23/24/25 Piazza Baldaccio and also 27/28/29 (with some rustic in the surrounds of French windows). During the 16th century, they became the norm along the long straight street (20/22/24 Via Matteotti).

The palazzo. In the middle of the 16th century, the Taglieschi family had a second house built (now 17 Via Mazzini). Unlike the house in the town centre, it is classified as a *palazzo*, according to Florentine custom.²⁷ It differed from such houses in the late Middle Ages in that there was no hustle and bustle of tradesmen coming and going. There were no large entrances on the ground floor, there was nothing to arouse other people's curiosity. The outside offered no clue as to what was going on indoors. The façade kept the outside world at a distance. On the ground floor, there were merely the rustic-built entrance and two small windows with iron gratings. The upper storeys had windows with defiant surrounds of blocks of rustic.

The *palazzo* stands outside the town walls, proof of relative peace in the principedom outside the city of Florence. Nevertheless, the form of the façade calls to mind cruel times of war.

Pillars and columns. In 1323, the town ruler, Pier Saccone, had a pillar set up on the Mercatale (now lost). It was a symbol of the functions it fulfilled: it was a sign that a market was held in that place; it laid down standardised measurements; it was used for posting announcements; the stocks were located there; it was the pivotal point of the sequence of squares. Formerly it had formed part of an ancient building and was therefore a sign of venerable old age.

The grand arcades (built in 1466, not preserved) on the west side of the market square were built in a centuries-old style, with a high foot and octagonal pillars made of large hewn stones. We know what they looked like from a drawing in the Codice Taglieschi (1624).

In 1466, the Council gave Borgo di Matteo dall Rocca di S. Casciano permission to build a portico on the Mercatale with three columns of stone (*colonne di pietra*). The construction, which was for general public use, reflected well on the highly regarded family, and on the town too. The columns were unusual, which was why people called them "Borgo's columns" (*le colonne del Borgo*).²⁸

The form of construction, including the use of pillars, was still entirely mediaeval in its expression. We may wonder why the construction showed no trace of Florentine avant-garde.

The 15th century proponents of the avant-garde in Florence (Brunelleschi, Alberti, Michelozzo, Rossellino and others) who drew their inspiration for developments in architecture from the ancient world most importantly left walls untouched on the whole, merely enhancing them by their use of columns and beams. In so doing, they were following everyday cultural traditions, but adding an element of prestige.

In Anghiari, we find almost nothing to indicate that such designs were either adopted or challenged.

Columns were more frequently found in churches (on the edges of niches) and in the field of sculpture and paintings.

There was once a fresco on the façade of the Taglieschi house on the square, with a life-size Madonna. (It was by an unknown 15th century artist and is now in the entrance hall of Museo Taglieschi, Anghiari.) Our Lady is accorded added dignity through her position between two columns with capitals, topped with an arch.

Symbolic community buildings

A community constructs the buildings it needs. They are functional, show their roots and reveal a

common pride. Additionally, their atmosphere suggests a cluster of other motives.

Many of these buildings were dedicated to evoking the incomprehensible. This is most obvious in the sacred places of the ancient world and in Christian churches. However, the basic framework can apply almost everywhere. Elements can be added through pictures or particular signs.

The community created buildings with a relatively secular infrastructure: squares, arcades, the administrative buildings of the town hall, wells, defensive facilities such as walls and gates.

In the 18th century, the upper classes erected a theatre, to which ordinary folk also had access.

In the 20th century, it was mainly schools, libraries, archives, further administrative buildings, technical facilities and so on.

Signs indicative of the public domain. All public sector buildings were cuboid in form, similar in appearance to other buildings in the town. Alongside the similarities, there were also elements to distinguish them: the public nature of a building was intended to be instantly recognisable from its façade.

The means to achieve this were size, height and spatial expanse, superior materials, such as hewn stone, often neatly formed and dressed to be as smooth as possible.

Points of view. To a large extent, when creating its municipal infrastructure, our town in Tuscany made practicality its priority.

This was misconstrued by 19th century observers, whose viewpoint was dominated by the non-working social class at court. Practical matters were first discredited by them, and then ignored. This was strange because – in an apparently contradictory way – they were writing at the time of the industrial era. Industrialisation had its roots in the traditions of burghers living in towns, traditions that ennoble usefulness.

This enhanced usefulness is present in Anghiari.

The Franciscan church, also known as Chiesa della Croce, is situated right at the top of the steep road (*stradone*). The interior is a simple cuboid shape, a space of great height. No vaulting is present to make it appear monumental. The roof timbers are laid bare, like in the store houses from the same period. The builders took the traditions of the mendicant orders and transformed them into something superior. There are three tall and narrow windows high up on the north side, so that light streams in in an unusual way and creates an atmosphere of calm. (The windows on the monastery side are painted.)

Each side wall has the stereotype that became common after the Council of Trent: two altars with a huge aedicule – pillars, beams and a gable. Funding came from various families wishing to erect a family tomb bearing their coat of arms in the church.

The arcades. The arcades (built in 1565) must have been planned at the same time as the church, but they were actually built much later. They seem to be the focal point of the long steep street. They have a balustrade at the front, on which columns have been constructed. The space behind the balustrade exudes calm and contains a bench for people to sit on and rest.

The cloisters are very plain in shape. There are no columns, only pillars of masonry with a plaster finish. The upper gallery is open, its pillars lower.

The courtyard is paved throughout with paving stones. The surface rises on all sides towards the middle, making it look like a flattish pyramid. Water in the form of a well forms the central point.

The cloisters were therefore dedicated to everyday use. In former times, someone went there regularly to fetch water. The courtyard, shaded by the gallery, was the piazza of the monastic community.

From the monastery garden we can look down into the Sovara Valley and identify the highest peak – Prato della Regina. To its left, we can make out Castello Montauto.

The Compagnia (Confraternity) del Santissimo Crocefisso o Corpus Domini (founded in 1506) converted the building it received from the Abbey (15 Via Nenci, now the Misericordia). They erected a portal and built an assembly hall with monumental columns and arches in its interior. Mario Salmi, writing in 1961, said they were the work of the *bottega* (workshop) of Pietro di Bernardino di Subisso, a native of Anghiari, who was a faithful follower of Florentine designs.²⁹

Feast days

Festive equipment. In the past, many houses had two pieces of equipment that enabled the townsfolk to celebrate the extraordinarily high number of feast days (about 180 in all) that lent structure to the year. They are particularly visible in Piazza del Borghetto (3 Piazza Mameli).

Iron torch holders were fixed in front of the windows, illuminating the town for the feast – a sight that must have been hugely impressive in the days when lighting was scarce.

Elegant houses had two further iron rods with brackets, on which wooden poles were laid. Families draped rich hangings over these bars.

These were presumably the draperies they usually hung on the walls behind their armchairs. We can see them in many paintings (as in Museo Taglieschi): Our Lady, seated, is painted to look like one of the ladies of a wealthy house. On feast days, such costly hangings were removed from the private to the public sphere and exposed to the gaze of the whole town.

The individual thus presented his private belongings to the outside world. It was an act of self-assurance on his part. He risked provoking other people's envy.

On the other hand, the individual was displaying his wealth for others to enjoy, beautifying the town and enhancing its prestige. The townspeople were linked by a general sense of community.

Regional colouring. Colours were used sparingly in Central Italian buildings. This reflected what people experienced every day. In the pleasant-weather months, there are no bright colours. The countryside looks earthen – the spectrum ranges from dark brown to yellow ochre. These earthy colours were also present in their building materials. Tiles were fired to a yellow ochre colour.

If they wanted to match the sunshine, very bright colours were needed. This is why garish colours were used in folk art, especially in the field of ceramics. Michelangelo did the same when painting his frescoes in the Sistine Chapel.

The world of paintings

For a long time, paintings were a rarity. The same was even more true of sculptures, especially in provincial churches. In the past, very few people had the gift of depicting persons or places.

This was why great communal efforts had to be undertaken to raise funds for liturgical pictures. Alternatively, funding had to come from very wealthy families. This was a rare occurrence.

Let us imagine all that had to happen, how much time passed and how many discussions took place before a decision was made to commission an expensive work in the wake of death, disasters or accidents.

For a long time, private houses contained no pictures of this kind. Even in later years, they were still

a rarity. Only very rich families owned paintings, and if they did, they were nearly always Mother-and-Child pictures, reflections of family life.

Ways of thinking and how they were expressed in paintings. Our ways of thinking were formed in the industrial era, so we find it hard to appreciate the continuity of thought patterns in Anghiari over the course of centuries, and probably millennia.

The cult of the pre-Christian mother lived on in the Christian veneration of Mary. It is an idea that seems strange to us, since our thoughts have been shaped by traditional 19th century thought patterns, but we should pause to consider the fact that pictures of a mother and her child formed the bulk of all paintings right up to the end of the 15th century.

The main altarpiece (a triptych) in the upper church of Sant'Agostino was the most important example in Anghiari of a Mother-and-Child painting (done after 1452). Matteo di Giovanni from Sansepolcro (born around 1430 and died in Siena in 1495) was commissioned to paint it by the Corsi family. We see the Mother and her Child flanked by saints on either side. It is now in the *Propositura* church.³⁰

It is nearly always the Mother who is depicted in pictures in Anghiari. This is a broad and complex subject, establishing and following various strands of tradition.

One strand is the courtly painting, in which the Madonna is seated on a throne. Mary, the carpenter's wife, has been raised to the rank of a Byzantine empress. This means she has been accorded the highest official state honours. Her robe is that of a female courtier, a style that was copied by wealthy women throughout the Middle Ages. This garment, chiefly worn at important festivities, was the start of a lasting fashion.

One picture offers proof that the robes depicted were fashionable ones. It used to hang in the church in Casanovole in the countryside near Anghiari (it was painted in the first half of the 14th century and is now in Museo Taglieschi, Anghiari). It depicts the Mother (formerly with her Child) as a young woman, dressed in a robe that was fashionable in towns in the first 40 years of the 14th century. Painters like Giotto and Lorenzetti also painted this style of garment.

Painting on the façade. We believe the life-size fresco of the Madonna (painted in the 15th century by an unknown artist), now on the south wall of the entrance hall of the Taglieschi house, was taken from the façade of the same house. She is surrounded by architectural forms that pay particular honour to her: two columns with capitals and an arch. An elegant princely seat is set against a blue background. We see the Mother with the Child on her lap, presenting Him to the viewer. She is wearing a red dress and a loose blue cloak.

Existential events. Such paintings of the Madonna were all linked to existential occurrences. This is most obvious in paintings of the Mother breast-feeding her Child, giving Him the milk of life.³¹

The Taglieschi house contains two such paintings. This type of *Madonna lactans* (the Madonna lactating) expresses a serious worry that a mother might not be able to give her new-born baby the nourishment it needs to stay alive.

The 14th century picture is understood both as a plea and an insurance policy against one of the greatest misfortunes that could befall a woman.

The threat to life itself is one of the reasons the subject appears in so many paintings. It also demonstrates the importance of wet nurses, although it was only rich families who could afford to employ them.³²

Vittorio Dini examined the complexity of this problem in the light of Piero della Francesca's

painting of the Madonna del Parto (the Madonna shortly before her delivery) in nearby Monterchi.³³

The Taglieschi family house also contains another smaller 15th century fresco, that of the Madonna del Ponte. It is said to have been painted over a Madonna del Latte. This indicates the fact that Mary – and other saints – were often allotted precise tasks.³⁴

Visitors to Sant'Agostino [...] are confronted with existential subject matter of a different kind in a painting done after 1400. It reflects people's fear of hail, storms and drought, the vagaries of nature and fears for survival, should a harvest fail. If it did, disaster persisted into the following year, as there were then no seeds for sowing.

A culture of extremes. The culture surrounding birth and death is expressed in other pictures. Andrea della Robbia (1435-1525)³⁵ depicted Christ's birth in colours reminiscent of folk art (terracotta covered mainly in blue and white). Christ's grave appears below. As ever, other figures are also present, providing protection (done around 1490/1500; now in Museo Taglieschi, Anghiari).

Figures providing certainty. Such protective figures were, like the Madonna, guides for those who sought a place they could flee to for safety.

The individual saints stood for a socio-cultural network of important groups and interests. We can learn a lot from them about the structure of society in Anghiari.

The main altar in Sant'Agostino is evidence of people's fascination with the *Poverello* and the fact that Anghiari was closely linked to the popular movement and socio-religious reform movements. It depicts St. Francis on the right-hand side of the Mother with her Child.³⁶

The Madonna is also accompanied by St. Damian, the patron saint of doctors, who symbolises the growing importance of health services, and on the left by St. Anthony of Padua,³⁷ another Franciscan, and St. Anthony the Hermit, the patron saint of farmers (painted in the mid-15th century).

Frescoes depicting St. Anthony were also painted on the walls of the first chapel (pre-1188) and in the hall of the upper church (post-1188).

The townsfolk take possession of sacred places

The churches were buildings in which believers were offered certainty in the face of the incomprehensible. They were not built by the clergy, but by the townsfolk themselves, mostly wealthy ones.

These persons brought their own opinions with them and gave visible expression to them.

They built a kind of house around their burial places beneath the floors of the churches and around the altars dedicated to the patron saints of their families. Thus, "rooms" were built along the side walls, open only to the body of the church, and creating what we call side chapels.

It shows that religion did not belong to the clergy, but from now on, for a long time, it belonged to the townsfolk. This was an important precursor of Protestantism.

The façade. In 1472, Sant'Agostino received a new façade (probably done by the sculptor Maestro Santi di Benedetto di Santi di Settignano).

This façade is evidence of the extent to which the person commissioning a work was able to exert control over it. In this case it was Antonio di Giovanni Canigiani [...], who was born into an old Florentine family allied to the Guelphs and befriended by the Medicis. His father was one of Lorenzo de' Medici's counsellors. Antonio, the holder of many offices, had been politically active in Florence since 1462. He was an intellectual. Marsilio Ficino dedicated three of his works to him. Cristoforo

Landino included him among the debaters in his “Disputationes Camaldulenses” and dedicated his “Carmen de primordio urbis” (on the origins of Florence) to him.³⁸

This goes to show that the post of *vicario* in Anghiari, limited as it was to a one-year term of office, was apparently an attractive option, even for the higher échelons of the political class in Florence.

Canigiani funded the façade of the church, as a memorial to himself for all eternity. He set his seal in the middle, his family's coat of arms and a plaque with title and date.

The burghers take over the sacred places, erecting family chapels.

Art historians usually mention the fact that private individuals made donations to churches. The example of Sant'Agostino contradicts this assumption, and is probably generally valid for large parts of Central Italy.

With the rise of the middle classes after 1452, self-assertive families took control of the sacred sector. They converted the hall of Sant'Agostino, erecting three side chapels on each side of the body of the church. Chapels were also erected at the east end. The church thus became an agglomeration of at least nine family chapels.³⁹

The church of Sant'Agostino seems to have been taken over in the years after 1300, when a hall was being built over the vaulted chapel. It was later to function as the upper church. Various families staked their claims, and painted the figure to whom they dedicated their chapel on the side wall.

The earliest figure of this type – who thus appeared in both the upper and lower churches – was probably St. Anthony, with his T-shaped crook. In the upper church, he now stands to the right of the early 15th century Ligi altarpiece (only a fragment now remains).⁴⁰ It is likely the figure first appeared when the church was being built, emphasising continuity of tradition between lower and upper churches.

The culture of death. There used to be a crucifixion scene on the wall of what was later the second chapel on the right (Madonna del Buon Consiglio). It is an expression of the culture of death. Nothing remains except St. Mary Magdalene beneath the Cross and Mary the Mother of Jesus beside her, together with her Child, who is giving His blessing.

The church is filled with the culture of death, as a family tomb is located in each of the chapels (a plan of the chapels and the burial places is to be found in Museo Taglieschi).

According to documents, the families owned these places in perpetuity. The location was ritualised through the sacred acts on the altar and the ritual figure. Statues and pictures were added. The ritualised family seal, their coat of arms, which the middle classes adopted after the example of the nobility, symbolised a family's self-assertive presence and prestige.

Influential families. We therefore have evidence of the fact that there was a class of very rich burghers. We also have an indication of the number of families that had the greatest influence in society. For instance, Gregorio Mazzoni held numerous public offices as a result of the drawing of lots, elections and temporary appointments.

Most of the following came to Anghiari in the 14th century: the Ducci, Ligi, Testi, Maimoni, Chieli and Carocci families.

Emancipation. Large sections of the populace emancipated themselves from the clergy. They may also have emancipated themselves from religious magic, as did the reformers during the Reformation north of the Alps.

Many and frequent disasters visited the region, rendering the people helpless.

Times of disaster encourage people to imagine things that bring them comfort, including stories of

miracles.

They also provide topics for conversation, which they need to satisfy their desire for communication. Many were willing to believe in miracles, which were something for them to hold onto. If such stories are well told, miracles can be looked on as literature. Faith in them is an expression of trust in the world – something that has been around since earliest times. People believed there was indeed something that would save them. For a long time miracles were the basis for hope.

Stories of miracles in crisis. Not everyone believed in miracles to the same extent. No-one was duty-bound to believe a miracle. Questioning a miracle was not considered a sin.

Difficulties always arise when miracles are exploited, or when they are raised to the status of a dogma.

A critical point was reached in later times, above all in the 19th and 20th centuries, when they came under pressure from movements connected with the Enlightenment. At the same time, the Church of Rome failed to defend them as a literary genre, justifying them instead on the basis of rational arguments. This led to them being used as dogma.

Death on a massive scale. In the third chapel on the right in Sant'Agostino, dedicated to St. Monica, we find symbolic, existential pleas for help in one of the many outbreaks of the plague (including that of 1485). Churchgoers encountered the figures of the patron saints of victims of the plague, Saints Sebastian and Roch.

This was a subject that troubled people greatly. We can judge how serious it was from another painting of St. Sebastian (it has survived elsewhere in fragmentary form).

Weather disasters. Another early 15th century painting, to be found where the second chapel on the left came to be built, is of harvest time; presumably it was linked to a patron saint. People could see peasant farmers in contemporary dress working in their fields.⁴¹

Reconstruction measures. In 1452, building work started on the hall, which was being turned into an agglomeration of chapels. The first chapel on the right was dedicated to the Holy Cross. It was endowed in 1456 by the wealthy blacksmith Luca di Piero, who may also have been a manufacturer of arms, and the brothers Borgo and Pietro from the Mannini family (until about 1800).

The second chapel on the right belonged to the Angelieri de Verani family (in 1560 it passed to their relatives in the Testi family), whose house stood opposite the church, on the north-eastern side of Piazza del Borghetto (now Piazza Mameli).

It is dedicated to Our Lady of Good Counsel (Madonna del Buon Consiglio). This title is significant in its description of Our Lady as a great woman who can advise and help in many situations of life.

From 1560, the third chapel on the right belonged to the Ligi family. They originally came from San Leo on the southern outskirts of Anghiari, at the foot of the range of hills. It received a second dedication to St. Monica in addition to the original one to St. Anthony, who was probably moved soon afterwards.

In 1456, Mazzone di Gregorio di Vanni set up the first chapel on the left. Mazzone was born as the illegitimate son of a mercenary general from Anghiari. He was later legitimised and came to found the Mazzoni⁴² dynasty.

The second chapel on the left was set up in 1452 by Michelangelo di Duccio, a member of the Ducci di Catenaia family, who had lived in Anghiari since 1392. It was dedicated to San Nicolà da Tolentino.

The third chapel was set up in 1465 for the use of the monastery. The monks prayed Divine Office

here and used it as a burial place. It was built by Andrea Carroccio⁴³, the then prior. Its dedication – to St. Anthony the Abbot – reflected the monks' interest in the monastery's origins.

He was the patron saint of cattle. The prior had a statue of him erected (now in Museo Taglieschi).

When we look at the plan of the upper church of Sant'Agostino, there seems at first sight to be a transept. This would be a typical form. In fact, however, it lends support to our interpretation. The chapels created the transept. The right-hand chapel was shared between the Maimoni (pre-1464) and Bruni families. The left-hand one was set up in 1493 by Neri di Cristofano Fabbroni.

In the right-hand chapel we again encounter the Mother with her Child under a canopy. She is in the company of angels and saints, including one of the evangelists (this is the only remaining fragment).

There are traces that suggest other families were also involved in this holy place, one of which was certainly the Ricciardeschi family.

Other churches were similarly structured. Between 1393 and 1614, the temporary office of *gonfaloniere* passed into the hands of the Taglieschi family 25 times. They were the owners of the second altar on the left in the abbey church (*Badia*).⁴⁴

Main altar. The principle argument in support of our contention that the middle classes took possession of the sacred is the fact that the main altar belonged to the Corsi family.

It was here that the triptych of Our Lady with her Child once stood (Matteo di Giovanni from Siena; painted about 1485/1490; now in the *Propositura* church).

To her left, the figures of St. Augustine and St. Anthony are indicative of the two strands of tradition that are fused in this church.

To her right, the figures of St. Damian and St. Francis show that the monastery was engaged in providing for the sick and the poor.

Alliances. The ownership and use of chapels brought about alliances.

After the death of Prior Andrea Carroccio in 1486, the chapel was used in two (later three) different ways beside its continued use by the monks. First, it passed into the hands of the Giusti family.

In 1515, they allowed the Compagnia della Madonna del Soccorso (the Confraternity of Our Lady of Help) – another telling nomenclature – to use the chapel too.

This association, founded in 1514, invested in the chapel, commissioning a copy of the altarpiece then in Sansepolcro painted by Gerino da Pistoia (1480 to after 1529)⁴⁵, and placed it in the chapel.

It is a picture that sorely affected the hearts of the people of those times. It depicts a mother praying, while her child is being threatened by the devil. The Madonna is wielding a club to fend him off (painted about 1502; in the Sansepolcro Museo Civico).

In the context of alliances for the use of the chapel, we may also mention the following contemporary rôle models: in the third chapel on the right (the Ligi family's) we find the Franciscan preacher St. Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444), canonised in 1450, and the Dominican preacher St. Vincent Ferrer (1350-1419), canonised in 1455.⁴⁶ Their fame had spread far and wide.

The middle classes organise building operations. Building projects were to a large extent in the hands of the burghers, as can be seen from the example of Mazzone (he died in 1504), who was construction supervisor in 1470 and 1471 (*eletto operaio e soprastante alla fabbrica di S. Agostino*).

It was not only in Italy that sacred spaces were being taken over. This also happened in middling or large-size towns in German-speaking parts of Northern Europe (Strasbourg is a particularly telling example).

Later, the Reformation drew far-reaching consequences from this popular trend.

The communal body was involved in construction projects. For example, it paid for the completion of the roof in 1472.

There are other indications of the church being taken over. In 1465, the mercenary leader Mazzone paid a large sum of money to finance the newly built apse, at least in part. The new apse was built on top of the fortress tower, the *torrione*.

He let this be known by placing his coat of arms on the columns of the arch leading to the presbytery and on the façade.

The plan in Museo Taglieschi shows which parts of the church were owned by whom. There were three chapels on each side. On the left-hand side, moving from the front to the back, they belonged to the *convento*, the Galli family and the Bigliaffis; on the right, to the Ligis, the Testis and the Donis. The main altar belonged to the Corsis.

The details on the underfloor burial places show that this was the most important church in Anghiari for tombs, and that it contained the greatest number.

At the same time, the plan tells us who owned which pews. There were 15 pews on the left and 13 on the right. We can read the name of the families and, in some cases, where they lived. For example: *del territo* (from the countryside); *di piazza* (from the square); *di dentro* (from inside the town walls).

Motives and prestige. The churches in Anghiari, as institutions, funded hardly any paintings. Most were paid for by private individuals. What does this signify?

It is an expression of the self-confidence of the Tuscan middle classes, which increased at the same time as the political power of the church declined in the region. They also chose the important ritual figures.

Filppo Ducci, who donated the terracotta altarpiece in the *Badia*, must have had some particular reason for his gift. Like other families, especially those donating works to Sant'Agostino, he displayed self-confidence in placing his family in the public eye, putting their ritualised seal, their coat of arms, where all could see it. In so doing, he linked their prestige to a consecrated place.

The iconic and the presence of Man

The iconic. It is obvious that paintings have their origins in icons.⁴⁷

This form of magic is powerful in its expression. The historian Umberto Eco refers to this in his novel “The name of the rose”, when he says “One cannot escape from the arrogance of paintings”.⁴⁸

“Hardly had my eyes got used to the dark than I was plunged deep into a vision by the silent speech of painted stone, which captivates the eyes and imagination of every one of us (since *pictura est laicorum literatura*) ...”⁴⁹

Umberto Eco points out that modes of behaviour are symbolised in pictures and, in their turn, pictures have an impact on behavioural patterns. This will not always be the case, but the idea certainly makes sense.⁵⁰

Presence. If we look closely, we will see that the iconic is almost unchanged where a true-to-life human being is present, one who might have lived in this place.

At one level, we find pictures of Mary that convey her nobility and dignified behaviour. Moreover, there is a fine distinction between this level and the next: this dignified woman is depicted in human terms. We will find many such pictures, for instance in the richly appointed Pinacoteca in Siena. How did this come about?

It is linked to home economics. The importance of the housewife – above all her skills and the labour involved in converting raw produce into meals – meant she was highly regarded for many centuries. There is a parallel here to the emancipation of men in the popular movement.⁵¹

Projection. In her rôle as a mother, Mary incorporated the very heart of real life. She was the woman at the centre of the wide erotic spectrum.

Her figure was used by others to project their own feelings, she was an idol for lovers, a vehicle for the expression of intimate feelings. People honoured their own mothers in her; she was a dignified lady, distant and unapproachable. She rendered emotions civilised and represented fertility.⁵²

Softness of language. We see the human side of Mary, the Mother, in the softness of her facial expression. Softness is in many ways characteristic of Central Italy. It is present, for instance, in sentimental Italian popular songs.

Presentations of persons. For a long time, works of art were dominated by the tradition of portraiture.

A 14th century St. Anthony the Abbot once stood against the back wall, next to the entrance to Sant'Agostino chapel (later the lower church).⁵³

When the upper church was reconstructed after 1452 to incorporate the nine family chapels, a wooden statue was placed beside St. Anthony's altar. The life-size saint is seated, book in hand, facing the expectant churchgoers and giving them his blessing. This is a frequent pose, one that is assumed by present-day revue artistes.

There used to be a life-size Madonna on the façade of the Taglieschi house (it was painted in the 15th century and is now in the entrance hall of Museo Taglieschi).

Frescoes depicting Mary with her Child and, alongside them, four protective figures, including St. Francis of Assisi on the left, were painted in about 1500 on the outside of the *vicario's* palace.⁵⁴

The Augustinian canon Aurelio da Castiglione from Arezzo was preaching Lent sermons in 1515. He told of a miracle worked in Arezzo by the Madonna del Soccorso. In response to his homily, a group of people donned white garments. They met in the Guisti chapel in Sant'Agostino, had the ceiling decorated, and commissioned a costly altarpiece depicting the Madonna del Soccorso.

When the mercenary leader Agnolo Prospero died of the plague in 1521 at the age of 52, he was buried in the Franciscan church (Chiesa del Crocefisso). His portrait on the wall beside his grave depicts him in the pose of a Roman emperor.⁵⁵

Story telling. In addition to producing portraits in which persons merely assumed a pose (like television presenters nowadays), artists gradually came to tell stories.

In his work on painting, “Della Pittura” (1436), Leon Battista Alberti of Florence, a writer of theoretical treatises on art, formulated an idea that was gradually gaining ground among artists, namely that the best paintings were those that told stories.

In the provinces, it was rare to find paintings that told a story before 1500.

Around 1490/1500, a terracotta altarpiece that told two stories was bought in Florence for the *Badia*. In it, Andrea della Robbia (1435-1525)⁵⁶ told the story of the birth of Christ, a great scene done in white and blue, colours of folk art. In the base, smaller scale figures depict Christ in the tomb and several figures offering their protection (now in Museo Taglieschi).

Leonardo da Vinci: the Battle of Anghiari. In the autumn of 1503, two artists received important commissions from the Florentine authorities to depict what were, in their view, the two most important battles in the history of the Republic. The paintings were intended for the new hall built to house the

3,000 members of the largest parliament of all times.

Michelangelo (1475-1564) was to paint the Battle of Cascina (1364) fought on the Arno to the east of Pisa. Leonardo da Vinci was to paint the Battle of Anghiari (1440).

Leonardo (1452-1519) first did a painting in oils, the *disegno*, in which he set down his initial ideas (*tavola doria*).⁵⁷ He then made a number of corrections to it (as an x-ray examination has shown).

On 4th May 1504, Leonardo was awarded an official contract by the Signoria, in which the princely sum of about 3,000 ducats was agreed.⁵⁸

The artist followed up his oil sketch with cartoons, sketches for the fresco in the form of scale drawings. This *disegno* was simultaneously a plan for the colour of the paints to be used.

In June 1505, Leonardo began to paint (*colorire*) in the Council Hall.

Leonardo did not get far. He was busy with many other commissions, painting the Mona Lisa, working as a military engineer and writing on the flight of birds. The King of France lured him to his court in 1506. Piero Soderini, *gonfaloniere* of the Republic, complained bitterly that Leonardo had only made a “modest start to a great work”. In a contract signed in May 1507, Leonardo had to agree to pay back 150 ducats of the original 160 ducats advanced to him.

His earnings thus totalled 10 ducats.

We are left with nothing but his designs. They are evidence of Leonardo's interest in the passions of people and animals. Man and beast are intertwined like furies, fighting for a symbol: the flag.

In his book “On painting”, Vasari described Leonardo's studies on garments as “miracles”, believing they should be judged in terms of the life they exuded. Leonardo – and many others – knew a body should not be overwhelmed by draperies. The way a garment fell depended on the quality of the material. The bodily form should be discernible, so that the garment appeared alive, inhabited by a living person.⁵⁹

In the 16th century, many painters and engravers copied the Battle of Anghiari.⁶⁰ In 1605, Peter Paul Rubens drew a group of horsemen based on Leonardo's sketch (in the Louvre, Paris).

Wolf Vostell painted a paraphrase of the Battle of Anghiari.⁶¹ He was prompted by the occasion when a student of veterinary medicine from the German Saarland seriously damaged a painting by Barnett Newman with a bar (Vostell had drawn up the catalogue). Vostell's topic was aggression.

Artists

We know hardly any names of painters from the Upper Tiber Valley. Even in Sansepolcro, painting as a profession was a rarity. Artists gathered in cities like Siena and Florence.

Shopping in Siena. Most commissions went to artists in the large cities, because painting and sculpture were rare art forms. Figures were based on those that originated in the city of Siena, where fully developed works that enjoyed widespread popularity were produced. This was why, for many years, artists looked to Siena.

Shortly after 1300, the Sienese sculptor Tino di Camaino (born in Siena around 1285, died in Naples in 1337)⁶² was commissioned to produce a statue of the Madonna for the eastern side-altar in the Abbey church (*Badia*). Around 1300, he was working in Pisa.

Tino was one of the most important artists of his time. He translated the courtly elegance and lyricism developed in France into city culture.

A second commission went to Siena. The confraternity involved in hospital administration, the

Compagnia di Santa Maria della Misericordia, placed an order for a statue by Jacopo della Quercia around 1420 (the date is inscribed on it). It was destined for a church and was a painted wooden sculpture of Mary with her Child (now in Museo Taglieschi).⁶³

Florence. In the 15th century, Florence joined Siena to form a second artistic hub. Siena remained fascinating, and it was not until the 16th century that Florence largely took over from Siena.

In 1446, the mercenary leader Gregorio d'Anghiari donated 100 florins for the embellishment (*abbellimento*) of the Abbey's main altar. The Florentine painter Piero di Lorenzo (1398-1451) produced an altarpiece "in the Greek style, on wood with a gilt surround".⁶⁴

A terracotta altarpiece in folk-art style (c. 1490/1500) was produced by Andrea della Robbia (1435-1525)⁶⁵ for the *Badia* (now in Museo Taglieschi). It depicts a lively scene with the newborn Child, his Mother and St. Joseph, St. Francis of Assisi and one of the evangelists, all elegantly framed by columns with capitals and beams.

A 15th century Madonna of Mercy (the Madonna della Misericordia now in the Chiesa della Propositura) came from the della Robbia workshop. It is in terracotta and coloured blue and white. Two angels are crowning a beautiful figure of Our Lady. On her left stand male saints of various generations, one in armour, and female saints are ranged on her right. All age groups – from childhood to old age – are represented.

Local painters. We only know of one such artist – Maestro Antonio d'Anghiari.⁶⁶ As a person, he remains a mystery.

Very little is known about him; most is speculation. Maestro Antonio is mentioned in several documents. We learn that he produced works in Sansepolcro and Rassina, and that he collaborated with the painter Ottaviano Nelli in Sansepolcro between 1430 and 1446.

He may have painted the figure of Justice in the town hall court room. We may assume he painted several of the frescoes in Sant'Agostino (the Madonna with her Child giving his blessing and Saints Sebastian, Roch and Mary Magdalene). They were painted in the first half of the 15th century, presumably by one and the same artist. Were they painted by a local man? If so, was it Antonio d'Anghiari?⁶⁷

We also know that Piero della Francesca from nearby Sansepolcro was apprenticed to Maestro Antonio. It is likely that Piero lived in Antonio's house in Anghiari for a period of two years.

Maestro Antonio got into political trouble by accepting a commission from the enemy. Having agreed to paint an enemy standard, he was branded as a traitor, banned and forced to emigrate to Arezzo.

To this day, no-one has been able to identify any of his works.

It was unusual for a great painter like Piero della Francesca (c.1410/1420-1492) to remain in the neighbouring town of Sansepolcro, but there was a particular reason for this. Piero and his two brothers were involved in the family textile business⁶⁸, which meant he earned his living mainly by commerce and not by painting.

Artists who emigrated. In 1400, mercenary troops destroyed the Santa Croce convent of the Poor Clares. The General Council had a chapel built on the ruins in 1421 (Via della Bozia).⁶⁹

A picture was donated, a painting by a Florentine artist who came of a highly regarded family in Anghiari, and who was born in the town some time before 1400. His name was Antonio di Giovanni Gorgieri di Anghiari.⁷⁰ He only received payment for the blue paint he used, which was expensive.⁷¹ He is said to have painted the picture in the Cappella del Beato Giovanni alla Verna in 1429.

The *maestro* did receive commissions as well. In 1425 he was paid “per depentura de la maestà de la Croce”, commissioned by the Compagnia di Santa Maria della Misericordia (Compagnia Nera). In 1451, he painted Our Lady together with St. Roch, the patron saint of plague victims in the Bigliaffi chapel in the *Badia*.

In 1429, he was at work in La Verna, in the chapel of Beato Giovanni alla Verna⁷². It was built by Count Simon, son of Count Guido da Battifolle.⁷³

Similarly, the painter Matteo di Giovanni (1430-1495) came from Sansepolcro but went to Siena to work. By 1452, he had joined the artist Vecchietta's circle, and he spent most of his life there. It would appear from his paintings that he visited Florence and studied the works of his fellow artists. Presumably it was through the offices of relatives that he received commissions to paint for his native Sansepolcro⁷⁴ and Anghiari.

In 1447, “the name Anghiari became famous as a result of writings by the graphic artist Bartolomeo”. These were published in a book that appeared in Venice in that same year. It was dedicated to “*Nobilibus Viris Prioribus, et cognita Partis Guelfe communis Anglaris*”.⁷⁵ He was probably another artist who had emigrated.

Francesco Nenci (1781-1850)⁷⁶, a painter and illustrator, was born into a poor family in Anghiari. Father Doni, a priest, was his benefactor, as was the Countess of Montauto. They paid for him to study in Florence. This excellent artist later rose to become Director of the Academy in Siena.⁷⁷

Artists moving to Anghiari were few and far between. The sculptor Maestro Santi di Benedetto di Santi da Settignano moved to Anghiari soon after the middle of the 15th century. He brought avant-garde art to the provincial town from Florence, above all via architectural details. As the avant-garde became important during a phase of modernisation, the *maestro* received many commissions and settled permanently in Anghiari.⁷⁸

He probably created two important façades, those of Sant'Agostino (1472) and Palazzo Taglieschi.

He also sculpted the altarpiece dedicated to Our Lady and St. Matthew that Matteo Cane donated to the Abbey in 1461 in connection with his family tomb. It is an altarpiece with pillars and arches primarily in honour of his patron saint.

Florence takes the lead. In the 16th century, when people in Anghiari wanted to have pictures painted, they turned to Florence. There were several reasons for this. Good painters were few and far between, and they tended to congregate in certain cities. Moreover, along with Antwerp and Venice, Florence was home to the largest number of great artists in the world.

Besides, rule by princes resulted in a centralising tendency. Many in the provinces were gradually becoming aware of this fact.

We can get a good idea of the typical commission being placed in Florence from the pictures we find in Anghiari, which will represent the average type of painting.

Although secular culture was extremely well developed, paintings in the provincial town were still more or less restricted to religious subjects. The occasion for commissioning a work was usually a singular religious happening, like a miracle.

On the other hand, there is no getting away from the fact that realistic portraiture was typically ambiguous. Religious figures bore the stamp of secular Florentine culture in their appearance, behaviour and fashion.

Sad to say, art historians of a later age, who have been all too eager to concentrate on the greatest artists and have been unwilling to develop an interest in social history, have largely overlooked those

artists who produced works for normal commissions.

To an even greater extent, they have ignored the producers of artistic handicraft, whose works were of even greater importance in Florence than those of so-called serious artists. No town in the world had so many workshops with skilled craftsmen. Unlike painting, handicraft was a well-developed art form in Tuscan provincial towns.

In Anghiari, many works of art have been preserved, both paintings and handicraft. This is because the populace has always placed a high value on them. In the 20th century, both the art college and Museo Taglieschi were the result of this tradition.

Pictures of a different kind. Times of crisis, epidemics and wars were described in detail in the diaries of Luca Landucci of Florence (second half of the 15th century) and Lorenzo Taglieschi of Anghiari (1614). The diarists paint a picture of a kind of counter-utopia – of a people longing for meaning and orientation in their lives, yearning to trust their fellow men.

They faced up to reality, despite the disasters of their times. This reality was meaningful to them, it formed part of their experience, and they held on to it as if it were a kind of dream.

Subtle reform. Around 1500, at the time of the Reformation north of the Alps, Tuscany also experienced a subtle reform of religious life. Fresh attention was paid to the figure of Jesus, His life, His passion and the legacy of the Last Supper. The lay confraternities were very influential in this Christocentric movement. They commissioned works from many artists and tolerated modern forms of portrayal.⁷⁹

One of the most important examples of this movement was a large painting by the artist Domenico Puligo of Anghiari.

Domenico di Bartolomeo Ubaldini da Marradi *detto* (also known as) Puligo (1492-1527)⁸⁰ lived in Florence, and for many years worked with Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio (son of Domenico). He joined several fellow artists in following Fra Bartolomeo (1472/1475-1517) and Andrea del Sarto (1486-1530), who was also his friend.

At the age of 23, in 1515, Puligo painted an altarpiece for the chapel of the Compagnia del Corpus Domini (the former seat of the Misericordia). It shows the body of Jesus being taken down from the Cross. The complex composition is unusual, although such complexity was very much sought after at this time (Sodoma in Siena, Filippino Lippi in Florence, Rosso Fiorentino in Volterra and Sansepolcro are all examples of this). The scene is crowded with figures and full of movement, with the personages interacting and taking notice of each other. It is full of drama, a powerful expression of a moment in time; it creates an intense feeling for that particular event.

The painting cost 26 florins. The art historian Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) mentioned it in his book and praised it greatly “Fece ad Anghiari in una compagnia un Deposto di Croce, il quale fu tenuto dell'opere sue la migliore.”⁸¹

Vasari described how tastes were changing, although he failed to provide an analysis “... apprese il colorito vaghissimo, e quello continuò con maniera abbagliata, con perdere i contorni ne gli scuri de' suoi colori, che piacendogli dare alle sue figure una aria gentile, fece in sua gioventù infiniti quadri con buona grazia.”

Basically, there was an increase in subjectivity, as a result of the intensity of the treatment of the persons depicted. Painters were more interested in a greater intensity of emotions than in precise details of scenery. They offered viewers what seemed like an almost dreamlike, slightly misty view (Vasari used the expression “fumeggiata maniera”).

Many of Puligo's fellow artists in Florence, having studied paintings by Leonardo da Vinci and modified his methods, painted in the same way. Vasari identified a second characteristic of their style – it was gentle and soft (“*colorito dolce e di morbidezza*”). He implied that pictures could be a source of enjoyment, which meant they were easier to sell. All this was happening at a time when not only holy places but also wealthy individuals were looking to buy paintings. Thus, there was also a tendency for pictures to become private in character.

Vasari said Puligo was a man of great talents, but unfortunately not very hard working or ambitious. He liked a good life and a merry one, enjoying himself with musicians and others, and he also “had certain love affairs with a number of women”. He refused an offer to work at the royal court in Hungary, preferring to remain in Florence. During an outbreak of the plague there in 1527, he met with an early death, at the age of 35.

In 1785, during the period of secularisation, the painting was hung in Santa Maria del Fosso (the *Propositura* church), which became the parish church of San Bartolomeo in 1787. The picture was supposed to go to Florence together with Sogliani's great painting of the Last Supper.

The painter Giovanni Antonio Sogliani (1492-1544) was apprenticed to Lorenzo di Credi. Like Puligo, he was a follower of Fra Bartolomeo and worked in Florence as his assistant in the workshop behind the Duomo in 1512/1514. In his day, he enjoyed a reputation as a successful painter of pleasing works.⁸²

In 1531, the Confraternity of the Compagnia Nera di Santa Maria della Misericordia, through their agents Marco del Borgo and Giovanni Mariotti, commissioned Sogliani to paint them a picture of Christ's Last Supper with the Apostles.

The design of the picture is rather unusual. We see a secular interior with very high chairs against the walls. The life-size figures seem to be alive.⁸³ St. Peter is entering the room through a large doorway. The effect of the huge picture is like architecture. This impression is intensified by an aedicular frame with pilasters supporting an architrave. Berto del Borgo, a woodwork specialist from neighbouring Sansepolcro, produced the frame.

A second spatially less ambitious picture shows Christ washing the Apostles' feet (*cenacolo*).

According to Giorgio Vasari, the picture had been painted for one of the confraternities, the Compagnia del Castello di Anghiari, and was greatly revered.

The pictures fulfil two criteria that Vasari considered the most important for artistic activity. First, the figures are so natural they appear to be alive. Second, the artist was even able to outdo nature through his composition.

A new keyword was introduced into Vasari's theory: “grace” (*grazia*) in collocation with such words as sweetness, gentleness, deftness, ease, lightness, naturalness, pleasing to look at.⁸⁴

Vasari's theory gave voice to a wide-ranging debate. As early as 1507, Baldassare Castiglione's work “*Cortegiano*” contained a lengthy discussion on graceful behaviour in our dealings with other people.⁸⁵

In 1783, Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo ordered both paintings to be hung in the *Propositura* church.

A painted canopy. In the context of rivalry with the Compagnia Nera, the Compagnia del Crocifisso had a canopy made in Florence for use in processions.⁸⁶

The painter Niccolò Soggi. In order to increase people's reverence for a miraculous vision (1536), the already famous painter Niccolò Soggi (born in Monte San Savino in 1480, died in Arezzo pre-1552)⁸⁷ received a commission that would appear strange to us nowadays. He was asked to copy an

apparently contemporary painting of the Madonna hanging in Mariotto di Luca Ciarpieri's house.

A twelve-year-old shepherdess had a miraculous vision of the Madonna. The girl maintained resolutely that the Madonna had looked exactly as she did in the Soggi picture. This was how she had wished to be revered. We see here the power of paintings to make a deep impression.

The artist depicts the Madonna, the Child Jesus and the young St. John as a contemporary family group, incorporating ideas on fashion and good looks from his time. Mary is a beautiful, motherly woman with a soft expression. The two children are plump, their sign language is lively.

It would seem the artist was working in circles surrounding Raffael Sanzio (1482-1520) and more particularly Andrea del Sarto (1486-1530).

A large crowd fetched the painting from the house and brought it to Santa Maria del Carmine, the chapel by the chestnut tree. The original is the more important, as the Ciarpieri family were given the copy.

The building of the chapel immediately sparked off one of the constantly erupting disputes between various groups. Some felt an expensive church of this kind and the religious house attached to it would enhance, and be better suited to, the fortress of Anghiari.⁸⁸

A miraculous painting of Mary. In 1559, the miracle-working picture of the Madonna (simulacrum) was carried from Santa Croce church to that of San Martino in the *cassero* and placed on the altar there. Taglieschi said the intention was to increase reverence for, and the prestige of, this church.⁸⁹ Paintings were also used for promotional purposes.

The artist Domenico Passignano (Domenico Cresti) (1558/1560-1636). In Lent 1575, a Capuchin friar and preacher founded a new congregation in the Franciscan church of Santa Croce, the Compagnia della santissima concezione di Maria vergine. However, progress was slow, and it was not until 14 years later (1599) that an altarpiece was finished. The painting was donated by the Nuti family and commissioned by Papo Nuti, a doctor, and his brother Niccolò for 63 florins. The artist who received the commission was an "excellent" one (*eccelentissimo pittore*), Domenico Passignano, known to art historians as Domenico Cresti.⁹⁰

The artist Matteo Rosselli (1578-1650)⁹¹ of Florence was extremely successful both as a painter and as a teacher. He painted a crucifixion for the Franciscan church of Santa Croce (now in Museo Taglieschi). The *castello*, the old walled city, can be seen at the bottom.

The artist Carlo Dolci (1616-1668).⁹² Behind the main altar of the Franciscan church of Santa Croce, there hangs a dramatic painting. The scene is Jerusalem, where St. Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, found the True Cross. In the background we see monumental columns and a twilight sky. Three men are raising the heavy wooden cross. The picture is a reminder of the cross that St. Francis erected on this spot. It was painted by the successful Florentine artist Carlo Dolci, who was held in high regard at the court of the Grand Duke of Florence.

Museo Taglieschi

Museo Taglieschi is a treasure trove of works that are important for the social history of our survey.

The museum, like the *Propositura* church, is evidence of the fact that many pictures were moved from their original locations after 1785.⁹³

On the left of the entrance hall, we see a painting by an unknown Tuscan artist, a fresco removed from the façade of the Taglieschi house (15th century). It depicts Mary painted as a ruling personage

with her Child beneath a monumental arch. The person who commissioned it used it to sanctify his house.

On the opposite side there is a picture (1500/1510 by Benedetto and Santi Buglioni) from the treasury of the Bargello Museum in Florence. The scene is a broad semicircle of town and countryside, which in those days were viewed as being closely connected. It was probably Florence with its many towers. Water is at the heart of the picture: the Samaritan woman is drawing water from a well. She is engaged in a lively conversation with Jesus. The picture originally hung in Sant'Onofrio's monastery in Florence. The picture comprises coloured terracotta fragments fitted together like a jigsaw puzzle. It is remarkable in that the two faces remain unglazed.

On the left, we find a painted 15th century recess in the old counting house. It was previously in Casa Sassolini in Castelfranco di Sopra in the Arno Valley. Once again, we encounter the Mother with her Child. Both are elegantly dressed. In the eyes of the patron, it was obvious that Mary and Jesus belonged to the upper middle class. However, two very poor people appear beside them – St. John the Baptist, living as a hermit in the desert, and the *Poverello*, St. Francis of Assisi. Even at the time of painting, such contradictions were obviously not a stumbling block. Blue, the most expensive paint beside gold at that time, was used for the garments and in the background. Just as important as the rich clothing was the expression of affection between Mother and Child – an important relationship in everyday life.

There follow three stone reliefs (14th century). They express emotions, especially pity.

A further (partially preserved) fresco shows the Mother breast-feeding her Child. This “Madonna del Latte” (14th century) reflects an existential and widespread worry among families that a mother might not have enough milk to feed her newborn child, causing it to starve. St. Francis is again at her side. We encounter him almost everywhere in these parts.

The Madonna breast-feeding is also to be seen in a 14th century fresco on the other wall. This picture is from the Taglieschi house.

We then come across three 14th century sculptures of saints. They are upright, elegant and lively figures of great simplicity. The sculptor may have been familiar with the sculptures of Giovanni Pisano in Pisa and Siena.

The next picture (from the 15th century) is by an unknown artist. It used to hang over the Madonna del Latte in the Taglieschi house. In this work, the Mother has her naked Child on her lap. She is a woman of beauty, dressed as usual in a red dress with a blue cloak. Another loose and expensive piece of fabric is draped over her chair.

The next fresco, from the second half of the 14th century, was also in the Taglieschi house. It is a symbolic picture of the Lamb of God.

On the right-hand side of the first-floor hall, we again come across the Mother with her Child. It is a very lively scene. An angel seems to be presenting the pious Mother with her Child. What a splendid child he is! The work, by the two Buglioni masters, is from about 1500/1510 and is in terracotta, similar to works produced in the Della Robbia workshop. This type of work is much cheaper to produce than a painted altarpiece. It used to be in the Bargello Museum.

The fifteenth century sculpture by an unknown master beside it came from the Chiesa di Casenovole in Anghiari. It is of a Madonna seated, wearing a white robe. At first she seems to be posed stiffly, but if we look closer she seems to be speaking.

The next picture seems rhetorically similar. Mother and Child adopt a pose that had its origins in

ancient times and is still adopted by television presenters. There are a few signs on the Madonna's white gown (as in the previous sculpture), but her clothing is much plainer than the rich garments in other pictures, presumably to fit in with a rural location. The sculpture comes from the church of Saints Lorentino and Pergentino (Molin Nuovo) in Pieve di Ranco. The two figures are no longer the beautiful people of the rich urban middle classes, but ordinary country folk.

On the left side of the other wall there are two further early 16th century works in terracotta that were produced in the great Della Robbia studio in Florence, which at one time supplied half of Tuscany with reasonably priced sculptures. The studio used clichéd poses, but knew how to make the figures seem full of life.

There is next a further rhetorical figure (from the 15th century), who is clearly presenting written characters that only some highly educated persons could read at that time; maybe not even they could read them. St. Anthony the Abbot is seated. He is a scholarly and pious man with an impressive face and eyes that command authority. He is the patron saint of farmers.

We have already come across the artists who produced the next few works in terracotta – they are the 16th century masters Benedetto and Santi Buglioni. They demonstrate in an attractive folk-art way the amazement aroused by the Child Jesus. In this case, he is joined by the young St. John. These circular pictures are always framed with the riches of nature.

The final sculpture in this room is the oldest of all. It depicts the stereotype of the Madonna as a rich lady on an elegant seat, with her Child on her lap, gesturing with his hands. Even in works from these early times (13th century) it is clear what most of them were aiming for: liveliness.

Stone masonry from around 1500 by Maestro Santi da Settignano forms the surrounds of the doorways and fireplaces.

In the next small corner-room we find one of the many altarpieces done by Andrea della Robbia of Florence (1435-1525). Filippo Ducci da Catena donated the altarpiece to the Anghiari Abbey church (*Badia*) in 1472. His coat of arms appears on the side, as a permanent memorial to himself. Two scenes are shown one above the other against a backdrop of elegant architecture. Christ's birth appears as if on a stage; the figures are large. Below the birth scene, the subject of death appears on a smaller scale. Death also includes the Resurrection. The people of the time were fascinated by bright and cheerful colours. Other colours – yellow, yellow ochre and brown – were not found on elegant artists' palettes, and were considered by the rich to be unfashionable.

The best sculpture of all stands in the next small room. It was done by the sculptor Jacopo della Quercia (1367-1438)⁹⁴ of Siena. It depicts the Mother, a strong personality, facing us. Her Child could almost be seen in terms of emancipation. This is an impressive extension of the traditional stereotype – the upstanding Child is running through the room. Master James of the Oak (Jacopo della Quercia) produced his best works in Lucca, including the earliest depiction of the phenomenon of sleep (*Ilaria del Carretto* in the *Duomo*).

In the small room at the back, we first encounter a portrait of a man dressed in the Spanish fashion. The Madonna della Misericordia (18th century by C. Fusai) is a cry for help in one of the many disasters.

There is a second portrait, that of Federigo Nomi (born in Anghiari in 1633, died in Monterchi in 1705). He is also clad in Spanish dress and is standing in front of his study, looking at us sceptically.

He was a man of letters, having received an education as a *maestro di retoria*. In 1671, he was called to Pisa to take over the post of rector of the *Collegio Ducale*. In 1674 he was appointed

Professor of Feudal Law (*diritto feudale*). Suddenly, however, for some as yet unknown reason, his career took a downward turn, and in 1682 he was sent to Monterchi, to act as parish priest. While he was there he wrote the poem *Il Catorcio*, about the theft of the key to the Anghiari town gate. In the 15 cantos in *ottava rima*, all the characters of the Tiber Valley put in an appearance. The poem was not printed until 1830, long after his death.⁹⁵

A niche from a house in Arezzo (Casa Tonelli) has been inserted into the wall. The stereotype “Mother and Child” has been expanded – the Child is now a young boy. The Holy Spirit in the form of a dove hovers above him; Saints John and Gregory stand to the left and right of him. The colours and forms suggest the artist was familiar with the paintings of Michelangelo.

We next come to the staircase. On the right-hand wall of the stairwell we find several pictures expressing gratitude for miracles wrought. We see that a red dress and a blue over-garment were customary forms of everyday clothing. We also see what beds looked like in those days, and how they were used.

One flight of stairs higher, and we find a room with 18th and 19th century figures done in the style of folk-art, mostly very much alive. The fashions they are wearing are rendered with great attention to detail.

The great hall on the second floor houses a collection of pictures on a monumental scale from the 16th and 17th centuries.

To the right, we see a cruel scene, in which Jesus is being tortured, painted by an unknown 17th century master. The atmosphere is bleak – paintings of this era paid increasing attention to atmosphere, which became the most important subject of their works. On the other hand, this trend was countered by other pictures that were vast in size.

Matteo Rosselli (1578-1651) depicted the ignominy of the Crucifixion. This painting used to hang in the Franciscan church in Anghiari.

On the east wall, next to the window, there hangs a 17th century painting of the Madonna spreading out her protective cloak – a picture to hang in a private house and not in a church. A mysterious dark scene with the Holy Family was painted in 1624 by Giovanni Battista Ghidoni da Cremona.

We are then confronted with a 17th century crucifixion scene, excellently painted. The faces of the bystanders are full of wonder.

A smaller picture of St. Peter, his body swathed in voluminous draperies, must have formed part of a larger group. The artist was Giovanni Antonio Sogliani (1492-1544) [...].

The Franciscan church in Anghiari was formerly also home to a painting by Jacopo Vignali (1592-1664). Life-size figures, among them the Madonna with a rosary, are standing against the background of a landscape.

**Notes on:
Aesthetics (10.)**

1 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 66. “... e fu peccato dell'ignoranza di quel secolo, che le case furono mal compartite e le strade non furono ordinate con diretta linea, ma assai casualmente poste, como si vede ancora.”

2 Günter, 1985, 131.

3 Quoted in Schumacher , 1977, 67/68.

4 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 66. “A i cittadini fu concesso il poter far la torre alle case loro, che era gran

- privilegio, le quali poi furono deroccate e ridotte in columbaie.”¹
- 5 Braunschweig-Kühl 1992, 1, 1992.
- 6 Braunfels, 1988, 116.
- 7 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 141/142.
- 8 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 142.
- 9 If you look at the Town Tower [..., ...] you will notice that the ashlar cornerstones at bell-chamber level stick out by a finger's breadth – evidence of a plastered surface. The same can be seen on a 14th century building in Vico del Poeta. Compare the present-day plaster on the façade of the Town Hall [...]. – The plaster has now gone from most of the houses. Gian Franco di Pietro says: “This throws up difficult questions for conservationists and preservers of monuments. There was one house where the window setting blocks protruded by between three and five centimetres. I suggested plastering the façade. The conservationists said no. They reasoned that unplastered walls were now irrevocably characteristic of the town. Secondly, the wall was an object lesson in architecture. The Old Town of San Giovanni Valdarno was for the most part free of plaster. The fact that the Office for the Conservation of Monuments refuses to re-plaster such walls means that a town that is Florentine in character is now becoming Sienese.”
- 10 An extension was built on to the front of the Taglieschi House (Piazza Mamelì); indoors, one can still see where it was joined on to the older (probably 14th century) building.
- 11 Other superstructures are: Via del Teatro; 1 Via 25 Luglio, where the superstructure over Via di Circonvallazione was built in the 1990s; 9 Via Bozia, where it spans the road to the garden on the other side; no. 27 to no. 12 Via Bozia.
- 12 See Braunfels, 1966.
- 13 Compare Arezzo and Lucca.
- 14 Braunfels 1953, 123. Sermon no. 94. Florence 1830.
- 15 Babbini/Benedettini, 1987, Fig. 31/32.
- 16 They also imitated the architecture of Antiquity; the wooden door to the baptistery [...] is an imitation of much more expensive bronze doors.
- 17 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 201/202.
- 18 Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 91
- 19 Quoted in Schumacher, 1977, 23/24, 26.
- 20 The Counter-Reformation later brought opulent elements of triumphalism into the unadorned rooms.
- 21 See Günter/Günter, 1988. Günter 2003.
- 22 This is visible in the not always entirely accurate drawing in Codice Taglieschi, 1624.
- 23 Unfortunately, traffic detracts from the impact [...].
- 24 For a long time, the lower nobility lacked a ceremonial hall. There was no room for one in a tower, but space was created if a new wing was built on. These additions were based on burgher-style houses. The inside of the hall was copied from those of the higher nobility, which in turn had their origins in royal palaces and town halls.
- 25 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 366.
- 26 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 366.
- 27 The term “palazzo” was not in common use until the end of the 15th century.
- 28 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 204.
- 29 Confraternità, 1989, 4.
- 30 Thieme-Becker, XXIV, 256/257.
- 31 Scuola aretina (14th century), Madonna del Latte from the Taglieschi house in Anghiari. – An almost life-size fresco depicting the Madonna, seated on a princely chair, breast-feeding her Child, originally from Casa Peruzzi in Anghiari. Mary Magdalene, with long tresses, and another female saint are depicted on a much smaller scale. To one side, St. Francis of Assisi, a very important figure in these parts, is depicted almost life size. – Another picture of Mother and Child together with St. John the Baptist and St. Francis of Assisi in an alcove with a pointed arch (15th century Florentine) is from Casa Sassolini in Castelfranco di Sopra. – Casa Taglieschi also contains a relatively large fresco of the Agnus Dei from the Late Middle Ages (2nd half of the 14th century).
- 32 There is another picture of the “Madonna che allatta il Bambino” in the chapel in Villa Sterpeto.
- 33 See Dini's excellent study, 1983, 1985.
- 34 There are other depictions of the Mother and Child in Museo Taglieschi in Anghiari, e.g. a painted wooden statue (13th century).
- 35 Thieme-Becker, XXVIII, 414.

- 36 Ruf, 1985.
- 37 St. Anthony of Padua (born in Lisbon c. 1195, died in Padua 1231) first joined the Augustinian Order, then the Franciscans. He was the first Franciscan whom St. Francis charged with the teaching of theology, sending him to teach the brothers in Bologna. St. Anthony travelled throughout the south of France and Italy. He was canonised as early as May 1232. Parents vow to give bread or grain to the poor in return for his protection of their children.
- 38 Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 90/94.
- 39 See Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 75 et seqq. for the sources. On p.79, they claim the monks meeting in chapter, or sometimes the provincial of the order, granted the various chapels to the families concerned, announcing their decision by the ringing of bells. However, I should like to put a different interpretation on this. I believe they agreed to a proposal put forward by the middle-class families themselves. Secular society was increasingly gaining the upper hand in arrangements between itself and the church.
- 40 See Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 79/80.
- 41 All the figures, with the exception of Harvest, are reproduced in Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 79/84.
- 42 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 187/188, 191. In 1446, Francesco Sforza gave Castello di Lonzano in Romagna to his mercenary leader Gregorio d'Anghiari, also known as Gregorio Mazzoni. In 1502, "Valentino" Borgia seized the castle, and Gregorio's son had to surrender his property in order to avoid being killed (Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 191).
- 43 He was a theologian and prior of the monastery for many years. From 1485 until his death in 1486 he was provincial of his order in Umbria.
- 44 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 14/15.
- 45 Gerino da Pistoia (1480 to after 1529 in Pistoia) was a long-time assistant to the painter Perugino and a friend of Pinturicchio. He painted in the Umbrian style. He worked in Pistoia and, from 1502 to 1529, in Sansepolcro. Thieme-Becker, XIII, 467/468. Touring Club Italiano, Toscana (non compresa Firenze), Milano 1959, 245, 309, 310, 316, 318, 450, 471, 496.
- 46 Vincentius Ferrerius (Valencia 1346-Brittany 1419) converted Jews and Saracens in Spain. He preached in Spain, the south of France, Switzerland, Piedmont, and in England, Scotland and Ireland.
- 47 See Belting 1990.
- 48 Eco, 1982, 84.
- 49 Eco, 1982, 57.
- 50 Eco, 1982, 62. "Instantly [the speaker, the monk Adson, was looking at a picture of the Day of Judgement in the abbey church] I knew my vision spoke of nothing but the evil happenings in this abbey, such as we had heard of from the hesitant lips of the abbot. And I was to return there many times in the next few days to marvel at the portal, secure in my feeling that I was experiencing the very story the pictures told. And I realised we had come to this place to witness a mighty intervention from Heaven."
- 51 It was not until the process of re-feudalisation in the 16th century that patriarchal tendencies came to the fore. – The position of women did not become critical until their work declined in significance during a certain phase of industrialisation, when the conversion of raw foodstuffs into meals became rationalised.
- 52 See Dini, 1983, 1985. Maetzke, 1996. – Ignoto maestro umbro; Madonna in trono con Bambino. First half of the 13th century (p. 72 and illustration), painted on wood. 1006x37. Museo di Palazzo Taglieschi. From Santa Maria a Casale near Anghiari. Laura Speranza in the magazine bellezza 2002, 75/77 and illustration – Madonna seduta (first half of the 14th century), painted on wood. 150x82x54. Dressed in a white cloak. Museo Statale di Palazzo Taglieschi. From the parish church of Casanova. Not placed on the main altar of the church until 1583. Paola Recife in the magazine bellezza 2002, 104/107 and illustration – Jacopo Vignali, Madonna del Rosario. Museo di Palazzo Taglieschi in Anghiari (p. 33 and illustration).
- 53 Only one fragment depicting his head has been preserved. See Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 18 and illustration p. 15.
- 54 The picture has been painted over several times and has been badly preserved.
- 55 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 247/248.
- 56 Thieme/Becker, XXVIII, 414.
- 57 For many years it was held to be a copy by an unknown Tuscan artist. It was not until 1972 that Carlo Pedretti attributed the painting to Leonardo; it was finally attributed to him by Friedrich Piel, following lengthy debates. The work came into the possession of a Genoese family in 1651, but turned up in the Hoffmann collection in Munich in 1983. Its present-day whereabouts are unknown. – The following text is based on Friedrich Piel's research. Piel, 1989, 83/97.
- 58 Lessing, 1935.
- 59 Leonardo da Vinci, 1991.

- 60 Machucha, 1992. Illustration p. 32.
- 61 Vostell, 1983, p.4.
- 62 He was a pupil of Giovanni Pisano, a sculptor who was engaged in the building of the cathedrals of Siena and Pisa. Tino followed his master to Pisa after some delay, shortly after 1300. In 1312, he held a senior position in the cathedral workshop there. In 1315, he received a commission to execute the funerary monument for Emperor Henry VII of Luxembourg, to be placed in the cathedral apse. He held the courtesy title of "caput magister". He was obviously a man of particular political persuasions, as he secretly left the Ghibelline city of Pisa in 1315 to fight on the side of the Guelphs in the Battle of Montecatini. He stayed on in Siena and held a position as capomaestro in the cathedral workshop there from 1320. In 1321, he moved to Florence, but was then appointed to a position in Naples on account of his Guelph sympathies in 1323. He was extremely successful there, both as an architect and an engineer, and finally as the artistic director at the court. Thieme-Becker, XXXIII, 184/186 (not listed). Tino di Camaino, Madonna col Bambino (c. 1317). Wood, polychrome paint. 147X71x23. Side altar on the eastern side of the Badia di San Bartolomeo. Paola Recife in the magazine bellezza 2002, 131/135 and illustration.
- 63 For this statue see Maetzke in "Scultura dipinta", 1987.
- 64 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 192. "Alla greca, con fondo e lavoro di legname per intorno tutto d'oro." Thieme-Becker, XXVII, 22 (not listed).
- 65 Thieme-Becker, XXVIII, 414.
- 66 On the question of the lack of painters see Babbini, 1989, 179/180. Matteoli, 1987.
- 67 The following authors dispute the fact that it was Maestro Antonio d'Anghiari: Chiasserini, 1951, Donati, 1991, Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 80/81.
- 68 Günter, 1984, Günter/Günter, 1990, Günter, 1995, 113/(
- 69 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 155.
- 70 Not mentioned in Thieme-Becker.
- 71 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 155.
- 72 Taglieschi, Annali, 1991, 16. No picture has been preserved that can be attributed to him with any certainty. In 1427, he was commissioned to paint an altarpiece for San Francesco in San Sepolcro. Thieme-Becker, I, 593.
- 73 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 160.
- 74 He painted the side panels (showing Saints Peter and Paul) for the altarpiece that later grew up around the centre painting "The baptism of Christ" done by Piero della Francesca for St. John the Baptist's chapel in the former abbey church of Sansepolcro. The panels were financed by the Graziani family, and are now in the Museo Civico Sansepolcro. His triptych of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and four saints (1487) is in the Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Servi in Sansepolcro.
- 75 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 223. Not mentioned in Thieme-Becker.
- 76 Thieme-Becker, XXV, 388.
- 77 Nenci, 1987. The Accademia Petrarca in Arezzo has an extensive collection of documents, including over one thousand letters.
- 78 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 202.
- 79 Casciu, 1998, 7/8.
- 80 Thieme-Becker, XXVII, 459. TCI, Toscana (non compresa Firenze). Milano 1959, 161, 465, 634. Casciu, 1998.
- 81 Vasari, 1550. Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 238.
- 82 Georgio Vasari: "Molto piaceva la sua maniera, facendo l'arie pietose ed in quel modo che pacciono a coloro che senza dilettarsi delle fatiche dell'arte e di certe bravure, amano le cose oneste, facili, dolci e graziose." Thieme-Becker, XXXI, 213/214. See also Thieme-Becker, II, 561 (Fra Bartolomeo). TCI, Toscana (non compresa Firenze). Milano, 1959, 101, 102, 132, 135, 161, 348, 465. Kunst des Cinquecento, 1992, 230, 236.
- 83 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 281, with further details. It cost 112 florins and 50 bushels of grain.
- 84 Blunt, 1984, 62ff.
- 85 Castiglione, 1986 (written c. 1507).
- 86 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 281, with further details.
- 87 Thieme-Becker, XXXI, 212 (not listed). His family came from Arezzo; in 1507 he worked as an assistant in Perugino's workshop in Florence; in 1513 he was in Rome, but returned to Florence, joining Vasari's circle. After 1522, we believe he was living in a house on Piazza San Domenico in Arezzo. He was also a fortress engineer. TCI, Toscana (non compresa Firenze). Milano, 1959, 344, 423, 429, 430, 432, 467.

- 88 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 286/287.
- 89 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 317/318.
- 90 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 339/340. Thieme-Becker, XXVI, 285/286 (not listed); he was born Domenico Cresti. He helped Federico Zuccari paint the dome of Florence cathedral, lived in Florence, but also spent time in Venice and Rome, and worked in Pisa, Forli and Reggio Emilia. He painted in the counter-mannerism style, concentrating on composition and using Venetian colouring. TCI, Toscana (non compresa Firenze). Milano, 1959, 103, 135, 155, 164, 169, 170, 254, 259, 264, 270, 307, 417, 452, 466, 470, 492, 751. Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1994, 40/41 and illustration.
- 91 Matteo Rosselli (1587-1650). Thieme-Becker, XXIX, 38/39 (not listed). TCI, Toscana (non compresa Firenze). Milano, 1959, 97, 110, 135, 179, 239, 263, 267, 310, 314, 315, 346, 349, 370, 410, 430, 522, 609, 691, 705, 753.
- 92 Thieme-Becker, IX, 385/388 (not listed). TCI, Toscana (non compresa Firenze). Milano, 1959, 256, 466.
- 93 For a general discussion on removing pictures from their original contexts, see Malraux, 1957.
- 94 Thieme-Becker, XXVII, 513/516 (not listed).
- 95 Nomi, 1842.

11. Disasters

Rootless men take to soldiering

Mercenaries. Our attention now turns to the rise of the territorial states and their rivalries among themselves. Each state sought to expand and consolidate its own territory.

They needed huge numbers of soldiers and military leaders to achieve this. Where did they find them?

The aristocratic knights had lost power, their importance dwindling as new military technology gained the upper hand in the form of archers fighting on foot.

It was unusual for burghers in the towns to become soldiers. For centuries, merchants and artisans had hardly been in a position to go to war, both for financial reasons and because they lacked the military technology.

Prior to the development of firearms (bombards), it was hardly possible for an enemy to overcome city walls, so the townsfolk merely needed to defend their town. Having become relatively prosperous, they had no desire to go on the offensive. As military attacks would put their existence at risk, they preferred to pay mercenaries to do the job for them.

Mercenaries were mostly poor men who sought their fortune in a military career. They were not only attracted by the pay, but also by the lure of booty extorted from rich and poor. There was often the opportunity of promotion through the military ranks.

Their military strategy had no supply system. Mercenaries were vagrants, who were forced to live off the land they roamed. They ate the food they plundered. If they refrained from plundering, they extorted large sums of money instead.

Sales of booty. The soldiers sold booty in the marketplaces, as they did in Anghiari after the 1352 (Pier Sacone) campaign and in 1381.¹

Niccolò Machiavelli wrote: “Many soldiers, English, German and Breton, were in Italy at this time, brought partly by princes who at various times came into Italy, partly sent by popes when they were in

Avignon.”²

“The greater part of Tuscany was subject to the Florentines; Lucca was under the Guinigi; Siena was free. The Genoese being sometimes free, at others subject to the kings of France or the Visconti, lived unrespected, and may be enumerated among the minor powers.

None of the principal states were armed with their own proper forces. Duke Filippo kept himself shut up in his apartments, and would not allow himself to be seen; his wars were managed by commissaries. The Venetians, when they directed their attention to terra firma, threw off those arms which had made them terrible upon the seas, and falling into the customs of Italy, submitted their forces to the direction of others. The practice of arms being unsuitable to priests or women, the pope and Queen Joan of Naples were compelled by necessity to submit to the same system which others practised from defect of judgement.

The Florentines also adopted the same custom, for having, by their frequent divisions, destroyed the nobility, and their republic being wholly in the hands of men brought up to trade, they followed the usages and example of others. Thus the arms of Italy were either in the hands of the lesser princes, or of men who possessed no state; for the minor princes did not adopt the practice of arms from any desire of glory, but for the acquisition of either property or safety. The others (those who possessed no state) being bred to arms from their infancy, were acquainted with no other art, and pursued war for emolument, or to confer honour upon themselves.

The most noticed among the latter were Carmignola, Francesco Sforza, Niccolò Piccinino the pupil of Braccio, Agnolo della Pergola, Lorenzo di Michelotto Attenduli, il Tartaglia, Giacopaccio, Cecolini da Perugia, Niccolò da Tolentino, Guido Torelli, Antonio dal Ponte ad Era, and many others.

With these, were those lords of whom I have before spoken, to which may be added the barons of Rome, ... who, being constantly in arms, had such an understanding among themselves, and so contrived to accommodate things to their own convenience, that of those who were at war, most commonly both sides were losers; and they had made the practice of arms so totally ridiculous, that the most ordinary leader, possessed of true valour, would have covered these men with disgrace, whom, with so little prudence, Italy honoured. With these idle princes and such contemptible arms, my history must, therefore, be filled.”³

Military disasters

Historians fill most of their pages with military deeds. They devote far less space to describing everyday life and people's achievements. The earth is soaked in blood.

The practice of war involves each side inflicting the greatest possible harm on the other:⁴ plundering, burning, raping, killing.

At times the people tried to defend themselves as best they could. When an advance party came to organise the purchase of food, they were sometimes murdered in one of the houses.⁵ The peasants would then flee to the hills.

Correlations. Lorenzo Taglieschi, writing in 1614, described the correlation between adversity and war. In 1234, the region endured a winter of extreme cold. The Tiber and Sovara froze over. The mills were unable to grind any corn for two months. The people were starving. Wolves invaded the towns and were hunted and hung. Taglieschi believed this gave rise to an anti-peace mentality, which sparked off all kinds of wars. Florence attacked Arezzo, but encountered resistance in the *campagna*. They laid

waste the land, with the result that many nobles fled Arezzo and made their way to Anghiari. They set about building a tower (*la torre*, which was in fact not completed until 1323) and other fortifications, later completed by Bishop Guido of Arezzo and Pier Sacone.⁶

Armies on the march; billeting; plundering. The military would not leave the population in peace. They marched through the area nearly every year.

In 1249, the king stayed in Anghiari for six days. This was a dubious honour, as the people had to provide for his entire army.⁷

After the death of Emperor Frederick II, Anghiari was forced to join the league against the Guelphs in 1251. The Ghibellines plundered the surrounding countryside in 1256.

In 1268, having lost a battle, hordes of plundering German soldiers roamed the area. They set fire to all the villages near Monterchi and roamed the Sovara Valley, only moving on when the Count of Anghiari and a large company of his followers drove them away. Before reaching Arezzo, they were “all hacked to pieces”.⁸

Imagine the human destinies behind such news.

In 1310/1313, the German King Henry went to Italy, where he was fêted and welcomed by the Ghibellines. His attempt to lay siege to Guelph Florence was unsuccessful. In 1310, the army of émigré Ghibellines plundered the land. In 1312, Henry marched his army through the Tiber Valley. Bands of thuggish soldiers plundered and pillaged. On the plain, they fought a battle with troops from Arezzo.⁹ As Henry VII, he was crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 1312. He died suddenly in Buonconvento near Siena in 1313.

In 1323, Anghiari was plundered.

After Anghiari had successfully rebelled against Perugian occupation, Perugia retaliated by pillaging the whole area.¹⁰

More and more foreign mercenaries appeared on the scene, especially from France and Germany. They were even more cruel than the Italian ones.

In 1342, an army of German mercenaries with over 2,000 horses was demobilised. These mercenaries wandered around the Sienese countryside, moving on to the Upper Tiber Valley once the Sienese had paid the tribute exacted from them. The Tiber Valley resounded with a cry of “The barbarians are coming!”.

In 1353, all the houses around the fortress of Anghiari were plundered.¹¹ In 1360, an army marched through and plundered. In 1386, troops were billeted for many months.¹²

In 1391, the Tarlati army appeared on the outskirts of Anghiari, with the aim of conquering it. The population was unable to leave the walled town, so peasants and poor people almost starved to death.¹³

At the end of the 14th century, the military became an independent force. Whenever peace was made, the soldiers moved on, because their job was to plunder and to kill.

This being their mentality, they did all manner of wicked deeds, wanting to harm other people in every possible way. Military men became unparalleled sadists. Mercenaries, mostly the sons of poor farmers and artisans, prowled around torching, pillaging, raping, torturing for fun, killing.¹⁴

One army, on the move from Lucca to Arezzo in 1396, went on to the surroundings of Anghiari and attacked Anghiari until there was nothing left. They then departed.

In 1401, Florence filled the entire land with military personnel, in expectation of an attack from Perugia.¹⁵

In 1414, 3,500 soldiers marched through the floodplain of the Tiber.¹⁶

Spiralling violence. The following shows how many people of all social classes were involved in these violent acts. In 1424, men's attitudes were so debased as a result of the war in Romagna that they completely lost their moral compass. In order to get rich, many citizens of Anghiari also took to prowling around Sansepolcro, plundering as they went. However, this was short lived. The inhabitants of Sansepolcro called on Guido Torelli, the Duke of Milan's mercenary leader, to help them. He came to their aid by attacking the area around Anghiari, plundering as he went.

Torelli went so far as to storm the Anghiari fortress in 1425. He plundered the town without mercy, showing no respect for either the sacred or the profane. Sant'Agostino was set on fire.

The mercenaries destroyed the upper fortress in many places. In so doing, they found bones so big they thought they must have been Noah's. They also found Etruscan plaques with inscriptions. The soldiers smashed everything to pieces. Torelli spent the whole winter here with his men, which was a shock for Florence.

Niccolò Fortebraccio, known as Piccinino, drove Torelli out.

Florence had promised him much, but failed to keep its promises, with the result that he entered the service of the Duke of Milan.

The war lasted until 1428.

One of the consequences of the war was that Florence drastically raised the level of taxation.¹⁷

A horrendous weapon. They only had to wait another three years for the next military threat (1431). Things were getting more and more dangerous. The first thing they did was to seal the well under the Mercatale, to prevent any enemy from using it.

Gunpowder was introduced in the form of underground mines.

They built subterranean prisons, cynically termed "confectionery houses" (*case del confetto*).¹⁸

In 1432, another army passed through the area.¹⁹

In 1436, Francesco Sforza marched through with his army, setting up camp in Viaio on the Tiber, in front of Montedoglio. The army was washed out by rain and flooding.

The mercenary leader was advised to depart immediately by Countess Anfrosina of Monterchi, a woman well versed in water management. The army wasted no time in escaping to the nearest hill, losing many horses and much equipment on the way. The plain was flooded the next day.

It was then Anghiari's turn to provide for the army.²⁰

In 1437, bombards were used to capture forts in many places. They had the reputation of being "terrible weapons".²¹

In 1438, in order to counter this new weapons technology, the Republic of Florence took great pains to modernise the territory around Anghiari, using state-of-the-art equipment.²²

Booty and revenge. Around the year 1440, occupying forces in the fortresses of borderlands like Anghiari were carrying out raids in enemy territory and seizing booty. On one of these expeditions, 80 farm animals were stolen. The chroniclers of war – in this case it was Giusto Giusti of Anghiari – proudly label such actions a success.²³

This shows how men, over-greedy for booty, completely let themselves go. The Christian chroniclers hardly ever pitied the victims.

These evil doings set in motion a spiral of violence, then fed into it over and over again. The result was perpetual motion. In this particular case, the enemy got his revenge the very next day, setting out from the village of San Leo and raiding Carciano and Pianettone. Some would call this foraging (*foraggio*).

Part three of the spiral. When the mercenary leader Taglia heard this, he preyed on the Sansepolcro area, that is to say, the area that had not yet been subject to plundering.

Anghiari rejoiced over his haul “with great joy”.²⁴ This was how far the population had sunk.

The surrounding area was so insecure that, in 1440, the commune had to set up a grain mill (*molino a seco*) driven by humans or animals in the courtyard of the *vicario's* palace, to serve the population that had been shut in.²⁵

In 1440, much infrastructure had been damaged: bridges, roads and ditches. A tax was levied on the clergy to pay for the repairs.²⁶

Armies keep marching. In 1442, the area was occupied by troops, because Florence feared the return of Piccinino.²⁷

In 1446, Francesco Sforza's army, comprising 500 cavalry and 3,000 infantry, marched past Anghiari.²⁸

In 1447, Anghiari was armed in preparation for war. Sigismondo Malatesta then spent the night there together with 1600 members of the cavalry.²⁹

The Peace of Lodi (1453) cemented the status quo for a time and gave the war-weary populace a breathing space.

Crusade. The year 1456 was considered to be a year of peace. However, neither the population nor their rulers had yet had their fill of warmongering.

Pope Calixtus III now wanted to wage war against “the Turks”. He called for a crusade (*crociata*) and sent a Dominican monk , a “master of sacred theology” (*maestro di sacra teologia*), Fra Giovanni di Napoli, to Tuscany, where his homilies gave rise to much excitement. Recruits were canvassed for the overseas expedition. On 4th March, a procession took place in Anghiari, in which 5,000 people were said to have taken part. Eighty young men volunteered.³⁰

No end of armies on the march. Marching men were hardly less terrible than wars, since the armies obtained their supplies en route. One army was encamped just outside Anghiari in 1466.³¹ In 1468, another encamped on the floodplain.³² In 1469, armies passed through the area.³³ In 1474, Duke Federico of Urbino passed through with his army.³⁴ In 1477, another army marched through.³⁵ In 1478, Spanish soldiers were not far away and constituted a perceived threat.

In 1479, the Council nominated four men to act as the highest authority in times of war. All men between the ages of 15 and 45 were called up for day and night guard duty. Bells were rung to mark the end of each shift.³⁶

In 1486, many soldiers were billeted in the town, and extensive supplies had to be provided.³⁷ In 1495, the Duke of Urbino passed through Anghiari with his army of 300 cavalry and 1500 infantry. They were billeted and fed at the inhabitants' expense.³⁸

Self-inflicted wounds. In 1478, the Republic of Florence again armed the fortress of Anghiari. It sent several companies of soldiers and gave them free rein to plunder the enemy's territory. However, as they did not have any horses, they plundered in and around Anghiari instead, causing terrible damage.³⁹

Conquest. In 1502, Vitellozzo turned up with an army, threatening to use bombards to flatten the town. In order to make this threat more realistic, he razed the Anghiari town tower to the ground (it was not until 1602 that it was rebuilt in a simplified form). Vitellozzo captured the town and let his soldiers plunder at will. He then left on the very same day and continued his march.⁴⁰

A series of wars. In 1504, soldiers from the fortress of Citerna cruelly plundered the surroundings

of Anghiari.⁴¹ In 1507, many mercenaries and their leaders were billeted in Anghiari.⁴² In 1511, new taxes were levied to pay for the military. In 1516, another army passed through. A meal for many infantrymen was served in Sant'Antonio church (*si fece tinello nella chiesa*).⁴³ Another army passed through in 1517, and a battle was fought outside Anghiari.⁴⁴ In 1521, armies passed through on two occasions, and the town was besieged twice.⁴⁵

The region was completely exhausted when the armies of Emperor Charles V and the Bourbon King Charles of France passed through. Shortly afterwards, they plundered Rome. This had been the intention of the mercenary leader Georg von Frundsberg, who claimed he was carrying a golden rope to hang the pope with. It was daring of him to say this. The saying immediately became famous.⁴⁶

The next few years turned into one cruel war. In 1532, Anghiari was forced to pay for the papal troops that were marching through.⁴⁷ In 1534, more troops were billeted and more taxes levied. In 1536, troops were billeted.

In 1538, guards were billeted. These were Florentine republican émigrés, who had put together an army for re-conquering Florence. Further taxes were levied.

In 1642/1644 Pope Urban VIII made war against the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.

Spaniards are billeted. Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote in 1614: "We know that the billeting of soldiers constitutes the greatest form of misery, and that the misery is even greater when the soldiers are Spanish."⁴⁸

In 1539, the town was occupied, because they feared war would break out with Perugia. The commune offered Duke Cosimo 300 scudi to prevent Spanish troops from being billeted there, as this was regarded as the greatest misfortune.⁴⁹

War taxes. In 1552, war taxes were raised.⁵⁰ In 1553, war taxes were raised for the war against Siena.⁵¹ Four hundred German soldiers were billeted in 1555.⁵² In 1582, new taxes were levied using harsh methods.⁵³ In 1559, one thousand soldiers were billeted at the expense of the general public.⁵⁴

The creation of large territorial states brought about a reduction in the number of conflicts. However, if war did break out, it was more expensive and crueler than previously.

Banditry. This was a new phenomenon. It made roads and villages unsafe.

Its social roots lay in unemployment and the uprooting of many people. Bandits were stamped with the cruelty they acquired in military life, where human life counted for nothing. Above all, their greed for booty knew no bounds.

In 1588, banditry had taken hold in many parts of Tuscany. A commissar was sent to Anghiari to tackle the problem. He did so skilfully, using tricks and harsh methods, and carrying out many spectacular hangings.⁵⁵

Pacifists

In a climate of violence that encouraged military conduct, and in the insecurity that made many seek safety in religion, repeated attempts were made to civilise the force of arms. The attempts made by St. Francis of Assisi (c. 1182-1226) were of the greatest consequence. The area was receptive to his teachings.

A further attempt was made by the Compagnia of St. Anthony (the patron saint of farmers) and St. James. Its roots lay in Scotland or Provence, and it was established in Arezzo in 1399. With Arezzo as its starting point, it went on a mission against violence, and preached peace and repentance.⁵⁶

In 1399 the times were very violent, but a procession of penitents in white robes (*penitenti bianchi*), 6000 men and 1200 women, made its way to Anghiari.

Let us imagine what this event was like. The roads were narrow and difficult to pass; it required a great effort on the part of the crowds to walk along them. Supplies were hard to come by. Even armies had trouble in marching such distances, but now the wish for peace was so strong that men and women in white robes and hoods were attempting it.

Based on the long-standing traditions of Central Italy, their statutes required members to have mutual respect and to help each other in brotherly love. This meant they had to lead a civilian life built on respect for other men.

About thirty members joined the Compagnia di San Antonio in Anghiari. One of its supporters, a man of means named Andrea del Pecora, bequeathed them a house in the middle of the south side of Piazza Mercatale (no. 26; it now houses a chemist's shop).

The Company first used this as a changing room, where they could don their white robes. In 1411 they built a church there.

As public appearance was of the greatest importance, the façade was dignified with the addition of two recesses containing the painted or sculpted figures of St. Anthony (the patron saint of farmers) and St. James (the patron saint of pilgrims). Thus, the two patron saints were ever present on the square. The third figure was that of St. Christopher, a saint who only exists in legends.

The *compagnia* wanted to build a large church in honour of their saints, but the plague in Tuscany prevented them from doing so.

They therefore turned to the monks of Sant'Agostino, whose first chapel had been dedicated to St. Anthony right from the start. The *compagnia* were allowed to put their signs on the side wall: the tall cross carried by pilgrims in processions, the crown of thorns (symbol of torture) and the scourge (the instrument of penance).⁵⁷

It is significant that, in the eyes of soldiers, the *compagnia's* hall on the large square became an object of hate. In 1425, when the forces of the Duke of Milan were roaming around Anghiari and cruelly plundering the unfortified part of the town (which included the piazza), the hall was laid waste.

The church hierarchy disliked the peaceful nature of the confraternity, believing the *compagnia* might get the people to oppose the powers that be, with whom the clergy had come to terms in their own interest and through their own diplomacy. The Papal States were themselves a military power with mercenary troops.

The hierarchy therefore regarded the lay brothers with suspicion and inspected them on several occasions. They ordered them not to wash each other's feet on Maundy Thursday, a ritual they had taken from the history of the Last Supper and a symbol of service to the community.

We may wonder why men who had been condemned to death spent the night in the confraternity's hall, where they were comforted by the brothers before their execution next day on the piazza.

A bandit as a mercenary general

The Piazza Baldaccio Bruni in Anghiari now bears the name of Baldaccio di Pietro Vanni (born about 1380), a native of those parts.

The Bruni family had been one of the most respected families (*notabili*) in the countryside around Anghiari since the end of the 13th century. They served the Tarlati family as customs collectors. In

1388, they owned Castello di Sorci⁵⁸, to the south-west of Anghiari. In former times, it had not been a castle, but rather a fortified post staffed with officers who collected the *gabella* from travellers at a crossing-place of the Sovara (now Locanda di Sorci). Baldaccio had a good education in the liberal arts.

Bandit. As a youth, he was the leader of a troop of bandits. He was sentenced to death for his part in an attack on a Florentine merchant.⁵⁹

However, Florence was quick to recognise his military skills. Instead of hanging Baldaccio Bruni or throwing him into prison, the administration gave him an opportunity to prove his worth as a soldier. They recruited him in 1394.⁶⁰

Careerist. He made a successful career in Florence, becoming a much sought-after mercenary leader. In 1401, he was made commander (*conestabile*) of a troop of 100 infantrymen, nearly all of whom he had recruited on Anghiari market square. He had lured them with the promise of a great life with the military: a career and rich booty.⁶¹ In 1433, Baldaccio the *colonello* was in charge of several companies of Florentine troops.

In Florence, the aristocratic faction led by the Albizzi family was in conflict with the popular faction under the leadership of Giovanni Medici, and later of his son Cosimo. In 1433, Rinaldo Albizzi stirred up a plot against the Medici. He had Cosimo put on trial before a special judicial commission, accusing him of making a deal with Francesco Sforza and doing other harmful things. Cosimo was sent into exile and went to Padua. However, as the Albizzi family feared a popular rebellion, they hired Baldaccio d'Anghiari, put him in charge of cavalry and infantry, and gave him the task of keeping Florence quiet.⁶²

In order to be able to negotiate the highest price for his services, Baldaccio served various masters in turn. In 1437, in the war between Florence and Lucca, he was a general with one third of the army under his command. A few months later he was *maestro di campo* of the entire army of Francesco Sforza.

Only two years later (1439) he was general commander over the entire infantry of the Republic of Florence.

He was so successful that, in his History of Florence, Niccolò Machiavelli later referred to him as the most skilful commander of his times.

Marriage. In 1438, Baldaccio married the Countess Annalena, a daughter of Galeotto Malatesta, the ruler of the town of Cesena. Motherless, she had been brought up by her relatives, the Counts Guidi in the Casentino. The wedding took place in Florence. Annalena's dowry included Castello Usciolu near Gubbio, but Baldaccio immediately exchanged it with Giovanni Tarlati for Castello di Ranco. The couple lived in Florence.

Death. Baldaccio's death is shrouded in mystery. He had publicly denounced Bartolommeo Orlandini for his cowardice in abandoning the pass at Marradi to Niccolò Piccinino. However, when Orlandini was raised to the highest office of state in 1441 and appointed *gonfaloniere*, he summoned Baldaccio to Florence City Hall on the pretext of discussing campaigns with him. Baldaccio who, as was customary in the city, was unarmed, was assaulted from behind, murdered and thrown out of the window.

The murderers cut off Baldaccio's head, rolled it down the staircase of the City Hall and finally impaled it in front of the building. His head was put on view for one day and his body was displayed at one of the City Hall windows.

That was the end of a formidable military leader, who had never felt pity for anyone and who had himself chopped off many heads. He reaped what he had sown.

Orlandini wished the case to take on an official character, so he took away all Baldaccio's assets. His Castello di Sorci, south-east of Anghiari, was razed.⁶³

Annalena had him buried in Santo Spirito. When her only son Galeotto died soon after, she sold all her possessions and used the proceeds to found a religious house in Florence, withdrawing to the convent herself.

Differing verdicts. The incident created a sensation. People differed in their verdicts.

Baldaccio's friend Neri Capponi turned the above version on its head. There had been a quarrel, and Baldaccio would have thrown the *gonfaloniere* out of the window if his followers had not killed the mercenary first.

Niccolò Machiavelli portrayed the incident in yet another way, claiming Cosimo Medici had arranged the murder in order to prevent Baldaccio's friend Capponi from gaining power.

Naldo Naldi believed the pope had wanted to engage Baldaccio as a military leader, and was therefore furious when he heard of the murder.

Theatre. The Milanese author Gian Franco Vené, who spent his summers in Anghiari and who was one of the prime movers in the establishment of a prize for the arts, wrote a play about Baldaccio in 1982. The young actors in the theatre were locals and they took the play on tour (including performances in Cologne, Bielefeld and Oberhausen in Germany). It was an ironic caricature of Anghiari's desire for fame. It suggested: "You wanted a hero, now you've got one. A general who was a criminal!"

The play is a contribution to the peace movement. The music was written by Annibale del Sere, a local man employed in the weaving mill. His composition was based on Francesco Guccini's political popular music from the movement of 1968.

Gift of a baptistery. The deep-set fear of hell that Baldaccio shared with many of his contemporaries prompted him, some time before his unexpected death, to leave a large sum of money in his will for the construction of a baptistery in the Old Town of Anghiari (a wooden gateway with the date 1442 at 5 Via Taglieschi).

Mercenary leaders from Anghiari

There is a long list of military men who came from Anghiari.

In 1266, mention is made of Simone di Giunta Diani d'Anghiari, who was the leader of 200 infantrymen (*fanti*) in the service of the Bishop of Arezzo.⁶⁴

In 1393, Tutto di Graziolo d'Anghiari was *capitano* in the fortress of Perugia.

In 1420, Agnolo di Piero del Vecchietti, known as Taglia, and Gregorio di Vanni were mercenaries in the service of the Duke of Milan. Taglia was later commander in Pisa, then in Castrocaro and, for a few months in 1439, in his home town of Anghiari.

He made a fortune and bought three country seats (Castel d'Elci, Sanatello and Faggiola near Massa Trabaria) together with all the farms belonging to them and other sources of income for 4000 Venetian gold florins. He also bought the title of count. Having climbed the social ladder, he was able to marry Giovanna, the daughter of Count Gentile Brancaleoni, Count of Casteldurante, thus becoming the cousin of Count Federico of Urbino.

As Lorenzo Taglieschi had access to the war diaries of Giusto Giusti, he was able to sketch the characters of Taglia and Gregorio d'Anghiari.⁶⁵ Giusti was a citizen of Anghiari, but lived in Florence. He was a notary and handled the financial affairs of the mercenary leaders, for which he received a handsome fee. He wrote a daily entry in his diary for 44 years, noting his activities in the most matter-of-fact manner.

He often went on journeys. He was apparently an enthusiastic and good horseman, who often rode all through the night. He covered long distances in short times. Giusti also negotiated the exchange of prisoners, for instance with the Republic of Lucca. He enjoyed a kind of diplomatic status, which meant he could visit his clients in prison, as he did in Lucca.

A rapid rise was followed by a rapid fall: in the peace concluded between Sigismondo Malatesta and Federico of Urbino, Taglia lost his three country seats and his title.

In 1442, the mercenary leader Francesco Sforza, now Duke of Milan, appointed Taglia as captain in charge of 200 cavalry and 1000 infantry. His salary was high – 1400 scudi plus commission.

In 1446, the Republic of Venice offered Gregorio the post of *capitano* in charge of 500 infantrymen. However, Florence acquired his services after making a similar offer. In 1449, Gregorio became commander general of Genoa. In 1449, he had become so avaricious that no-one wanted to hire him any more. In the end, he did find a post. He became general commander of the infantry in Florence in the year 1452. He died at the age of 64, and was buried with great honour in the *Badia*.⁶⁶

In 1423, Nardo del Vecchietto d'Anghiari, after more than 20 years with the military, tried to run off with the war chest belonging to the heavily indebted mercenary leader Braccio da Montone. He was caught and immediately hung from a tree. Braccio was reputed to hate fraudsters and traitors.⁶⁷ Did he also hate himself?

Lorenzo Taglieschi deplored the fact that the military knew no bounds, not even when it came to the lives of their own soldiers.

In 1430, mention is made of another mercenary leader from Anghiari, Masaccio da Pantaneto.⁶⁸ In 1437, Cristofano Vettori from Anghiari was named as a commander (*conestabile*) of infantry.⁶⁹ In 1440, a brother of Gregorio d'Anghiari appeared on the scene: Piero di Vanni di Bartolomeo d'Anghiari.⁷⁰

In 1447, Leale d'Anghiari was commander of the eight-man-strong *guardia*, or occupying forces, on the *rocca* of Monterchi.⁷¹ His cousin Vettorio di Leale appeared in 1478.⁷²

In 1449, Matteo Cane d'Antonio Taglieschi (Matteo “the cur”) held the office of *castellano* in the fortress of Volterra.⁷³

In 1452, Giusto Giusti accused Renzo di Mariotto d'Anghiari of being cowardly and untrustworthy.⁷⁴

Gregorio d'Agnolucci del Grosso was commanding four cavalrymen and one hundred infantry in the service of Florence in 1452.⁷⁵ Piero di Vanni was commander of the occupying forces in Foiano in the same year.⁷⁶

The following were mentioned in the year 1466: the “Anghiarian”⁷⁷ and the “Anghiarino” (Roberto di Santi), who later settled in Anghiari.⁷⁸ In 1530, Mariotto Ciarperini d'Anghiari was the chancellor to the commissioner general of Pope Clement VII's army.⁷⁹

The following were all mercenary leaders from Anghiari: Domenico d'Anghiari (mentioned in 1469);⁸⁰ Maddalò d'Agostino d'Anghiari (1478);⁸¹ Niccolò di Andrea di Niccolò del Vecchietto di Anghiari (1480);⁸² Lorenzo di Sevestro Taglieschi d'Anghiari, known as Gattesco (1486);⁸³ Pieruccio del Bene d'Anghiari (1500);⁸⁴ Bernardo di Piero d'Anghiari (1502);⁸⁵ Piero Mannini (1516);⁸⁶ Matteo

di Borgo Mannini (1516).⁸⁷

Fulvio Taglieschi, ensign to Niccolò Giusti (1551);⁸⁸ Luca di Mariotto Ciarperini, known as the *cavaliere grande* on account of his height (1551);⁸⁹ Pierono Chieli (1553);⁹⁰ Mattia Chieli, known as Cavacarne (1553);⁹¹ Antonio di Renzo Angelieri (1553);⁹² Nanni Nuti (1553);⁹³ Nicolò Bufalini (1555);⁹⁴ In the Ottoman War: Busbacca Palai⁹⁵ and Baratta Tartaglia⁹⁶ (both 1568); Santi di Giovanni Piero Ligi, who died in Turkish custody (1574);⁹⁷ Antonio di Cherubino Biglaffi, known as Il Moca (1577).⁹⁸

Legends. In 1424, a blacksmith from Anghiari was dismissed without pay from the army of Lodovico Alidosio of Imola. He got his revenge by going over to the enemy army and helping them to take the fortress of Imola, which was under siege. For this act, the blacksmith received money and a badge of honour. In Anghiari many people referred to him as the “Great Blacksmith” (*il fabbrone*).⁹⁹

The story goes that after peace was made in 1428, the mercenary leaders Baldaccio di Piero Bruni, Agnolo di Piero (known as Taglia), Gregorio di Vanni and Santi di Cristofano di Vagnuccio were walking around the piazza in Anghiari and debating whether people were better off under a prince's rule or as a republic. Some said they had been better off serving other lords rather than as servants of the republic.

An elderly woman heard part of what they were saying and called out that a conspiracy was afoot. She claimed they had been plotting to hand Anghiari over to Sigismondo Malatesta, the ruler of Rimini. She scolded the men and threatened to tell the government in Florence. The suspicious woman left Anghiari in a hurry and set off for Florence. While crossing the River Sovara, she looked down at the water, fell in and drowned.

The mercenary leaders interpreted this as a sign that they should offer their services to the next best lord.¹⁰⁰

In 1530, the tailor Morgante del Riccio was one of the defenders of Empoli. Having been taken prisoner by the Spaniards, he let himself down by a rope from the upper storey of a *palazzo*, jumped the remaining distance, broke all his fingers and remained crippled for the rest of his life.¹⁰¹

Bindaccio del Torso d'Anghiari was reputed, in 1530, to be a soldier with supernatural strength. He could break a horseshoe with his bare hands and pull a rope apart with one tug at it. He carried a donkey laden with wood from Santa Croce monastery to the Porta di Sotto.¹⁰²

Mattio di Bernardo Subissi, a stonemason from Anghiari, was raised to the rank of *capitano* in 1530. He is said to have been the soldier who, in 1530, took his sword and cut the throat of the famous defender of the Republic, Francesco Ferruccio.¹⁰³

Generations of mercenaries. Soldiering was a way of life passed down from one generation to the next. In 1463, one of Alessandro Sforza's military leaders was Francesco Prospero d'Anghiari.¹⁰⁴ His son Agnolo Prospero followed in his footsteps.¹⁰⁵

Mazzone di Gregorio, the illegitimate son of Gregorio di Vanni, came of a family who, by virtue of the many mercenary leaders they produced, were very influential over a long period of time, and were caught up in quite a number of scandals. He used the money he obtained in the form of booty to open the largest tavern (*osteria*) in the town below the large square [...]. He received the county of Orbecchio as his wife's dowry together with the title of count.¹⁰⁶ His son Piero di Mazzone also became a soldier.¹⁰⁷ We also come across Conte Guido Taglia di Mazzone.¹⁰⁸ In 1551, mention is made of a Lieutenant Ercole Mazzone¹⁰⁹, in 1553 of Francesco Mazzoni Conte di Orbecco¹¹⁰, and in 1591 of Silvio Mazzone Mazzoni.¹¹¹

The Giusti family were also a very influential dynasty. Giusto Giusti served as chancellor for many years with Taglia's troops, becoming a mercenary leader in 1468, and then quartermaster (*commissario*).¹¹²

His son Niccolò Giusti was also a mercenary leader¹¹³, as was another son Jacopo Giusti.¹¹⁴ His brother Giusto di Niccolò Giusti later wrote a book on warfare: “Pratica di guerra”.¹¹⁵

In 1530, his grandson Niccolò di Giovanni Giusti was a young sergeant, in 1532 he was a standard bearer in the forces resisting the Ottoman campaign against Vienna. In his old age, he wrote a book entitled “De re militari”, in which he described all the various manners of waging war.¹¹⁶ In 1568, in the war against the Ottoman Empire, Ettore di Girolamo Giusti was a sergeant.¹¹⁷

The Magi family were also a family of soldiers. Antonio Magi was serving in 1521.¹¹⁸ In 1571, Girolamo Magi was a soldier and prisoner-of-war in Cyprus; he wrote on the subject of war.¹¹⁹

Engineers as mercenaries. According to Ammirati, San Leo was captured thanks to the excellent skills of Marco d'Anghiari, a carpenter.¹²⁰

Andrea Brugoni d'Anghiari, an artisan, invented floating mills for the River Tiber. However, he was tricked out of the prize for his invention; another man was awarded the *premio* and became a famous engineer. Later on, he constructed pontoon bridges for the military; parts of the pontoons could also be used as scaling ladders. He was an engineer in the service of Duke Cosimo Medici I, and was constantly inventing instruments of war.¹²¹

In 1536, Ansovino Pierosti d'Anghiari was an engineer in the service of the Venetians. He was also in charge of a bombard.¹²²

It is not the intention of this book to write a history of wars. Nor does it aim to glorify mercenary leaders and make heroes out of them, which is how we speak of them nowadays. It would be more appropriate for historians to describe them for what they really were. Behind their military decorations and their masks they were criminals and mass murderers.

The Battle of Anghiari

The Sixty Years War. From 1390 to 1440, Milan and Florence fought a war that lasted half a century¹²³. It is hard to imagine this fact. Both sides employed propaganda tactics.¹²⁴ The armies of Gian Galeazzo and Filippo Maria Visconti seemed unconquerable. The story of the first half of the war was told by Goro Dati in his book “Istoria di Firenze (from 1380 to 1406)”. The war was not finally over until the Battle of Anghiari.

Sudden attack. In his book “The life and deeds of Francesco Sforza” (c. 1448), Pier Candido Decembrio described the history leading up to the battle. The Duke of Milan, an early absolute ruler called Filippo Maria Visconti, “wanted to try his hand at something new, to compensate for his bad luck in the war [against Venice and Verona]. He ordered Niccolò Piccinino to pull his troops out of Lombardy and send them into Tuscany. ... Florence was deeply shocked by this sudden attack. ... Immediately the peasants from the surrounding countryside, together with their cattle, their wives and their children, started to pour into the city; the townsfolk were trembling with fear, because they did not know where to turn for protection. Pope Eugene and his attendants, who lived in exile in Florence, were in despair, seemingly imprisoned. The city would have been lost, had not Francesco Sforza tried his luck and bravely decided to make an assault on Filippo's troops near Soncino, where he defeated them. As Filippo found himself in trouble, he summoned the help of Niccolò Piccinino, who was

leading his troops towards Anghiari. He was crushingly defeated there in a huge battle [on 29th June 1440] by the combined forces of the Florentines [under Giovanni Orsini] and the papal troops.”¹²⁵

Many writers have used exaggeration as a rhetorical means when ascribing fame and glory.

This battle did indeed halt Milanese expansion and give permanent stability to the territory of the Florentine state.¹²⁶ Had Florence been unsuccessful, it would have lost the Tiber Valley, Valdichiana and Casentino. From now on, Anghiari, the contested town and its surroundings, would form part of the Republic of Florence.

The battle started more or less by chance, as a result of Piccinino's attempt to take the Florentine army by surprise. To this end, he had also mobilised the people of Sansepolcro, luring them with the promise of booty in Anghiari. No fighting was allowed on Sundays and holy days, as these days were devoted to God, but the Milanese army began fighting, in order to catch their enemies off their guard. They took up position on the bridge. A great battle ensued, which was won, lost, then won again.

The conflict was typical of the wars waged in those times. There was only one fatal casualty – a Milanese soldier who, while fleeing, fell from his horse and was trampled to death.¹²⁷

How battle was waged. Why were there so few dead after this and other battles? Mercenaries had no desire to risk their lives. The longer they survived, the more booty they could seize and enjoy. When armies met, all ranks on both sides surely talked long and loud about their relative strengths. An interesting group process took place within the various formations. The lower ranks had their say too and, if necessary, forced their leaders to retreat by refusing to fight. They calculated such threats would save their lives. Then the weaker party surrendered and abandoned the field.

A fresco of the battle. Piero della Francesca (1410/1420-1492) painted this battle, but under a different title, because the person commissioning the work wanted a painting of the battle between the rival claimants to the western imperial throne, Constantine and Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge near Rome. The artist was forced to take this usual but indirect route, because it was unlikely he would be directly commissioned to paint the Battle of Anghiari.

In 1440, Piero had presumably just returned home to Sansepolcro from Florence, and was able to learn at close quarters what people on the public squares and streets were saying about events on the other side of their walls. Both towns, Anghiari and Sansepolcro, were well protected. By positioning themselves on the walls, people may have been able to watch a small part of the distant conflict.

An event of this kind was particularly memorable when not much else was going on, and they surely went over it and discussed it many thousands of times. A whole host of different theories and versions will have been put forward.

Piero painted his fresco a whole generation later, in the chancel of St. Francesco's church in Arezzo. We can see the river and the countryside of the Upper Tiber Valley. The defeated army is lowering its flags and retreating.

The monument. Not long after the battle, the Republic of Florence had a monument built on the battleground in the valley. It stands on the long straight road (*stradone*), “... so that [victory] may always live on in the memories of succeeding generations and passers-by” (*ni rimanesse sempre viva la memoria ne' posteri e ne' passaggeri*).¹²⁸

The monument was in the form of a small house with one open side (aedicula), like a little chapel. The Madonna was painted on one of the inside walls, as victory was attributed to her, the Madonna della Vittoria.

Nevertheless, people tended to be more interested in the terrors associated with the nearby gallows.

For this reason, they dubbed the painting of the Madonna the “*Maestà delle Forche*” (gallows).

Later, a plaque was put in place bearing an inscription and an explanation of the events of the battle.

A race. To remind people of the victory, they instituted a *palio*, an annual running race from the battlefield to the well on the market square. Runners sweated copiously in the heat of 29th June. Perhaps this was why the race was transformed into a horse race in 1484, under the pretext of conferring greater prestige on the event.

Pictures of the battle. Pictures illustrate the importance of this battle in the history of Florence.

In 1991, Franco Polcri found a painting of the Battle of Anghiari in the National Gallery of Ireland in Dublin. It was painted on a dowry chest and has been attributed to Biagio di Antonio.¹²⁹ A piece of furniture of this kind would normally have stood in a place where everyone could see it, in the hall of a great house. The painting shows places in the Upper Tiber Valley and the most important strategic formation with considerable accuracy.

We may assume there were more pictures of the event, but they have not been preserved.

The clearest indication of the importance of the battle is a commission placed 64 years (three generations) later. In 1504, the *signoria* with *gonfaloniere* Piero Soderini placed one of the Republic's most important government commissions in the hands of the Florentine artist Leonardo da Vinci. Two military events – rated the most important in the Republic's history – were to be brought to life in vast paintings (7.5 x 18.5 metres) for the benefit of the 3000 members of the new parliament in Florence City Hall. Michelangelo was to paint the Battle of Cascina (1364) in the war against Pisa, and Leonardo was to paint the Battle of Anghiari (1440).¹³⁰

Leonardo began by painting the key scene: the grim fight for the standard (*lotta per lo stendardo*). Only the sketch of this viciously cruel scene has been preserved. The drama is captured in minute detail, but the painting is pure invention. Unlike Piero and Michelangelo, he took cruelty as his subject. By contrast, Michelangelo painted the soldiers bathing naked in the Arno, almost innocent and powerless. From this position they went on to defend themselves successfully against the Pisans' sudden attack. Leonardo, however, was interested in wild passions. On the other hand, perhaps he deliberately wanted to depict the dreadful cruelty of war which unleashed such human passions. Was it a warning against the waging of war?

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) contradicted Leonardo's visual interpretations and those of other authors. His point of view was realistic and critical, and his description of the battle was probably carefully researched (we shall return to this later).

It is likely that the Medici princes deliberately allowed Michelangelo's fresco and Leonardo's unfinished one to decay in the Council Hall of Florence, which they converted into their audience hall. They will have been motivated by the fact that the paintings were an important symbol of the Florentine democracy they themselves had toppled.¹³¹

Copies. The Flemish artist Peter Paul Rubens made two copies of Leonardo's sketch for this painting, which he saw during the years he lived in Italy (the Rubens works are in the Louvre in Paris and in The Hague).

Wolf Vostell drew a paraphrase of Leonardo's sketch.¹³²

A congress held in Anghiari theatre in the year 2000 dealt with the topic of *Una battaglia nel mito. La Battaglia e Leonardo*.

Museum. The Congress coincided with the opening of the municipal “Centro di Documentazione della Battaglia di Anghiari” in the 15th century Palazzo del Marzocco, opposite Museo Taglieschi, on

30th June 2000, the anniversary of the battle. The subtitle was “Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) and his lost masterpiece”.

The battle is reconstructed in the rooms of the museum. Unfortunately, the exhibition was not skilfully curated. It resorts to name dropping, where it should be thought provoking.

Palazzo del Marzocco was not the original name of the house. It used to belong to the wealthy Angelieri family, who, in the 16th century, knocked together two tall Mediaeval houses (of the *casa torre* type) to create a continuous and uniform façade.

The *marzocco* high on the corner of the house is a copy of the original that is now on show in the Museo Statale di Palazzo Taglieschi on the other side of the square.

In the rear part of the northern house, there is a hall with a groined vault ceiling supported by a central pillar. A garden on the hillside behind the house can be entered from the first floor.

Niccolò Machiavelli on the Battle of Anghiari

Niccolò Machiavelli described the Battle of Anghiari (1440) in his book on the History of Florence¹³³ as follows: “While these events were taking place in Tuscany, so little to the advantage of the duke, his affairs in Lombardy were in a still worse condition.

The Count Francesco, as soon as the season would permit, took the field with his army, and the Venetians having again covered the lake with their galleys, he determined first of all to drive the duke from the water; judging, that this once effected, his remaining task would be easy. . .

His land forces took the castles held for Filippo, and the ducal troops who were besieging Brescia, being informed of these transactions, withdrew; and thus, the city, after standing a three years' [!] siege was at length relieved.

The count then went in quest of the enemy, whose forces were encamped before Soncino, a fortress situated upon the River Oglio; these he dislodged and compelled to retreat to Cremona, where the duke again collected his forces, and prepared for his defence.

But the count constantly pressing him more closely, he became apprehensive of losing either the whole, or the greater part, of his territories, and perceiving the unfortunate step he had taken, in sending [his mercenary leader] Niccolò [Piccinino] into Tuscany, in order to correct this error, he wrote to acquaint him with what had transpired, desiring him, with all possible dispatch, to leave Tuscany and return to Lombardy.

In the meantime, the Florentines, under their commissaries, had drawn together their forces, and being joined by those of the pope, halted at Anghiari, a castle placed at the foot of the mountains that divide the Val di Tavere from the Val di Chiane, distant four miles from the Borgo San Sepolcro, on a level road, and in a country suitable for the evolutions of cavalry or a battlefield.

As the Signory had heard of the count's victory and the recall of Niccolò, they imagined that without drawing a sword or disturbing the dust under their horses' feet, the victory was their own, and the war at an end, they wrote to the commissaries, desiring them to avoid an engagement, as Niccolò could not remain much longer in Tuscany.

These instructions coming to the knowledge of Piccinino, and perceiving the necessity of his speedy return, to leave nothing attempted, he determined to engage the enemy, expecting to find them unprepared, and not disposed for battle.

In this determination he was confirmed by Rinaldo, the Count di Poppi, and other Florentine exiles,

who saw their inevitable ruin in the departure of Niccolò, and hoped, that if he engaged the enemy, they would either be victorious, or vanquished without dishonour.

This resolution being adopted, Niccolò led his army, unperceived by the enemy, from Città di Castello to the Borgo, where he enlisted two thousand men, who, trusting the general's talents and promises, followed him in hope of plunder.

Niccolò then led his forces in battle array toward Anghiari, and observed great clouds of dust, and conjecturing at once that it must be occasioned by the enemy's approach, immediately called the troops to arms.

Great confusion prevailed in the Florentine camp, for the ordinary negligence and want of discipline were now increased by their presuming the enemy to be at a distance, and they were more disposed to flight than to battle; so that everyone was unarmed, and some wandering from the camp, either led by their desire to avoid the excessive heat, or in pursuit of amusement.

So great was the diligence of the commissaries and of the captain, that before the enemy's arrival, the men were mounted and prepared to resist their attack; and as Micheletto was the first to observe their approach, he was also first armed and ready to meet them, and with his troops hastened to the bridge [carrying the road from Sansepolcro to Arezzo] which crosses the river at a short distance from Anghiari.

Pietro Giampagolo having, previous to the surprise, filled up the ditches on either side of the road, and levelled the ground between the bridge and Anghiari, and Micheletto having taken his position in front of the former, the legate and Simoncino, who led the troops of the church, took post on the right, and the commissaries of the Florentines, with Pietro Giampagolo, their captain, on the left; the infantry being drawn up along the banks of the river.

This, the only course the enemy could take, was the direct one over the bridge; nor had the Florentines any other field for their exertions, excepting that their infantry were ordered, in case their cavalry were attacked in flank by the hostile infantry, to assail them with their cross bows, and prevent them from wounding the flanks of the horses crossing the bridge.

Micheletto bravely withstood the enemy's charge upon the bridge; but Astorre and Francesco Piccinino coming up, with a picked body of men, attacked him so vigorously, that he was compelled to give way, and was pushed as far as the foot of the hill which rises towards the Borgo d'Anghiari; but they were in turn repulsed and driven over the bridge by the troops that took them in flank.

The battle continued two hours, during which each side had frequent possession of the bridge, and their attempts upon it were attended with equal success; but on both sides of the river, the disadvantage of Niccolò was manifest; for when his people crossed the bridge, they found the enemy unbroken, and the ground being levelled, they could manoeuvre without difficulty, and the weary be relieved by such as were fresh.

But when the Florentines crossed, Niccolò could not relieve those that were harassed, on account of the hindrance interposed by the ditches and embankments on each side of the road; thus whenever his troops got possession of the bridge, they were soon repulsed by the fresh forces of the Florentines; but when the bridge was taken by the Florentines, and they passed over and proceeded upon the road, Niccolò having no opportunity to reinforce his troops, being prevented by the impetuosity of the enemy and the inconvenience of the ground, the rear guard became mingled with the van, and occasioned the utmost confusion and disorder; they were forced to flee, and hastened at full speed toward the Borgo.

The Florentine troops fell upon the plunder, which was very valuable in horses, prisoners and

military stores, for not more than a thousand of the enemy's cavalry reached the town.

The people of the Borgo, who had followed Niccolò in the hope of plunder, became booty themselves, all of them being taken, and obliged to pay a ransom. The colours and carriages were also captured.

This victory was much more advantageous to the Florentines than injurious to the duke; for, had they been conquered, Tuscany would have been his own; but he, by his defeat, only lost the horses and accoutrements of his army, which could be replaced without any very serious expense.

Nor was there ever an instance of wars being carried on in an enemy's country with less injury to the assailants than at this; for in so great a defeat, and in a battle which continued four hours, only one man died, and he, not from wounds inflicted by hostile weapons, or any honourable means, but, having fallen from his horse, was trampled to death.

Combatants then engaged with little danger; being nearly all mounted, covered with armour, and preserved from death whenever they chose to surrender, there was no necessity for risking their lives; while fighting, their armour defended them, and when they could resist no longer, they yielded and were safe.

This battle, from the circumstances which attended and followed it, presents a striking example of the wretched state of military discipline in those times.

The enemy's forces being defeated and driven into the Borgo, the commissaries desired to pursue them, in order to make the victory complete, but not a single condottiere or soldier would obey, alleging, as a sufficient reason for their refusal, that they must take care of the booty and attend to their wounded; and, what is still more surprising, the next day, without permission from the commissaries, or the least regard for their commanders, they went to Arezzo, and, having secured their plunder, returned to Anghiari; a thing so contrary to military order and all subordination, that the merest shadow of a regular army would easily and most justly have wrested from them the victory they had so undeservedly obtained.

Added to this, the men-at-arms, or heavy-armed horse, who had been taken prisoners, whom the commissaries wished to be detained that they might not rejoin the enemy, were set at liberty, contrary to their orders.

It is astonishing that an army so constructed should have sufficient energy to obtain the victory, or that any should be found so imbecile as to allow such a disorderly rabble to vanquish them.

The time occupied by the Florentine forces in going and returning from Arezzo, gave Niccolò opportunity of escaping from the Borgo, and proceeding toward Romagna.

Along with him also fled the Florentine exiles, who, finding no hope of their return home, took up their abodes in various parts of Italy, each according to his own convenience.

Rinaldo made choice of Ancona, and, to gain admission to the celestial country, having lost the terrestrial, he performed a pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre; whence having returned, he died suddenly while at table at the celebration of the marriage of one of his daughters; an instance of fortune's favour in removing him from the troubles of this world upon the least sorrowful day of his exile [1492].

Rinaldo d'Albizzi appeared respectable under every change of condition; and would have been more so had he lived in a united city, for many qualities were injurious to him in a factious community, which in an harmonious one would have done him honour."

Life as an armourer

Weaponsmiths. It was not only soldiers and their commanders who lived by war, but also manufacturers. In 1424, for instance, there were more than 15 family-run workshops (*botteghe*) manufacturing weapons in Anghiari.¹³⁴ It was a flourishing trade.

Weapons production was part of the blacksmith's trade (*ferro battuto*).¹³⁵

Those who plied the trade were also engaged in decorating the weapons, so their owners could show them off.¹³⁶

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the workshops run by the Matassi, Vallini, Cerboncelli, Favilli and Guardiani families enjoyed considerable prestige.

Iron extraction. The conditions for quarrying were favourable. There were rich deposits of iron ore in the area, in the Monti Rognosi, which may be translated as “the mangy mountains”. They lie a mere five kilometres or so to the north of Anghiari, near Albiano and Ponte alla Piera.

For centuries, peasants and day labourers had been quarrying copper, a highly prized metal, in the mountains. Some workmen had smelted metal out of its ore in numerous small furnaces, others had transported iron to the smithies.

How was iron traded?

Manufacture of guns. In the 17th century, these workshops mainly produced rifles and pistols. Were there any middlemen? Did wholesalers from Arezzo or Florence buy weapons in bulk?

Did the wealthy go to one of the manufacturers and order a weapon for a special occasion? Where were the weapons used? Many of the owners put them on display in their halls. For whose benefit? And when?

Ornamental weapons. In the 19th century, many manufacturers sold ornamental weapons that were later put on display in museums. There is a collection in Museo Taglieschi in Anghiari.¹³⁷

To this day, we accept the aesthetics of war without asking ourselves what lies behind it.

Myth. A local theatre company, Compagnia dei Ricomposti, comprising amateur actors and the professional director Andrea Merendelli, performed a lively comedy on the Poggiolino in 2003. It dealt with the magic surrounding arms production: the mysterious dogs depicted on the pistols and rifles owned by princes and prelates, gunpowder dealers and smugglers. It was the devil masked as a dog that also played a trick on the youthful brigand Sagresto, who was shot beneath Montauto in 1902.

Non-political violence and an enduring legend

Il catorcio. In Museo Taglieschi, the keys to the town gate are kept to the rear of the ground floor, on the left-hand side. They are linked to a story that sheds light on social history, which is why it has acquired the status of a myth.

At a fair in the year 1450, youths from Sansepolcro began quarrelling with young locals from Anghiari. The usual brawl ensued.

The reason was probably a girl. The locals were angry that an outsider was “trying to get off with her”.

The boys from Sansepolcro lost and fled. They returned the same evening, however, to have their revenge. There were another 400 “soldiers” with them, now armed.

The lads from Anghiari were not expecting this, and it was now their turn to be defeated. Six youths were killed – six times the number of dead in the Battle of Anghiari (1440) – and 150 wounded.

The victorious youths of Sansepolcro stole the lock from the town gate and took it away with them in triumph.

By now, the boys of Anghiari had obtained reinforcements. They ran after the enemy, but they were already far away. They could only have their revenge in a different way.

On the banks of the Tiber, they came across a group of women from Sansepolcro washing their laundry in the river. The Anghiari youths, heady with local chauvinism, set on the women. They did not do them any bodily harm, but cut off their skirts to the waist, tied the lengths of cloth to sticks and bore them home like flags – as a sign of victory.

They hung the lengths of cloth on the town gate, where they remained until they fell into tatters from wind and rain. On the other side of the valley, the youths of Sansepolcro put the locks from the neighbouring town in a high position on their piazza. You would think they had come from a city gate in Jerusalem.

Federico Nomi (1633-1705),¹³⁸ was a priest who had lived as a teacher in Arezzo for twelve years. In 1670 he was made vice-chancellor of the ducal college in Pisa and in 1674 he became a professor of law. He was then demoted to the position of parish priest in Monterchi, probably on account of some heresy or other. In 1684, he set the story down in verse, sparing no detail and adding a good dose of irony. (“Il cantorcio di Anghiari”, first printed in Florence in 1830).

A portrait of Federico Nomi hangs on the first floor of Museo Taglieschi. It is stereotypical of well-bred people of his time. Book in hand, with a sceptical authoritative look, he is portrayed as balding and sporting a beard of the type fashionable in the Spanish Netherlands. The Spanish influence is also apparent in his black suit with its white collar and cuffs.

According to the archives, the Grand Duke had the key brought to Florence in 1737, in order to remove the fetish, the symbol of the quarrel. We can thus imagine how many dramatic, irritating, ludicrous and weird things had happened in the wake of this event from the distant past, how long it all lasted, and how emotions kept boiling over as a result of the parochialism (*campanilismo*) on both sides. How often was it the topic of conversation on the town squares?

It was not until Museo Taglieschi opened its doors that the State Archives returned the key to the people of Anghiari, where it remains in the uncontroversial and peaceful surroundings of the museum.

Disasters

Disasters are mostly overlooked, or else they only get a brief mention in the portrayal of landscapes and towns. Nevertheless, they are an important part of the whole picture. If we have no knowledge of them, there will be many things we will not understand.

If we look at a chain of disasters, things take on a new and different dimension.

Cannibalism. The historian Procopius of Caesarea tells us the land was hit by a great famine in the Byzantine-Gothic Wars that ended in 554. The mountain dwellers ground acorns to make flour for bread. Many people died from all kinds of diseases. Some were so hungry they ate human flesh. One story goes that two women in the Rimini area gave shelter to 17 travellers, murdered them in their sleep and ate them. The eighteenth man was able to take action and kill the women.

A historian records the disasters. It is not often we are lucky enough to have a historian who records disasters in minute detail, but in Anghiari there was such a one writing around 1614, Lorenzo Taglieschi. His was no bureaucratic record. He was oppressed by the events, and this experience

impressed itself on his mind.

Since this dimension cannot be ignored in historical writings, we shall now follow Taglieschi's example and list the disasters in the order in which they occurred.

Floods and famine. We have records of the Tiber flooding in the year 589.¹³⁹ Much of the land could not be cultivated after the floods; starvation ensued and a rise in mortality. A remedy was sought in prayers by popes, citizens and peasants calling on God.

The balance between the need for, and the production of, food was very precarious. Two bad harvests in a row already constituted a disaster.¹⁴⁰ There was starvation at the regional level and in restricted areas. "Florence, situated in an area that is not exactly poor, suffered 111 years of famine between 1371 and 1791; there were only 16 years of exceptionally good harvests. However, the hilly land of Tuscany, with its olives and wine, could not survive without grain from Sicily, which merchants had already been importing before the 13th century." The towns were suffering despite their stores of grain. "Paradoxically, suffering was much greater in the countryside. The peasants were dependent on the merchants, towns and landowners. As they had hardly any stores to spare, they were unable to cope in emergencies, and had no option but to move to the crowded towns and beg on the streets ..."¹⁴¹

Drought. In 1119, there was a great drought. The trees and vines dried up. Famine followed. The third misfortune in a row was the plague. Animals and humans fell sick.¹⁴²

In 1226, cold weather led to famine.¹⁴³

In 1136, Tuscany suffered extreme heat, which gave rise to fires and then famine. Once again, many were killed off by the plague. The outbreak was so terrible that Anghiari was almost deserted.¹⁴⁴

Snow. Huge amounts of snow fell on twelve occasions in 1162 with serious consequences for seeds, trees and vines. The snows were followed by three years of terrible drought that almost destroyed the town. As always, it was the poor people who were hit the hardest. About 200 people received alms each day, a sign of social mindedness.¹⁴⁵

Rain. The usual run of plagues occurred. In 1269 there was heavy rainfall with flooding, damage to houses and mills, then famine.¹⁴⁶

Soon afterwards, in 1272, there were rain storms throughout the months of June, July and August, then a great heatwave. The following spring, the seeds that had been sown were choked by weeds.¹⁴⁷ As the harvest was so poor, the price of grain rose to giddy heights.

The next famine followed in 1275, and in 1285 rain caused great damage. In 1286, the snow was deep. In 1302, another drought.

The regional grain stores were located in Arezzo. If famine was imminent, this was the point of distribution for sacks of flour.

The town on fire. In 1307, fire broke out near Porta degli Auspicij and spread to Via del Borghetto.¹⁴⁸

Drought. There was a long period of drought in the same year, resulting in famine. Grain came from Arezzo and was distributed to the poor, who would otherwise have starved.¹⁴⁹

Flooding. In 1328, floods washed away houses, humans, cattle and soil. The flooded fields remained bare. The result was two years of famine. Bishop Guido, the ruler of Arezzo, had 200 sacks of grain sent to the poor of Anghiari. The price of grain rose, speculators became active, the Bishop sent more grain to the piazza and ruled that no-one was to sell it at a higher price.¹⁵⁰

Winter. In 1322, huge amounts of snow fell, followed by eight months without rain. Many peasants were so hungry they fled to Arezzo and the Maremma region.¹⁵¹

In August 1323, an infectious disease spread through the area; those who caught it had a high temperature and severe headaches. Nearly everyone was affected. Sixty people died.¹⁵² A similar disease cropped up in 1580.¹⁵³

In 1325, heavy snowfalls on 11th April caused everyone to believe the vines had frozen.¹⁵⁴

Famine and plague. Disasters revealed people's fears.

They believed famines were linked to the stars and their constellations, as they did in the great famine of 1329, which affected the whole of Tuscany. Once more, Arezzo had to provide grain. The famine was followed by an outbreak of the plague. The population in town and country was greatly reduced.¹⁵⁵

Miracle. In 1330, no rain fell for five months. Suddenly it rained on 25th October. People said this was a miracle.¹⁵⁶

In 1331, however, there was a great surplus of food. Having been through the famine, people were amazed.¹⁵⁷

Flooding. Nevertheless, a fresh disaster hit the following year – a flood of Biblical proportions covered the whole of Tuscany. The news spread that bridges had been destroyed and shops badly damaged in Florence. In the area around Anghiari, the waters carried off houses and cattle and rendered many fields barren.

Speculation in the price of grain. In 1337, there was a surplus of food after the harvest. Prices fell. However, the next food crisis followed in 1338, and prices rocketed.¹⁵⁸ Florence had to send grain.

Help. The commune helped the poor by allowing them to gather wood in the forests, but forbade the killing of animals. The poor were permitted to sell wood on the market. Moreover, the commune sold a number of plots of land, earmarking them for the growing of crops for the poor.¹⁵⁹

Storm. In November 1337, the *Badia* was struck by lightning, causing eight neighbouring houses to collapse. Six people died. The *campanile* was not rebuilt until 1436.¹⁶⁰

A comet appeared in the eastern sky in March 1340 and was visible for two months. People believed it was the cause of the widespread death that then occurred. An order was issued to the effect that when a dead person was carried to church, he was to be buried immediately, and the mourners were not to stay long, as had been their wont. Famine followed in the wake of the plague. The population declined. The rulers in Perugia had to send grain, and opened a bread shop for the poor.

One disaster followed on the heels of another. Hail partially destroyed the harvest.¹⁶¹

In 1347, the fields remained barren. Hungry peasants resorted to eating grass. Their immune systems were weakened from lack of food. Infectious diseases were rampant. Many people died of starvation. A shop was set up for the sale of grain provided by Perugia.¹⁶²

The Black Death. In 1348, Europe suffered one of its greatest disasters ever – an outbreak of the plague of unimaginable proportions.¹⁶³ In his *Decameron*, Boccaccio described life in the face of impending death. Ninety out every hundred persons died in the region around Anghiari. In the town, 75 per cent died. The poor were the most likely to die – nearly all of them succumbed.

No amount of imagining will enable us to comprehend the cruel reality of this disaster. The problems that arose are illustrated by the fact that, in order to bury their dead, communities had to make special combined efforts and reinforce them with rituals. A “black confraternity” came into being (*Confraternità nera*).

In this context, Heaven was invoked in a visible way, and the invocation made manifest for all times: a church dedicated to Our Lady of Mercy was built in the most conspicuous location on the

main square.

Strange to say, when the Black Death was over, many of the survivors were in possession of great wealth bequeathed to them by the dead.

A series of disasters. Flooding occurred in 1353. A hot southerly wind scorched part of the fruit crop. Famine in Tuscany.

In the same year, a mighty earthquake shook the Upper Tiber Valley. In Sansepolcro, many people died when their houses collapsed on top of them. About 500 persons were made homeless. Help arrived quickly, especially from the rival town of Anghiari. The greatest help was provided by stonemasons.

This illustrates human charity at a time of disaster. In its immediacy, it overrode all prejudice that appeared set in stone.

The year 1374 was a time of famine and plague throughout Tuscany. Even the head of the administration in Anghiari, the *vicario*, died.¹⁶⁴

Floods in 1379.

In 1383, the plague was again rife in Tuscany. Part of the population of Anghiari fled into the countryside. The town ruler feared the empty town could fall prey to its enemies and ruled that no-one should leave. However, not even this order prevented people from escaping from impending death.¹⁶⁵

In 1391, famine and a serious attack of the plague struck again. Every day brought many deaths. In order not to alarm the people, no bells were tolled for the dead, and they were buried without ceremony. Shops were shut. The town mourned. The inhabitants started to quarrel with the soldiers from Florence.¹⁶⁶

In 1392, there was a shortage of grain.¹⁶⁷

In 1400, the whole of Tuscany suffered from a serious outbreak of the plague and the usual resulting famine. People fled from the towns and into the countryside.¹⁶⁸

Two hundred people died of a renewed outbreak of the plague between May and September 1411. Yet again, many fled into the countryside and Anghiari became depopulated.¹⁶⁹

On 9th May 1413, the population went in solemn procession to pray for an end to the rain that had been falling for the previous two months.¹⁷⁰

An earthquake shook the ground, but Anghiari suffered no damage. People believed their many wells and springs were able to absorb the powerful underground wind.¹⁷¹

In 1417, there was another outbreak of the plague.¹⁷²

In 1418, it rained from September to the beginning of January, resulting in flooding. The sowing season was unsuccessful and years of famine followed. Many people died, and Florence helped with supplies of grain.¹⁷³

People went hungry at the end of 1441.¹⁷⁴

In 1442, there was no rain for five months. The peasants walked in processions and prayed for the heavens to open.¹⁷⁵

Great damage was caused by a storm on 30th August 1443, following the feast of the beheading of St. John the Baptist. The roof of Sant'Agostino was struck by lightning.¹⁷⁶ There was another serious storm on 4th August, which lifted the roofs off the fortress and the *vicario's* palace.¹⁷⁷

In 1449, the plague revisited the region. Nearly all the inhabitants fled into the countryside, but people died there too. There was an eight-month-long famine. Two hundred people died, mostly peasants and the poor.¹⁷⁸

Some people interpreted the earthquake that struck in 1451 as the wrath of God. Many left their

houses and spent the night in the open air. Many religious houses held processions.¹⁷⁹

The plague raged again in 1463. A third of the population died between April and October. People again fled to the countryside.¹⁸⁰

Huge amounts of rain fell in 1471, and there was flooding. The bridge over the Sovara collapsed and was washed away. The new bridge cost 35 florins.¹⁸¹

The year 1478 saw plague and flight to the countryside.¹⁸²

In 1485, a more terrible form of the plague visited the land. In four months, there were 150 deaths in the town and even more in the surrounding countryside.¹⁸³

The wells froze in the severe cold weather of 1491, even on the Mercatale. People could not draw water for six days. Deep snow followed. Time and again, until 4th June, the tramontane wind covered the mountains with snow. People were surprised the harvest was good in spite of this.¹⁸⁴

Astrologists forecast severe flooding. They were right, people said, because floods came in 1494. Flooding was so bad that all the bridges were destroyed. The mills on the Sovara were submerged and many houses ruined.¹⁸⁵

In 1495, the whole of Tuscany suffered terrible famine on account of the floods. The Council decided the confraternity should sell some of their land to pay for grain and distribute it among the poor “for the love of God”. This would prevent the poor who could not afford expensive grain from starving. The commune also took action, as did individual families who gave alms.

Lorenzo Taglieschi wrote: “Nevertheless, countless people died of hunger. Some fell down dead on the street.”

The rumour circulated that people had been seen flying on large horses between Arezzo and Anghiari, making a dreadful noise and beating drums. This filled many who were suffering from hunger and the passage of armies with extreme terror.¹⁸⁶ Such stories and imaginings are the effect of hunger on the brain.

In Florence, an ancient law was invoked to chase peasants who had come to escape disaster out of the town. They were declared to be “foreigners” and expelled.¹⁸⁷

Famine struck again in 1501. The export of crops from the surrounding country was largely forbidden.¹⁸⁸

There was severe famine in 1506. No grain was to be found anywhere, so “it was very hard to survive”. Bread sold to the starving was passed through a window in the chancellery (*cancelleria*), because it was feared the building might be stormed.¹⁸⁹

In 1508, there was a famine. No-one was allowed to export grain outside the republic. Many speculators were caught and severely punished.¹⁹⁰

Large hailstones fell in 1513, destroying part of the vines and even killing cattle. Afterwards, there was a great drought.¹⁹¹

Ten years of plague. An outbreak of the plague in 1519 lasted for ten years and killed 500 people.

They believed it had been heralded by an earthquake. At first, people returned to the town, placing sentries to guard the town gate both day and night, since other towns were already infected. This measure gave Anghiari some protection from the plague.

Armies on the march made the plague worse.

Then the epidemic broke out in the town. The townsfolk fantasised, saying the illness had been brought in from outside the town by a cat; the cat had been chased from house to house and had thus spread the deadly disease.

Those who had initially fled to the town, now fled back into the countryside. Hardly anything was functioning in the town any more.

Normal funerals could no longer be held, so the dead were taken by horse-drawn cart to the graveyard at Burazzano di sotto, which was part of the inheritance of the mercenary leader Agnolo Prospero.

Despite – or perhaps because of – the nature of the times, they celebrated big weddings, the watchword being eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die.

People imagined they were being hit by the scourge of a wrathful God. They tried to appease him with processions and gifts, as their predecessors had done in the case of the gods of Antiquity. In their families it was usually the mother who could be roused to pity rather than the father, so in the same way they turned to the Madonna, the successor to the pre-Christian great mother, begging her to placate him. In their desperation, they believed Mary could work miracles. What else could they do in such a devilish situation?

They sought a “particular advocate” (*avocato particolare*), to plead their case before God, believing they first had to honour and worship this figure (*a honore e devotione*). In 1524, they therefore began building a church on the graveyard where the victims of the plague were buried in Burazzano and dedicated it to the glorious (*glorioso*) St. Roch (*Rocco*), the advocate and defender (*avocato e defensore*) of plague victims.

The church was built quickly, as the desperate people had inherited unusually large fortunes.

It was here that the Red Cape Confraternity (*Compagnia delle cappe rosse*) was set up. Many wealthy families joined.

In 1530, a church dedicated to San Rocco and a changing room were built on the street leading to the Abbey, in a house bought from the Compagnia Nera.

To help the poor, the Republic ordered that next time soldiers were billeted, supplies were to be handed out by the confraternities.

In times like those, hospitality was no longer practised. It was made a punishable offence.

In Anghiari, the sick were no longer cared for at home, but in a hastily erected infirmary near Porta di Sotto.

In such desperate times, prices rocketed and avaricious and cruel speculators (*avari e crudeli*) exploited the pitiful situation.

Old enmities reared their ugly heads again. A rumour circulated that Borgo San Sepolcro had sent two newly infected men to Anghiari. They arrived at Caviella (at the foot of the hill, near what was later to be the railway station) and embraced Guido di Nardo and Maddalena, Gabriello di Niccola's servant. They “used her carnally”. When she screamed, the enraged populace locked them up in Palazzo Nuti, laying siege to it until the wretched men breathed their last.

The neighbouring town was outraged. Further conflicts ensued; there was one fight in the middle of the piazza in Anghiari that ended with three dead from Sansepolcro.

Guards were sent into the countryside to watch out for passing strangers.¹⁹²

The year 1528 was a time of famine, high mortality and wars.¹⁹³

A comet appeared at the end of March.

Attacks of the plague became more violent as the heat of summer increased. Rich and poor were equally affected. It was so bad that ten people died on one day alone. Once again, the plague was followed by famine. Some cynics put about a pseudo-rational explanation, saying the plague was a

good thing, because if so many had not died, it would have been impossible to feed everybody. A second even more cynical assertion was that the plague had its uses, because there was not much fruit. If the hungry had filled their stomachs with fruit, more people would have become ill.

Lorenzo Taglieschi lamented the end of brotherly love. Each sought to help himself.

In this distressful situation, poor people were fighting over bread. On the bridge over the Tiber, they ambushed a cart with grain from Borgo San Sepolcro, carried the food off to Anghiari and distributed it.

The case came before a court of the Republic, and Bernardo del Caccia was ordered to pay for the booty.

For security reasons, grain for the poor was no longer sold in the chancellery, but in the courtyard of the *vicario's* palace. On one occasion, there was plundering and great uproar. It was feared the poor might attack the houses of the wealthy.

As there were no occupying forces in Anghiari, Florence sent mercenaries. Since there were no provisions for the mercenaries, they were allowed to plunder, which they did in the worst possible manner. The soldiers committed many acts of violence, dishonouring their victims as well. Many court cases were filed. The republic had to bring the *capitano* before a court of law and find a replacement for him.

“By the grace of God and St. Roch” the townsfolk were able to breathe again. Official documents contain no reference to any accusations, public or otherwise, brought against God and the saints for the misfortune that befell widows and orphans in the form of the plague that cost the lives of 600 people.

Troubles. In 1540, famine was everywhere, but the *priori* had taken precautions, for instance by obtaining 600 bushels of grain from Florence. However, when the Camaldolesian monks wanted to move their grain from Anghiari to Camaldoli, the people assaulted the carts. The duke mediated a pragmatic solution by ordering the people to pay for the grain.¹⁹⁴

In 1542, Anghiari was hit by a large plague of locusts that ate some of the plants right down to the roots. They were killed off in the autumn by a strong easterly wind. The insects covered the ground and were eaten in their turn by the animals, who put on weight that year.¹⁹⁵

There were seven earth tremors in 1542.¹⁹⁶

In 1544, there were floods, a bad harvest and famine.¹⁹⁷

In 1548, a famine led to a popular uprising with two fatal casualties.

The year 1550 saw a famine and successful resistance to ducal tax rises on the part of the peasants.¹⁹⁸

In 1555 many people died of a bad fever.¹⁹⁹

In 1557, it rained so heavily that the water level in the Tiber Valley was seven ells higher than the average. Buildings and bridges were badly damaged. Mills, including the fulling mill, were demolished by the waters.²⁰⁰

In 1558 the valley floor was hit by an earthquake, but Anghiari was spared.²⁰¹

Famine struck again in 1563.²⁰²

A terrific storm raged in 1575 and caused a vast amount of damage. The confraternity only harvested half its usual amount of crops.²⁰³

The plague hit Lombardy again in 1575. The townsfolk were terrified of another outbreak; they posted sentinels and banned the housing of strangers.²⁰⁴

In 1579/1580, rain fell continuously, so peasants were unable to work in their fields. People went

hungry, and many died. The confraternity tried to help.²⁰⁵

The plague ravaged Lombardy in 1585. A general uneasiness set in. Over a period of four years, until 1585, nearly all citizens were infected with sheep and goats' disease (*mal di castrone e del montone*). Sentinels were posted to guard against the plague. Every house, up to number 262, had to provide one man for duty.

The harvest was poor in 1589.

Famine followed in 1590. The town was increasingly preoccupied with managing the grain supply.²⁰⁶

The vineyards were destroyed by a storm in 1609. There was hardly any wine for several years.²⁰⁷

"In this year [1613], and with the start of this war, Italy underwent famines, the plague, plundering, ruin and other misfortunes; they spread throughout the land, devastated the peoples and annihilated them. ... This is but God's judgement. For many years, he has been using these many scourges to punish the world for its sins, as one will read in the "historic memories" of these times." (Lorenzo Taglieschi)²⁰⁸

The plague 1631/1632. Later, Lorenzo Taglieschi described the plague of 1631/1632.²⁰⁹ It was the infamous outbreak of 1629 in the Duchy of Milan that Alessandro Manzoni (1785-1873) reconstructed in his book "The Betrothed" (1823).

The disease led people to change their behaviour; they became cruel and interested only in self-preservation.

When the plague was approaching, priests promised indulgences.

In 1630, the Health Magistracy of Florence banned monks (*frati*), Jews and merchants from travelling, for fear of the plague spreading. All annual fairs were cancelled. The merchants' comment was: "and the result was that the world suffered greatly".

News came from Leghorn that four people from Anghiari had died of the plague there.

Comprehensive measures were taken as soon as there were signs of the plague approaching. People became more afraid once the sick started dying in the town. Panic took hold when ten people wasted away in Castello Montauto, in the countryside. All roads were closed, no-one was allowed to pass through the area. All links to the outside world were cut off.

Panic reached such a pitch that the *sergente* and his ten soldiers were allowed to use their discretion to kill people from Castello Montauto or lock them up in their houses.

If anyone fell at all ill, he risked being shut up in his house for eight days, for others to monitor the progress of his illness. People thought the plague was transmitted by air. Neither doctors nor priests were admitted.

At first, the dead were immured in their houses; frequently they were no burials or burial services. Some of the dead were thrown into pits to become "food for dogs and wild animals".

What was Lorenzo Taglieschi thinking of when he wrote these punishments were the "just rewards for many injustices"?

All towns in the area shut themselves off; no-one was allowed to enter. Trade came to a standstill, as Arezzo had blocked the road to Florence. If anyone arrived from a place affected by the plague, he could be killed.

In Florence, the slaughtering of animals was forbidden for one whole month, on pain of death.

What was more, excessive rain fell in October.

The parish priest of Ponte alla Piera became ill. Seeming to have recovered, he stepped outside his

front door and fell down dead. No-one buried him. “He became fodder for wolves and dogs, who ran off with bits of his corpse into the countryside.” Once again, Lorenzo Taglischi is merciless in his comment: “It can be said that all this has happened as a result of God's just judgement”. His idea of God is unerring.

The order was given that all dogs were to be killed.

In other parts of Europe, too, the plague brought about drastic alterations in people's behaviour. In 1665, Samuel Pepys noted in London: “This disease makes us more cruel to one another than we are to dogs.”²¹⁰

The populace breathed a sigh of relief – the plague seemed to be over – but it returned several times.

In 1631, the Council placed an order with the artist Bastiano Pontenani for drawings of San Rocco. He was to distribute individual sheets of paper depicting the patron saint to those who lived in fear of the plague.

When the plague had passed, people rejoiced by lighting bonfires, firing shots into the air and making a great deal of noise.

However, some deaths did occur from the plague in the following year (1632).

In the 19th century, Alessandro Manzoni gave an account of the plague in his novel “The Betrothed”.²¹¹

What lies behind the fact that we have so few references to most disasters and such scanty evidence?

Notes on:

Disasters (11.)

- 1 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 101. Ascani, 1973, 186, who also published a work by the contemporary poet Ser Bartolomeo.
- 2 Machiavelli, 1520/1987, 65.
- 3 Machiavelli, 1520/1987, 71/73.
- 4 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 96.
- 5 Letter dated 1384, quoted in Ascani, 1973, 193.
- 6 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 70.
- 7 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 71.
- 8 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 74.
- 9 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 84.
- 10 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 100/101.
- 11 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 105.
- 12 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 122.
- 13 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 144.
- 14 Evidence in Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 147/148.
- 15 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 149.
- 16 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 153.
- 17 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 157/158.
- 18 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 161.
- 19 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 162.
- 20 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 163.
- 21 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 164.
- 22 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 166.

- 23 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 167.
- 24 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 167.
- 25 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 178.
- 26 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 178.
- 27 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 186.
- 28 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 191.
- 29 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 193.
- 30 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 201.
- 31 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 204.
- 32 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 205.
- 33 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 206.
- 34 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 209.
- 35 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 211.
- 36 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 213.
- 37 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 218.
- 38 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 222.
- 39 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 212.
- 40 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 226/227, 228.
- 41 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 229.
- 42 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 232.
- 43 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 239.
- 44 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 242.
- 45 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 248/249.
- 46 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 257.
- 47 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 282.
- 48 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 292.
- 49 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 296.
- 50 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 309.
- 51 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 311ff.
- 52 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 315.
- 53 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 316.
- 54 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 318.
- 55 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 346. On the subject of special purpose-built prisons, see pp. 347 and 350.
- 56 Ascani, 1973, 239/240.
- 57 See Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 74/75, with illustrations on pp. 74 and 15.
- 58 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1990.
- 59 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 72.
- 60 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 147.
- 61 Greci, 1998.
- 62 Ascani, 1973, 257.
- 63 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 149. See also 150, 161, 162, 164, 166, 167, 168, 169, 175, 177, 179, 183/185, 186. See also Ascani, 218/219, 297/324.
- 64 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 74.
- 65 Newbigin, 2002, 41/246.
- 66 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 154, 161, 164, 165, 167, 176, 177, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 185, 189/195, 197/198, 205.
- 67 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 155/156.
- 68 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 161.
- 69 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 164.
- 70 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 179, 209.
- 71 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 193, 197, 205.
- 72 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 212, 263/264.
- 73 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 194, 197, 198, 201 (design for an outer gate for Porta Fiorentina), 204, 205, 206, 210, 211, 213, 216.
- 74 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 197, 204.
- 75 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 197.

- 76 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 197.
 77 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 204, 205.
 78 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 204, 205, 210, 211, 213, 250.
 79 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 265.
 80 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 206.
 81 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 212.
 82 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 214.
 83 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 218.
 84 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 225, 232, 236, 248, 249, 253.
 85 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 227, 230, 232.
 86 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 239, 241, 248, 253.
 87 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 239, 240.
 88 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 306, 314.
 89 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 308.
 90 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 310, 316, 325.
 91 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 310, 312, 316, 334, 338.
 92 Taglieschi, 1991/1614.
 93 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 310.
 94 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 314.
 95 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 327.
 96 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 327.
 97 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 335.
 98 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 341.
 99 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 156/157.
 100 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 159/160. Ascani, 1973, 252.
 101 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 264.
 102 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 265.
 103 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 265, 266.
 104 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 204, 205, 211, 216.
 105 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 230, 232, 235, 236, 238, 239, 241, 247 (he died of the plague in 1521).
 106 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 205, 206, 207, 215, 218 (in 1488 he received a plot of land in front of the well below the Mercatale), 219/220 (his family tree), 226 (his loss of the fort of Lonzano in Romagna), 229.
 107 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 221, 223, 225, 227, 241, 248, 249, 253, 261.
 108 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 264.
 109 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 306, 322.
 110 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 310, 314, 334, 335.
 111 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 350, 351.
 112 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 205, 206, 209.
 113 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 206, 215, 226, 263.
 114 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 206, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213/214, 216, 221.
 115 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 237, 238, 240, 257.
 116 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 263, 266, 281/282, 284, 292, 299/300, 302, 306, 307, 308, 310, 327, 350.
 117 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 327.
 118 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 249.
 119 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 329/330, 331.
 120 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 240.
 121 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 283, 285, 297, 301.
 122 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 240.
 123 Brucke, 1981.
 124 Lanza, 1991.
 125 Ludwig Goldscheider, quoted in Vostell, 1983, 6.
 126 For the Battle of Anghiari see also Ascani, 1973, 277/295. Giusto Giusti: "Giovedì a di giugno ebbi lettera da Agnolo che 'l campo nostro era ridotto ad Anghiari e che disfacheva tutto quel paese. Giovedì a di 30 giugno la matina a terza venne in Fiorenza la notizia come le genti nostre, cioè de' Fiorentini, avevano rotto ieri, che fu il di di San Pietro, el campo del duca di Milano, ciò è Niccolò Piccinino, ad Anghiari a piè della città verso el Borgo, e torsagli circa 3000 cavagli e presaro 16 capi di squadra e altri uomini d'arme assai

d'altri luoghi. Fu grandissima vittoria, e tolsaro loro gli standardi. Fecisene gran festa, e meritamente, perché fu la salute di Toscana. Scampò Niccolò Piccinino con circa 1500 cavalli in lo Borgo e la notte medesima fuggì e passò l'alpi con gran suo danno e vergogna.” (QUOTED IN NEWBEGIN, 2002.65)

- 127 The number of dead is disputed. Taglieschi mentions various authors' estimates. Strange to say, he does not trust Machiavelli's (“indegno di fede”) (Taglieschi 1991/1614, 173/175). Ascari, 1973, 284.
- 128 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 178.
- 129 National Gallery of Ireland in Dublin: the Battle of Anghiari. Painted on a chest, presumably in the 1460s. It shows the floodplain, Anghiari with the bridge over the Tiber and the stradone, and also Borgo, Città di Castello and Citerna. – Polcri, 1991, 359/363. Polcri, 2000, No.11, 151/154 and illustration p. 153.
- 130 Leonardo worked on this painting from 1503 to 1506, but never completed it. He was experimenting with the ancient technique of encaustic (or hot wax) painting, but failed to produce paint that would hold. Various sketches of the battle have been preserved. Popp, 1928, illustrations 41/58. Moreover, a copy by Rubens still exists, and also a later engraving by Edelinck. Hermann Grimm [1828-1901], *Leben Michelangelos*. Vienna, s.a., illustration p. 218. Zöllner, 1997.
- 131 See also Ascari, 1973, 285/286.
- 132 Vostell, 1983.
- 133 Machiavelli, 1987, 343/349.
- 134 Babbini/Finzi, 1979,9.
- 135 For blacksmiths' nicknames see: Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 38/39.
- 136 On this topic see: Mostra, 1968 (18th to 20th centuries). The exhibition is unfortunately only designed with antiques in mind. No reference is made to the provenance of the materials, the organisation of the workshops, who traded the weapons, or who commissioned them. Trotta, 1993, Appendice, (Giacomo Bartolomei) 95/100.
- 137 Weapons and pistols by Giuseppe Guardiani (1797, 1800) in Musée Hôtel des Invalides, Paris, and in Museo Stibbert in Florence (Anghiari, 1979, illustration p. 11).
- 138 Bianchini, 1984. Painting in Museo Taglieschi: illustration p. 32. Nomi, 1984. Giuliani, 1984. Bianchini,1999. Bini, 2004, no. 22, 67/78.
- 139 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 48.
- 140 Braudel, 1990, *Der Alltag*, 68.
- 141 Braudel, 1990, *Der Alltag*, 70/71.
- 142 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 56.
- 143 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 56.
- 144 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 56.
- 145 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 58.
- 146 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 74/75.
- 147 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 75.
- 148 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 82.
- 149 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 82.
- 150 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 85.
- 151 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 86.
- 152 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 87.
- 153 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 87.
- 154 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 87.
- 155 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 92.
- 156 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 92.
- 157 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 92.
- 158 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 94.
- 159 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 95.
- 160 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 94.
- 161 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 96.
- 162 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 98/99.
- 163 On the following: Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 99/100. – The plague first broke out in Europe in the 11th century, but it was not until 1894 that Yersin discovered the bacillus responsible for it (Braudel, 1990, *Der Alltag*, 81/82).
- 164 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 109.
- 165 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 114.

- 166 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 144/145.
- 167 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 146.
- 168 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 149.
- 169 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 152.
- 170 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 152.
- 171 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 152.
- 172 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 154.
- 173 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 154.
- 174 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 186.
- 175 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 187.
- 176 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 188.
- 177 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 189.
- 178 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 194.
- 179 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 196/197.
- 180 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 203.
- 181 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 209.
- 182 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 213.
- 183 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 217.
- 184 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 219.
- 185 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 221.
- 186 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 222.
- 187 Herzfelde, 1978, 196.
- 188 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 225.
- 189 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 231.
- 190 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 232.
- 191 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 237.
- 192 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 247/254.
- 193 For the following, see Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 259/261.
- 194 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 299.
- 195 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 300.
- 196 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 301.
- 197 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 304/305, 306.
- 198 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 305.
- 199 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 315.
- 200 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 315/316.
- 201 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 317. The floodplain was particularly badly hit.
- 202 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 322.
- 203 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 338.
- 204 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 339.
- 205 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 343.
- 206 For this, see Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 349.
- 207 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 362.
- 208 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 367.
- 209 Lorenzo Taglieschi, *Le Peste* 1630, 1631, 1632. Published: Daniel Finzi (ed.), Lorenzo Taglieschi. *Peste* 1630, 1631, 1632. Libro Giornale de'debitori e creditori segnato F. Città di Castello 2002. Presentazione written by Tommaso Fanfani. Biography of Taglieschi.
- 210 Quoted in Braudel 1990, *Der Alltag*, 83.
- 211 On the subject of the plague see Landucci, 1978, 56, 57 (1481), 72 (1484), 207 (1497). Luca Landucci: "And on 18th April 1479 the plague wreaked such havoc in our parts that I went to my villa in Dicomano with all my people [i.e. his family] and left my apprentices in charge of my bottega" (Landucci, 1978, 49).

12. The rule of the Medici 1512-1737

The first coup d'état: rule by princes

“The Medici, for instance, gained [long-term] dominance in Florence [in the 15th century] without themselves holding office, merely through utilising their influence and a systematic manipulation of election procedures.” (Max Weber)¹

The Medici ruled from 1512-1737.

In 1494, they had been sent into exile.

Coup d'état. In the years 1511/1512, Italy was a battlefield for foreign armies.

In 1512, the exiled Medici pulled off a coup d'état in Florence and seized power again. However, opposition in the city was so great that for a time Florence had to call itself a republic.

Nevertheless, with the aid of foreign powers, above all through the intervention of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (the chief enemy of the Reformation), the Medici destroyed the Republic and proclaimed themselves princes.²

They transformed Florence into a police state, hired mercenaries, built up a comprehensive network of informers and established secret prisons, into which thousands disappeared without trial.

In 1512, Vitellozzo Vitelli, a cruel mercenary in the service of the Medici, laid siege to the town of Anghiari. The town surrendered rather than risk large-scale destruction and plundering.

Several uprisings in Florence failed, including that of 1513 and the “Friday Tumult” of 1527.

Opposition. The state had to deal with the losers over a period of more than a century. The Medici faced two groups of opponents: those who had stayed and those who had emigrated.

The fall of the Marzocco. In Anghiari, the *vicario* Lodovico Scarfi had the Marzocco, the stone lion that symbolised Florence, gilded.

This act signalled Scarfi's strict application of the rule of law. The money for the gold plating came from the many fines imposed by the *vicario*, including those imposed on the opposition for their “offences”.

Until then, the lion had been standing on a low wall at the entrance to the Mercatale, next to the urinal (*pisciatoio*). It was now raised to the top of the pillory.

However, it was not long before the lion was knocked off its lofty perch and damaged. The deed was done by Don Francesco Balulli, a supporter of the Republic, who had been banned from Florence and was working as a parish priest in Carciano.

It appears the statue was hardly in a condition to be reinstated. The *priori* therefore handed it over to Ilioneo Angelieri, a Medici party man. He had the lion restored and placed on a corbel at the top of his house on Piazza del Borghetto (Piazza Mameli), where a copy of the original stands to this day. (The original is in Museo Taglieschi on the opposite side of the square.)

The Republic is temporarily re-born.

The sack of Rome. Since Emperor Charles V could not pay his army their wages in 1527, some of his troops went off by themselves, marched on Rome and plundered the papal city mercilessly (*sacco di Roma*). This caused a huge shock that has acquired the status of a myth. One contemporary remarked: “Hell is nothing compared to Rome in its present condition”.

Liberation. The sack of Rome in 1527 weakened the foreign policy alliance between the pope and

France, the supporters of Medici rule in Florence. This enabled the enemies of the Medici and friends of the Republic to throw off the hated Medici rule and re-establish their former freedom. Thus, from 1527 to 1530, there was a return to democracy. The people were urged on by Benedetto da Foiano, a preacher of the same mind as Savonarola. The Medici were declared to be rebels.

The Republic in Anghiari. The Medici had fallen into disgrace, so the *vicario* in Anghiari was ordered to remove their coat of arms from all public places. This order was carried out immediately. All painted coats of arms were plastered over and the sculpted ones taken down, but opportunists hid them in case they might be needed again.⁴

The second coup d'état: the princes rule once and for all

Switching alliances. In Rome, the Medici pope Clement VII (1525-1534) changed sides. He abandoned his alliance with Francis I, the king of France, and allied himself with the Emperor Charles V, the same ruler who had sacked Rome in 1527. Clement VII crowned him emperor in Bologna.

The pope and the emperor decided that Florence should lose its ancient liberty and be subject to a new duke.

Tuscany is plundered. Initially, the Emperor Charles V allowed his troops to move around Tuscany, leaving them free to plunder and blackmail. Cortona was forced to pay 20,000 *scudi* – equal to the amount the emperor paid for his daughter's dowry. Castiglione and Arezzo were plundered.

The siege of Florence. The Florentines fought courageously to resist the pact. In 1529/1530, an imperial army besieged Florence for ten months. One of the leaders of the defenders of the city was Michelangelo Buonarrotti, the sculptor, painter and architect.⁵ He was in charge of the construction of fortifications.

The mercenary leader Malatesta Baglioni was a traitor. He betrayed the city and offered his services to the emperor, with the result that the Republic was forced to capitulate.

Malatesta Baglioni (born in Perugia in 1491, died in Bettona in 1531) did not receive any reward, because the emperor loved betrayal but not the betrayer. Despised by everyone, Baglioni returned to his estate in Bettona, where he died not long after.

Restoration in 1530. After Florence had been taken, Charles V restored the Medici dynasty. The emperor refused to allow a republican government without a hereditary ruler, and appointed the pope's nephew, Alessandro Medici, as duke. Moreover, the new duke was to commit himself to an alliance with the Habsburgs, and to seal it with a dynastic marriage between himself and the emperor's daughter Margarita.

A new constitution was introduced in 1532. On paper, it was republican, but the Medici were able to manipulate it to their advantage.

The office of *gonfaloniere* was abolished; in its place, a four-man council was elected by a Senate of 48 citizens for a three-month term. This *Magistrato Supremo* was the highest administrative authority and had wide-ranging powers, including the appointment of civil servants in Tuscan towns.

There was also a Council of 200 elected for life, but this was simply a matter of form. It was only competent to deal with minor issues.

Alessandro Medici always chaired the administrative bodies and took the title of Duke of the Florentine Republic (*Duca della Republica Fiorentina*). He was awarded an annual salary of 12,000 *scudi*.

Alessandro had the great bell (*la Vacca*) removed from the Palazzo della Signoria, as a sign that there would no longer be a parliament to announce change.

The Medici prince increased the use of military force. The Fortezza da Basso was built (1530/1534), a monstrosity that deeply offended the Florentines in their republican mentality. Alessandro paid for the Spanish garrison stationed in the fortress under the command of Alessandro Vitelli of Città di Castello.

A second fortress, the Fortezza del Belvedere, was built later on (1590/1594). The two fortresses held the city in a kind of vice.

The situation in Anghiari. Two parties formed in Anghiari. One supported the free Republic and the other the pope. Officially, the town was on the side of the Republic.

Alessandro Vitelli of Città di Castello, a mercenary leader in the pope's service, brought his troops to the town in 1512. He set up a huge siege machine – a catapult used to hurl huge stones – on the large square in front of the drawbridge. It destroyed the town tower. He then had the moat filled with wood that his soldiers had torn out of the houses standing unprotected outside the town wall. After a fight, Vitelli got his troops to demolish the wall of the outer gate.

Anghiari surrendered, as the town feared the terrible destruction wrought by the bombard. Alessandro Vitelli handed the town over to a man commissioned by the Medici pope Clement VII.⁶

Anghiari had to swear loyalty.

However, it retained the same rights it had enjoyed for 143 years.

In 1531, Duke Alessandro ordered all towns and districts within the state to establish a residence for an authorised representative (*ambasciatore*) in Florence – at their own expense.⁷

Alessandro Medici visited Anghiari in August 1536.

Tyrannicide. Alessandro Medici was hated for his tyranny. In 1537, he was murdered by his cousin Lorenzino Medici.

In a mythological way, Lorenzino came to be associated with Brutus, who had assassinated Julius Caesar on account of his disregard for the constitution.

The tyrannicide linked to the name of Brutus remained a hotly debated topic in Tuscany. Above all, it was the subject of plays. Michelangelo, who sympathised with the Republic and left Florence for Rome in protest at princely rule, never to return, sculpted a bust of Brutus.⁸

Rule by the grand dukes

Cosimo I (1537-1574). The 18-year-old Cosimo Medici succeeded Duke Alessandro Medici, his relative, who had died without an heir. Cosimo was the son of the *condottiere* Giovanni Medici, nicknamed dalle Bande Nere ("of the black bands").

In 1543, he paid a large sum to the emperor, who was chronically short of money. He thereby purchased not only the withdrawal of the imperial garrisons from Fortezza da Basso and the citadel of Leghorn but also the formal assignment of Tuscany to himself. From this time on, Tuscany was independent of the emperor.

Cosimo I tried to make the duchy as strong as possible. He built military structures and a system of fortresses, above all on the frontiers and with a fleet of warships. He imposed heavy taxation on the population in order to pay for the upkeep of his troops.

The conquest of Siena. The Republic of Siena resisted Florentine hegemony for many years.

Since 1530, the distrustful Emperor Charles V had had an army encamped in the city. This more or

less constituted a siege and robbed the Sienese of their independence. In 1551, Charles V ordered a mighty and relatively impregnable citadel to be built for his soldiers. The city, knowing a citadel of this kind would fall entirely into the hands of the occupying forces, rebelled against being silenced in this way.

As Charles V was busy fighting wars in Germany, Cosimo took over from him, laid siege to Siena and conquered the city in 1555. The emperor gave him the territory as a fiefdom in 1557, but on condition that he tolerated Spanish garrisons on Sienese territory.

Six hundred and fifty families emigrated from Siena to the nearby mountain town of Montalcino and entrenched themselves there for four years. They were joined by many others from the opposition in Florence. However, the last bastion of Sienese democracy fell in 1559, by force of weapons.

Title. In 1569, Cosimo coaxed the pope into giving him the higher ranking title of Grand Duke of Tuscany. He then persuaded King Philip II of Spain to confirm it.

The state as a whole. Cosimo's thinking marked a departure from the previous history of Tuscany in that it encompassed the whole territory rather than just the city of Florence. In his book *Florence and the Medici: the Pattern of Control*, John R. Hale pointed out that as Cosimo had grown up in a Tuscan village, he did not share the convictions of the two Florentine parties, who believed the land was there to be exploited by the city of Florence.⁹

Max Weber commented on the fact that "the policy of the princes, which on the whole was directed to the balancing of interests ... was certainly no longer the policy of an urban citizenry using the countryside merely as a means towards its own ends."¹⁰

Cosimo ended the Florentine monopoly on wool and silk and promoted production in Tuscany. He also facilitated the extraction of mineral resources.

John R. Hale commented further that a unifying dirigisme was now replacing the series of conquests and individual settlements that had previously marked the course of history.¹¹

Cosimo travelled widely to see things for himself. One of his tours took him to Anghiari in 1562, where he was welcomed with feasting. He stayed there one day.¹²

The capital also profited from this policy towards the territory. The population of Florence numbered about 60,000 in 1550, but grew to around 75,000 in 1600.

Handicrafts received ducal backing. Following an initiative from artists, Duke Cosimo founded the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno in Florence in 1563. John R. Hale mentioned the fact that it was the first academy of art to be set up in Europe. Its members comprised about 70 painters, sculptors and architects. Organisation was in the hands of Vasari, Bronzino and Bartolomeo Ammanni, among others.¹³

The rulers used this resource mainly to stage great acts of state and princely weddings.

Behind the scenes. In 1564, Cosimo abdicated, appointing his eldest son Francesco as regent. He continued to rule from behind the scenes, however, for a further ten years.

Pomp as reflected in clothing. The desire of dignitaries to distinguish themselves was subtly at odds with the traditional bourgeois view that one should not give oneself airs and graces, a view that had been around since the 13th century. On the other hand, the wealthy were constantly tempted to provide themselves with distinguishing features. Sometimes this was done unobtrusively, but at others it was all too obvious.

The wealthy were in fierce competition with one another regarding their social status, appearance and honour. Some were ruined by this, others almost so. Rivalry became more intense in the

principality, whose leaders took their cue from feudal courts. The government tried to prevent matters from going to extremes.

In 1546, Duke Cosimo I banned some luxury items of clothing: wealthy women were no longer allowed to wear silver belts, gold chains or overgowns made of a particularly expensive fabric from Lucca, rich in gold and silver thread.¹⁴

Resurgence of the nobility. In the 15th century, aristocratic titles had been in demand again, as only the nobility could hold important governmental posts in many towns and countries. A large number of social climbers, especially mercenary leaders, were falling over themselves to get one. A new noble class was thus emerging.¹⁵

One such mercenary leader in Anghiari, Agnolo Taglia, bought three country seats in 1539. He was less interested in real estate than in the titles that went with them.

Duke Cosimo Medici was keen to retain the loyalty of influential citizens. To this end, in 1561, he cleverly created a new class of nobles, the Order of St. Stephen. The prince was at the heart of the Order: he and his successors were to be its grand masters. Knighthood was also conferred on persons who were not of the old nobility, but like them, the new nobles bore hereditary titles. At the same time, the Grand Duke was able to fill his coffers, as every aspirant had to pay a large sum of money.

In Anghiari, the Musetti, Chieli, Ducci, Pichi and Mazzoni families were ennobled in this way.¹⁶

Corbels. House fronts in Anghiari also had to keep up with a generally increasing demand for elegance, but their owners did not always follow the trend. When Grand Duke Cosimo looked round Anghiari in 1562 he noticed many house fronts that were not modelled on Florentine examples.

He therefore suggested, without making it mandatory, that house owners should remove the corbels (*sporti*) from their house fronts, particularly on the piazza and in Borgo della Croce.¹⁷ From this time on, these had the reputation of being the most prestigious parts of the town.

This happened in the same year as the ancient Porta degli Auspicij (sic!) was demolished.

Lorenzo Taglieschi, writing in 1614, was critical of the measure. Many believed they were adopting the measure in order to beautify (*abbellire*) the town, whereas in fact they were “stripping the town of its ancient [!] character” (*tolsero via l’antichità del paese*). Furthermore, it was damaging the foundations, cellars (*cantine*) and water courses (*fosse*).¹⁸

Corbels remained on some of the houses.

Prestige. The following century was the era of palace-building in Florence. A specific law was passed to benefit wealthy persons who wished to extend their properties and convert their merchants' houses into noble palaces.

Courtly society. A class of republican-minded patricians was turning into one of courtiers. John R. Hale commented that the Florentines had swapped their freedom to participate in government for the freedom to be left alone, in peace and security. A court had spawned courtiers, he said.¹⁹

The grand dukes modelled their courtly rituals on those of the Spaniards.

The Barbolani country seat near Anghiari-Tavernelle. “The patrimonial-bureaucratic state sought to harmonise the contrasting interests of the nobility and the cities. However, since it wanted to use the nobility as officers and civil servants, it prohibited the purchase of noble estates by non-nobles, including the urban citizenry.” (Max Weber)²⁰

Between 1577 and 1582, Count Barbolani di Montauto had the mighty Villa La Barbolana built above the village of Tavernelle, to the west of Anghiari. It was designed by the stonemason Bernardo da Anghiari in the style of a central tower with rooms built around it.²¹

Francesco I (1574-1587). In 1574, having served as regent, the weak 33-year-old Francesco I succeeded to the duchy. Philip II had granted Cosimo the fiefdom of Siena in 1557 and in 1576 he bestowed the title of Grand Duke on Francesco. Francesco's temperament was such that he had alternating fits of melancholy and outbursts of rage. He did not enjoy being a ruler, but preferred to bury himself in laboratories, where he experimented with all kinds of substances and metals. He studied chemistry and, above all, alchemy. He often spent his time in Florentine workshops and wandered through the streets of Florence alone at night.

At his court, however, this insecure ruler was a stickler for etiquette.

The country fell into economic recession. Many came to have their doubts about trade and invested in agriculture instead, believing it to be a safer bet. They produced wheat and other produce that fetched good prices on the market.

The gap between rich and poor widened. Poverty was on the rise.

Historic changes came about on the world stage after 1580. Mighty Spain, that had had a presence in the Duchy of Tuscany, was being pushed towards the Atlantic.²²

Ferdinando I (1587-1609). The unloved Ferdinando I succeeded his brother Francesco, who died childless. Up to that time, he had been a cardinal at the papal court in Rome, where he had represented Spanish interests. His knowledge of the Spanish enabled him to exploit Spanish weaknesses. He knew how to free Tuscany from its reliance on Spain and retain its independence as a state.

After lengthy negotiations, he arranged a marriage in 1608 between his son and heir Cosimo and Archduchess Maria Magdalena of Austria. This was done partly to appease Spain, since the Queen of Spain was Magdalena's sister.

Ferdinando I was able to profit from conflicts of interest between the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs.

Grand Duke Ferdinando's foreign policy was non-aggressive. He had no wish to expand his territory. In consequence, military expenditure put less strain on the budget. Wars result in losses, whereas peace promotes prosperity, and this was a time of growing prosperity in Tuscany.

Fortresses were built on Elba to combat piracy, a measure that protected coastal areas from plundering.

Domestic policies. There were several very bad harvests in Tuscany between 1590 and 1607 and periodic food shortages. The price of grain, the most important foodstuff, rocketed at such times.

One of the reasons for this was the Medici family's monopoly on grain distribution²³ – they used their position skilfully for speculation. Vast sums of money could be earned. Amsterdam, for example, grew rich on grain speculation, especially in times of war.

Taxes made it became more and more difficult to create capital. Differences between rich and poor increased. Wages for artisans, building contractors and weavers went up.

At the end of the century, the economy picked up and profits rose.

Princes as bankers. Even in their rôle as princes, the Medici were still engaged in banking, although they now remained backstage, acting via third parties. They speculated with grain, financed illicit sorties into Spanish waters by the captains of English and Dutch ships and used their own galleys for trading. John R. Hale commented on the fact that foreigners turned their noses up at grand dukes who sold their own wine. He noted, however, that for the Florentines, this was a comfortable and reassuring character trait.²⁴

Mercantilism. As the rulers acted and thought in terms of the Grand Duchy as a whole, they developed a macroeconomic approach towards governance. The port of Leghorn was developed for export trade.

They stimulated the production of silk, a luxury good that could easily be exported. In 1576, the government under Grand Duke Francesco I (1574-1587) ordered all owners of an ox to plant four mulberry trees (*gelso*) in order to promote textile manufacturing in Tuscany. However, this order was ignored in Anghiari and other places for many years.

In 1590, the government of Grand Duke Ferdinando I passed a further decree ordering all owners of properties bordering a road to plant such trees (*moro, gelso*).

However, the trees were neglected and died throughout the Anghiari area after cattle had stripped and eaten them.²⁵

Apparently the government could dictate overarching objectives but the people, without making a fuss, were quietly able to undermine them.

Anghiari is affected. In 1589, the city of Arezzo wanted to build a new road from Arezzo to Sansepolcro via Anghiari. It was to start in Pietramala and pass through Trafiume and Morella. In Anghiari, however, people opposed the plan vehemently, saying the road was too expensive and the follow-up costs prohibitive.²⁶

This shows the area was, in the main, structurally self-sufficient, and wished to remain so. At this time, it did not need many links to the outside world.

The medium-size town of Anghiari did not adopt many of the capital's structural features. It remained very much on the periphery, despite the fact that the grand dukes and their governments were working with men from all over the country.

Princely weddings. The Medici had been engaging in self-aggrandisement campaigns since the 15th century. The unique resources of Florence were at their disposal in the form of the arts, both applied and liberal, and historians. In spite of this, European nobility still regarded them with scepticism and even contempt, rating them as upstarts up to the end of the 16th century.

Against this backdrop, Ferdinando, who enjoyed life and loved ceremonial, evolved ways of casting a prestigious light on the state.

Political alliances between the various rulers were to a considerable degree reinforced through family ties. Under Ferdinando's direction, princely weddings turned into theatrical performances on a vast scale, and the pursuit of prestige on the part of competing ruling houses peaked.²⁷ Many European nobles came and enjoyed the spectacle.

The year 1586 saw the opening of non-stop theatre with impressive stage machinery in the complex of buildings known as the Uffizi. In these offices of state, writers were busy recording the events in detail, enabling guests from all over Europe to take a written souvenir home with them.

Bernardo Buontalenti, an architect and theatre manager, created a gigantic spectacle on the occasion of the wedding of Ferdinando I to Cristina di Lorena (Christina of Lorraine), Maria Medici's niece.²⁸

Architects were taught a lesson in theatricality, one they applied at the courts of absolute monarchs all over Europe and beyond. (Architectural historians were later to refer to this style as "baroque", which is a highly restricted and unsatisfactory term.)

"The scenery is quite literally directed at revealing the miraculous, rendering the divine and the supernatural visible."²⁹

The means used to achieve this and transform scenes that set religious thought processes in motion

made huge demands on contemporary high technology and involved the use of massive machinery.³⁰ Paradoxically, machines were put at the service of miracles.

Buontalenti designed the decorations for multimedia happenings (for example, the comedy “La Pellegrina” by Girolamo Bargagli). Much was later distributed via other media, for instance engravings and etchings like those of Jacques Callot³¹.

Such theatre unleashed all available media, culminating in the synthesis of all art forms that is opera. The first opera was staged in Florence in 1600.

Responses from the provinces. At first glance, it would appear that, for a long time, Anghiari failed to react to the stimulus from Florence. Of course, a medium-size provincial town lacked both the occasion and the necessary means to stage such complex performances.

However, the towns that featured in the scenery of 16th century theatres were often studies in perspective. They looked like Anghiari does in real, like the houses that line the long straight street (*stradone*). At that time, many owners were rebuilding their house fronts, modelling them on the façades of Florentine upper middle class homes. The new fashion was for a wide area of smoothly plastered wall, sturdy rustic work and window frames shaped like portals.

The people of those days were looking at their town from a new angle, as if it were theatre scenery.

Outside the town wall, scenery of this kind was also built at the beginning of the 18th century in the form of the road (Via Trieste) leading up the hill. It culminated in a flight of steps crowned by the façade of the new Propositura church.

A final highlight. The area around the park and the theatre was later built up between 1777 and 1790 by the wealthiest citizen, Benedetto Corsi. It was a public event for the town and its surroundings.

The Counter-Reformation took shape under Grand Duke Ferdinando I (1587-1609).

Numerous new churches were symbolic of the movement. The lack of pretentiousness that had characterised churches built by the middle classes gave way to faith-inspired rhetorical propaganda.

Viewed from a dialectical perspective, it seemed religious faith had little credibility. Tuscany had centuries of anti-clerical tradition behind it.

The church therefore needed to bring about urgent change. It sought to improve its reputation and enhance its power, but failed to renew itself in any substantial way. The buildings followed courtly examples, their opulent decorations spoke of wealth that was intended to fascinate and command respect.

In Anghiari, the interior of Sant'Agostino was completely changed. It had been a basilica in the simple Tuscan style, in the tradition of a small country town. The new concept derived from the Counter-Reformation.

The Abbey (*Badia*) church was also redesigned to include a triumphalist high altar.

In the Franciscan Santa Croce church, monumental, ostentatious side altars were built, with high columns, architrave and gable.

Clericalisation. The clergy lost power in the early days of the Republic of Florence. Like Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498), some of the priests sided with democracy. However, the grand dukes increasingly used the clergy as a psychological tool for securing their rule. The saying went, “If the people are not in awe, it will be hard to rule them”.

The two regents at the beginning of the 17th century, Christina of Lorraine (until 1638) and Maria Magdalena of Austria, were particularly close allies of the clergy.

Grand Duke Ferdinando II (1621-1670) then encouraged the founding of religious houses by giving

them tax breaks. He hoped to bring about the clericalisation of all aspects of life. Thus, around the year 1660, there were some 12,000 nuns in the Siena area, not including the city itself. This was an absurd situation. Ferdinand himself prophesied to the Archbishop that in 60 or 70 years' time, the nuns would have devoured everything. John R. Hale reported that in Ferdinando's days, Tuscany was awash with land-hungry religious orders that paid no taxes. The monasteries and convents were full of unproductive refugees from the mass of potential workers. The capital itself had to cope with nearly 5000 nuns. However, an influential church in Tuscany was able to exert political pressure on the Vatican.³²

The prince's last will. Ferdinando I died in 1609, having warned his successors in his will not to try any experiments, to respect Spain, to ensure taxation remained at its present level (as a prince had to be a wealthy man), to levy new taxes, if necessary, for defence purposes and to do away with them as soon as danger had passed.

A simmering state of civil war

Latent and full-blown civil war. Nowhere in Europe was rule by princes as precarious as in Tuscany. This was an era of long-drawn-out civil war in Florence and the whole of Tuscany between the Medici faction and those who opposed them.

It was often waged below the surface but broke out into the open from time to time. Many members of the opposition went into exile; one of their leaders was Piero Strozzi. Resistance persisted for centuries.³³

Uprisings. Francesco Burlamacchi (1498-1548) from Lucca, a supporter of Savonarola, attempted to stir up the populace of Pisa, Pistoia, Pescia and Florence. He failed and was executed in 1548.

The emigrés were also unsuccessful in their attempt to take Sansepolcro. Anghiari had to be handed over again. In 1537, their army was defeated at the Battle of Montemurlo.

In Sansepolcro and Anghiari too, resistance remained below the surface. In order to keep the situation under control, the Medici billeted mounted police in every village in the area.

Secret service. Grand Duke Cosimo created a network of spies and informers across the whole land. John R. Hale refers to the spy that was at work in every religious house and church, on every square and street. A single word from him could land a person in one of the *secrete*, the political prisons that no visitor could enter, and whose inmates were hardly ever released. Unlawful gatherings were a capital offence, and whispered criticism a crime.³⁴

Conflict in Anghiari. Many in Anghiari hated the Medici.³⁵ A number of wealthy families sided with the emigrés and the “ancient liberties”, including the Ciarperini, Maimoni, Angelieri, Bigliaffi and Fontani families. They believed most of the townsfolk were behind them. The Medici supporters included the Taglieschi, Mazzoni, Marcheschi and Dottori families. Ilioneo Taglieschi was the leader of the Medici faction, and Mariotto Ciarperini headed the opposition.

Can we imagine what effect this internal discord had on the town? How did the families regard each other? What did they talk about in the streets and on the squares?

When the anti-Medici faction heard Piero Strozzi was looking for a fortified base (*piazzaforte*), they sent a letter addressed to Niccolò Strozzi, *capitano* of the exiles, suggesting he chose Anghiari and offering him all manner of support.

At the same time, Piero Strozzi was engaged in negotiations with Alessandro Rondinelli, the

commissario of Sansepolcro, who was the friend of another emigré, Baccio Valori. In Sansepolcro, however, the leader of the Medici faction, Sandrino Pichi, became suspicious and wrote to Cosimo.

In Anghiari, Ilioneo Taglieschi also wrote to the Duke, who replied immediately. He reinforced the guards at the gates with soldiers from both factions, the better to be able to control the rebels.

On 6th April 1537, Niccolò Strozzi marched to Anghiari with a company of emigrés and mercenaries. They halted to rest at Micciano, two miles from the town. Strozzi sent a messenger to Anghiari with a letter for Mariotto Ciarperini, detailing the place for their planned attack.

The letter fell by mistake into the hands of Ilioneo Taglieschi, who was standing with the guards at the lower gate (*del ponte*). The rebels immediately tried to gain possession of the town. Their second mistake was that Niccolò Strozzi retreated into the countryside.

A hand-to-hand fight at the drawbridge ended in the death of Count Ippolito di Mazzone, a nephew of the Medici mercenary leader Alessandro Vitelli, and two members of the opposition, Paolo di Piero Maimoni and Piero Ciarperini, all of whom were shot by bowmen.

Thirty-eight rebels, including the *gonfaloniere* and the *priori*, fled into the Apennines, fearing severe retribution. They joined the Strozzi mercenaries, who were moving towards Sestino.³⁶

Anghiari at once sent two emissaries to the Duke. They assured him of the people's loyalty and begged him to put an end to the divisions in the town. The Duke sent Ridolfo Baglioni and Federigo Barbolani da Montaguto, who provided more troops to reinforce the defence of the town.

On 13th April 1537, Piero Strozzi, perhaps unaware of Niccolò Strozzi's failed attempt, marched from Bologna and arrived with great speed at La Serra outside Sansepolcro.

In Sansepolcro, Rondinelli was immediately replaced by Gherardo Gherandi, who at once left Florence for Sansepolcro.

Having considered the situation, Piero Strozzi retired to the Sestino area, to join Niccolò Strozzi.

The rebels from Anghiari were declared outlaws. The duke ordered the *Commissario Fiscale* to confiscate their goods, mostly movable property, worth 120,000 florins in all. Some items were sold by auction.³⁷

Renewed escalation. The conflict smouldered, then flared up again. The leader of the Medici faction, Ilioneo Taglieschi, was attacked in his house (number 36 in the *borghetto*, on the corner of present-day Piazza Mameli and Via Garibaldi) during the night of 22nd November 1539. The house had been fortified, as was usual at that time.

However, the opposition were familiar with an ancient method used in siege warfare – they broke the door down by swinging a heavy beam to and fro. Others entered via the roof. Ilioneo tried to hide, jumping into a hole and covering himself with straw, but the opposition fighters tracked him down and killed him. They mocked him by emptying two barrels of wine over his corpse.

His wife, who had hidden under a pile of waste hemp straw, was undetected. She died, however, six days later as a result of shock.

Disputes concerning the growth of the aristocracy. The social history of the Middle Ages records a massive attempt to emancipate certain sections of the population. Increasing numbers of persons and groups were eager to participate in public life and to hold public office.

Nevertheless, once they had arrived at the top, this new upper class was active in emphasising the differences between itself and other groups. Throughout 15th century Europe, the wealthy and the nobility separated themselves from the lower classes by a process of aristocratisation.

The tendency to exclude the rank and file from holding office spread from the big capital city to the

medium-size town of Anghiari. In 1530, once the Restoration had replaced the Republic, the old families seized the opportunity to prevent or impede less wealthy families from holding office.

There were, however, undercurrents among the populace that worked against this, and the people had some measure of success.

This in turn gave a number of Medici supporters an excuse to turn the tables on them. They told Bartolomeo Valori, the commissioner, some new citizens wished to exclude the old ones from the drawing of lots (*borsa*). In fact this can hardly have been true, but was said with malicious intent. They claimed the new and self-important citizens were ignorant, but were behaving like know-all.s.

Valori too, a member of the aristocracy, believed it was always the new citizens who were the trouble makers and natural enemies of the old ones. He therefore ordered that five old citizens be chosen by lots instead of five new plebeians (*plebei*).

Girolamo di Antonio Fontani was one of those who had been de-selected. He had always tried to increase the number of eligible candidates, in order to broaden the democratic process.

His opponents claimed he had patronised “lower class persons” (*persone basse*) in the administration, people who had no respect for the old establishment and who failed to look up to them. According to his slanderers, the lower-class persons treated their betters as if they were no different from everybody else, often mocking and insulting them.

As a result of these accusations, which were based on rhetorical methods practised by the establishment since time immemorial, no artisan's name was placed in the bag used for drawing lots.

Thus the foundation was laid for long-drawn-out enmity between the Mazzoni, Taglieschi and other families. Their feuding knew no bounds.³⁸

Seventy-five councillors were present at the *generale consiglio* in 1538.³⁹ When those who supported the election reform tried to take the names of the lower-class contenders out of the bag, tumult broke out. Commenting on this, Lorenzo Taglieschi, a member of the establishment, demonstrated just how violent the response was. For a moment, this intelligent historian dropped his usual impartiality and described the people as “the worst scum of the earth” (*più vil feccia della plebe*). The revolt was huge, and therefore successful: the old rule remained in place.⁴⁰ The commissioner and the establishment failed to get their way.

This meant that in a town with the size and circumstances of Anghiari, the process of aristocratisation was unable to develop as fully as in other cities.

The ancient quarrel between “insiders” and “outsiders” was a form of civil war. It had its peculiar local characteristics and was also linked to the Guelph and Ghibelline faction. Civil wars were not only battles against princes.

Many people were die-hard supporters of a particular party. Others changed sides opportunistically. It was often difficult to make out who supported which party.

The emigrés (*fuorusciti*), outlaws, or those who had to flee their home towns, were scattered to the four winds, but maintained surprisingly strong links among themselves.

Some groups were militant, hiring mercenaries and joining them on raids to ransack their enemies.

They had a considerable section of the population on their side. Some were openly supportive, others secretly so.

In order to discover who supported which party, Duke Cosimo ordered all inhabitants to take up arms at the hint of the slightest trouble. Whoever failed to do so was classified as an enemy. However, he gained little from this.

Pardons. Many emigrés from Anghiari were pardoned as late as 1546. They had to swear an oath of loyalty (*fedeltà*) to the duke. The wealthiest man among the rebels, Mariotto Ciarperini, was not allowed to return to his family until 1550.

Renewed conflict. In 1567, the old quarrel over the republic flared up anew in the neighbouring town of Sansepolcro. The Pichi and Gratiani families were the leaders of the two factions at the centre of the conflict, which then spilt over into Anghiari.⁴¹

The scene moved to Anghiari. After the death of Grand Duke Cosimo I in 1574, the old enmity between the Medici party and the opposing Strozzi flared up again in 1575, during the rule of Cosimo's weak successor, Francesco (1574-1587). On the Medici side there was the wealthy Vincentio Pietro Paolo Taglieschi, known to his supporters as Bacioschi. Opposing him were the Ribaldacci, whose leaders were Count Carlo da Orbecco and the aptly named Bruto d'Ascaio Mazzone.

As the latter two had several times been treated badly by Taglieschi, they and others decided to kill him. They assembled on 15th February, armed with poisoned swords, and intercepted him on his way to Mass. Passers by did nothing to protect the unpopular Taglieschi, and he was struck dead.

The strange thing was that nothing happened for months.

On 9th August, the gang of murderers also shot Milano di Raffaello Taglieschi dead, using bow and arrows, and aiming from Antonio Angelieri's window.

It was now time for the judiciary to step in. Antonio Angelieri was sentenced to ten years as a galley slave, which was the harshest form of punishment, resulting as it often did in death from hard labour and deprivation. Angelieri survived, however. The second man to be condemned, Bruto Mazzone, died in 1579 after four years on the outer fringes of society working at the oar. Two other accomplices went to the gallows in Florence.

There were many such violent deeds. Lorenzo Taglieschi, writing in 1614, claimed nowhere was more violent than Anghiari. The conflict escalated throughout one generation and then simmered beneath the surface.

In the countryside, many died from wounds inflicted by bow and arrow. Niccolò Giusti commented on the seething passions of his times. "Force prevails over reason" (*La forza prevale alla ragione*), he said.

Anghiari played a distinctive rôle among Tuscan cities. In 1614, Lorenzo Taglieschi estimated that of the 20 important families, eight belonged to the Medici-Taglieschi faction, which enjoyed the support of the prince, while twelve belonged to the Strozzi-Mazzoni opposition, which kept up the old republican tradition.

Revenge. Revenge often played a part in the disputes, whether they were fought out in the open or simmered below the surface, and whatever the other motives. Frequently, in the context of the violent politics of the day, it was but one link in a chain reaction.

Tight family ties nurtured the desire for revenge. In 1575, in order to avenge the death of Giustiniano di Cristofani Musetti, the *capitano* and knight Mattia Chieli, also known as Cavacarne, was killed by bow and arrow in the tailor's shop belonging to Bartolomeo Geri.

After many attempts had been made to intervene, the leaders of the two factions solemnly made peace in 1579.⁴²

In 1586, the long-lasting conflict was settled between the Mazzoni, Dottori and Magi families on the opposition side and the Testi and Ligi families, who supported the Medici, to the extent that it was no longer an armed conflict. Those who failed to observe this truce would be punished harshly, in the

form of confiscation of property and other things.⁴³

Crime and punishment. Nevertheless, a new dispute erupted in 1594. Girolamo and Torquato Musetti together with Count Carlo Mazzoni da Orbecco tried to kill Antonio Angelieri with bows and arrows. He managed to get away despite being severely wounded.

The marksmen received draconian punishments for breaching the hard-won truce. Girolamo was hanged and one third of his house on the piazza demolished. Torquato and Carlo were taken to Florence and incarcerated in the notorious Stinchi prison. They were then sent to the war in Hungary, where all trace of them is lost.

Despite the verdicts, passions were aroused again. Amilcare Baldassari died in a brawl.

There was no end to the conflict between the Marchesi and Baldassari families. Each tried to ruin the other in every possible way.

Lorenzo Taglieschi, writing in 1614, said they were human beings that, giving full rein to their animal instincts, let their latent hatred of each other run riot.

Attempted murder. In 1598, Vincentio Marchesi was attacked by marksmen with bows and arrows who had hidden between the two gates on the piazza. However, he managed to escape. The grand duke sentenced more than ten persons to the harshest punishments.⁴⁴

Town tower. The destruction of the town tower (*torre alta*) in 1512 was, among other things, a symbolic act. The ruins lay untouched for nearly a century. What are we to make of that? It had been a symbol of the old democracy. Not until 1598 did Grand Duke Ferdinando I approve its reconstruction.

Lengthy discussions took place as to whether it should be rebuilt in its original place or moved to a position between the two gates on the piazza. Experts recommended the previous location, and the tower was finished in 1603.

Time signal. The first town tower clock, that, according to Lorenzo Taglieschi, had probably been put in place some years before 1512, was removed from the fortress (*cassero*) tower that had collapsed. A second disaster occurred when the town tower was hit by a bombard shot by the mercenary leader Vitelli.

The parts of the valuable clock were fitted together again, and the clock was set in the tower of San Martino monastery.

While the town tower was being rebuilt (1602/1603), a new clock was made by Giuliano Panatti di Roncaglione di Romagna.⁴⁵ Anghiari asked Florence to foot the bill for 200 *scudi*. Clocks of this kind required frequent repairs; in 1780 the clock was replaced; in 1878 it needed a new movement.

The town tower was given the bell from the *cassero* convent. The town appointed a bell-ringer (*donzello*), and in 1606 they introduced a special chime to strike three o'clock in the morning.⁴⁶

Cycle of violence. In 1603, violence returned. Emilio, son of Bruto Mazzone, decided to avenge his father's death on the galley 24 years previously. When Raffaello di Milani Taglieschi revealed his contempt for him and his family, Bruto set out to defend the family honour. He could have been a character in a Shakespeare play.

Emilio threatened to kick Raffaello to death. One morning, Raffaello left his house on the piazza (now Piazza Mameli), intending to go to Mass in Sant'Agostino across the way. Emilio, armed with a pistol, confronted him. Like his uncle Milano and his uncle Vincentio before him, Raffaello died a violent death. He died aged 28, leaving a widow and five fatherless children.⁴⁷

Supporters of the republic in the majority. Unlike many other towns in Tuscany, Anghiari was always home to a majority of "Republicans".

The Medici faction, led by the Taglieschi family, despised them, believing them to be incapable of managing the town's public affairs.⁴⁸ This was said at a time when no great expertise was required to run a public administration.

The underlying attitude persisted into the industrial age, and to some extent it is still around nowadays.

Medici coat of arms. The Medici coat of arms displays five balls (*palle*), which have been the cause of much lewd mockery on the part of their opponents. Some have jeered, calling them *coglione*, which, apart from "balls", also means "blockhead" or "half-wit".

In Anghiari, the Medici coat of arms with its five balls is still to be seen above the door of house number 1 on Via Garibaldi, but this is the only place it can be found.

Passions made people blind to the consequences of their acts and set off chain reactions. Furthermore, the wealthy, still having recourse to the ancient system of patronage, were able to collect and mobilise supporters. Given the existence of such networks, it is fair to say that an individual name stood for more than just an individual person.

Let us imagine a stretch of countryside in our mind's eye. It was a densely populated area with a large number of small villages that, being so close, had good communications links. For their evening's entertainment, the population would devote as much attention to the happenings that aroused their passions as if they were characters in a Shakespeare play. This happened on a scale comparable to present-day television.

In one case, the scene was Toppo, a hamlet to the west of Anghiari. In 1518, some persons set fire to a barn, shed (*capanna*) and the large house (*casa*) belonging to the wealthy landowner Niccolò di Belagio. At the time, he was actually somewhere else, but his property went up in flames and twelve members of his extended family were burnt to death. Two grandsons tried to save their lives by jumping out of a window, thus breaking various bones. They remained crippled for the rest of their lives.

In 1563, a man was killed in front of Santa Croce Franciscan church at the top of the steep *stradone*. Antonio di Lorenzo Magi hurled several insults at Alessandro di Vincenzo Zaccagnini. In his fury, the latter drew his sword and shattered Antonio's chin and shoulder. Antonio died, and Alessandro fled.

They put a price on the perpetrator's head. Some months later, Ercole Mazzone, a soldier and relative of Antonio's, turned up bearing Alessandro's head and collected the prize money. He had come across Alessandro and slain him at Castello di Santa Sofia in the eastern Apennines.⁴⁹

During the famine, speculators were banned from buying up the grain that the people in the area needed for themselves. Nevertheless, some speculators did buy grain in the Citerna area, intending to sell it at a high price on Anghiari market square. However, twenty men from Citerna pursued and surrounded them near Castello di Sorci, shooting arrows at the speculators and their beasts of burden. The speculators were all killed.⁵⁰

Vengeance. The Belagi family wished to avenge a killing. Some of their menfolk therefore killed Giusto Cherico by a blow to his left temple. More than twenty persons from both sides were injured in the ensuing affray. Cherico's family had their revenge soon afterwards by killing Niccolò di Belagio in Scaramulo. As a result, all those involved were outlawed and sent to various states.⁵¹

Republican resistance on the wane. Max Weber writes: "In Italy, except for Venice and Genoa, the hereditary *signoria* constituted the form of city government definitively legitimised by imperial and papal recognition after the subjection of Florence with the help of Spanish troops [in 1530].

The declining resistance of the burghers, however, must be explained by a number of separate factors. Here as everywhere, the very existence of a princely court created its own support in the form of growing strata in the nobility and the bourgeoisie with social and economic vested interests in its survival.

The increasing refinement of wants and the slowing down of economic expansion together with a growing vulnerability to warlike disturbances of the higher bourgeois strata's economic interests; the general decline in political aspirations of the economically active groups, associated with increasing competition and growing economic and social stability, and the consequent exclusive devotion of these groups to gainful economic activity or the peaceful enjoyment of *rentier* incomes; and finally, the general policy of the princes who furthered both these developments to their own advantage – all these were responsible for the rapid decline of interest in the political fate of the city.

Both the large monarchies, like the French, and the *signorie* of single cities could everywhere count on the interest of the lower strata in the pacification of the city and in a regulation of economic conduct which professed to safeguard the “living” of the small burgher.”⁵²

The last three Medici rulers

Cosimo II (1609-1621). The next two successors to Grand Duke Ferdinando I were such inept rulers that, in the opinion of John R. Hale, one would be justified in describing the history of the last grand dukes as nothing but the story of their personal eccentricities.⁵³

Cosimo succeeded to the throne in 1609 at the age of 19. For the most part, he was incapable of ruling and died of tuberculosis in 1621, at the age of 31. The administrative chiefs of the four councils were careful to avoid any risk of change.

They were vexed by his mother, Christina of Lorraine, who increasingly and perpetually interfered in affairs of state, and even more so by his wife Maria Magdalena of Austria, the sister of the Habsburg Emperor Ferdinand II.

Ferdinando II (1621-1670). The two widowed women ruled as joint regents during the minority of Ferdinando, who was eleven years old when he succeeded to the title. His actual rule began in 1637, after the death of his grandmother.

World War (1618-1648). The Thirty Years' War north of the Alps did not directly affect Tuscany, but its effects were felt there. A long-drawn-out recession started in the 1620s, and demand for Tuscan goods fell dramatically, partly on account of competition from other countries, where wages were lower.

Famine struck in 1621. A series of poor harvests resulted in a sharp rise in the price of grain.

One tax was imposed after the other.

The wealthy became uneasy and turned to investing in property, but high yields were rare. For this reason, wages in the countryside came to be paid more and more in kind. Barter was again common at country markets.

In 1630, there was a devastating outbreak of the plague. It was on the wane three years later, but ten per cent of the Tuscan population had died of it.

In his diary, Lorenzo Taglieschi described the ghastliness of the plague and how it affected people's behaviour.

The situation deteriorated to such an extent that it was dominated by people's need for religion, and

therefore by priests and monks. This was the time when Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) was humiliated by the Inquisition. The joint regents were both pious fanatics and supporters of the religious orders, which were proliferating aggressively. The many court cases arising from their purchase of land were an indication of this.

The economic situation in Tuscany was bad.

Cosimo III (1670-1723). The land was once more subject to a weak ruler. It seemed Cosimo III would rule “for ever” – in fact it was over half a century. He was bigoted and, in John R. Hale's view, indifferent to the growing difficulties in Tuscany. He travelled the land ceaselessly, in order to touch the relics in the churches with his own hands.

The Grand Duke issued a series of laws inciting hostility to sexuality and discrimination against women. Men were not allowed to enter houses in which unmarried girls were living. Women were not allowed to go on the stage. Cosimo III also stirred up anti-Semitism by banning Jews and Christians from living together.

Professors in Pisa were ordered to teach only Aristotelian philosophy. Tuscan young men were banned from attending any universities other than the Grand Ducal University of Pisa.

Cosimo III followed the tradition of his forbears in retaining the land's military neutrality. This came, however, at a price, as he had to pay vast subsidies to Austria for its wars against the Turks.

He also copied his predecessors in keeping a magnificent and costly court. Countless gifts to religious foundations also depleted the funds at his disposal. The clergy were exempt from taxation.

In order to afford all this, the Grand Duke levied higher and higher taxes on the land. The weaker members of society, the small traders and farmers, bore the brunt.

The population decreased. Much of the land lay fallow. The towns were run down. Scenes of dereliction were created that travellers found “picturesque”. They formed the 19th century image of Tuscany.

In 1645, Cosimo III visited Anghiari.

Gian Gastone (1723-1737) and the succession. In vain did Cosimo III search for an heir. His daughter Anna Maria Luisa was married to the Elector Palatine, who had syphilis and was infertile. Cosimo's son Gian Gastone was a homosexual and alcoholic. His brother Francesco Maria was estranged from his wife.

For a time, with no prospect of having an heir, Cosimo considered restoring the old republican constitution.

In the end, Gian Gastone ruled for fourteen years. He was even less competent than his father, being an alcoholic and becoming prematurely senile. He was surrounded by scroungers and profligates.

When Gian Gastone died in 1737, the Medici dynasty came to an end.

Living conditions and infrastructure

Around the year 1500, there were various strongholds in the Anghiari area, namely Pianettole, Toppole, Carciano, Castiglioncello, Valialle, Montauto and Galbino.

The hamlets were named as: Upacchi, Scoiano, Catigliano, Scille, Colignola, S. Bartolomeo, Gello, Poggiolo, Montemercole, Verazzano, Ticchiena. Those in the Tiber Valley were: Motina, Viaio, San Leo. Their inhabitants were mainly cattle grazers, who put their animals out to pasture in meadows and forests.

In 1551, the Anghiari district had a population of 4,385 in 25 locations.

A small number of wealthy families. Every *comune* recorded the value of properties together with a description of their characteristics in its *libro del'estimo*⁵⁴, on the basis of which it imposed property tax.

The amount levied rose in accordance with the requirements of the government. Calculations were made on a purely arithmetical basis, not according to a progressive scale.

In 1532, Duke Alessandro ordered new records to be made as, throughout Tuscany, the books were falling to pieces and often barely legible. For as yet unknown but presumably good reasons, Cosimo I ordered a re-drafting in 1549.

There were two books in Anghiari: the *Estimo della Costa di Fuori* and the *Estimo della Costa di Dentro* – for properties “outside” and “inside” the town.⁵⁵

Every property owner had to appear before the *vicario* and present his deeds. Any person withholding information was severely punished. The administration worked on the records for more than a year. The officials at the cadastral office (*catastieri*) presented both books to the *vicario* on 22nd June 1533. Objections could be raised within a period of five days.

Many entries soon turned out to be questionable. The administration had worked sloppily, so disputes arose and amendments needed to be made. The whole procedure had to be repeated in 1548/59.

Useful insights can be gained from comparing the earlier and later books.

In 1532, 72 per cent of the land was under agricultural use, 5.7 per cent was farmed in part and 8.2 per cent was fallow land or forest. There was no flooded wasteland. In 1549, 63.8 per cent was under agricultural use, 21.3 per cent was farmed in part and 12.7 per cent was fallow land or forest. What does the difference reveal?

Ecclesiastical land. The books record the property owned by the church.⁵⁶ Forty-eight churches owned land. In addition, there were seven confraternities that owned small amounts of property and also six religious houses and five hospitals.

San Bartolomeo Abbey was the largest property owner by a long chalk. In 1532 it was recorded as owning 284 plots of land, and 218 in 1549. The mother house in Camaldoli only had five plots of land in the 1532 version and 43 in 1549. Sant'Agostino was also a large property owner, having 49 (1532) and 85 (1549) plots of land. The Confraternity of Santa Maria del Borghetto was especially rich, having 171 (1532) and 202 (1549) plots of land. Micciano parish church (*pieve*) owned 89 (1532) and 96 (1549) plots of land. The parish church on the River Sovara owned 64 (1532) and 48 (1549) plots of land. The difference between the earlier and later sets of figures points to a considerable trade in real estate.

The wealthy families held roughly the same amount of property, whether inside or outside the town.⁵⁷

The most important piece of information is the fact that the leading 23 families owned about 54 per cent of the whole territory in 1532. The figure recorded for 1549 was even higher, namely 59 per cent.⁵⁸

These wealthy families were named as the Mazzoni, Fabroni, Pichi, Bigliaffi, Angelieri, Ciarperini, Taglieschi, Mosetti, Morgalanti, Giusti, Migliai, Mannini, Nuti, Ducci, Ricciardeschi and Magi families. The Vitelli and Bufalini families were also named, but they were outsiders.⁵⁹

They had developed a kind of caste system akin to that of the nobility, only marrying among

themselves.⁶⁰ One sign of this was the fact that Lorenzo Taglieschi recorded all marriages and inter-relationships.⁶¹

In 1532, the Bigliaffi family owned three water mills on the Tiber, and the Nuti family four.

The confiscation of property by rebels in 1537 hardly emerges from the cadastral records, even though the vast sum of 120,000 florins was mentioned. The goods confiscated must have been mainly movable property – gold, silver, decorated weapons and many other things besides. Some objects were sold by auction.⁶²

Town notables. In 1614, Lorenzo Taglieschi listed the persons who, in his opinion, ranked among the important personages in the town.

First, he named the clerical hierarchy: the bishop, the mitred abbot (*abatia mitrata*), his permanent representative (*vicario perpetuo*), the chaplains (*cappellani*), and clergy (*cherici*). Additionally, there were the members of nine confraternities with standards (*standardo*), seven other associations of devotion (*di devotio*), the baptismal oratory (*fonte battismale*), two monasteries (*monasteri di frate*) and two convents (*monasteri di monache*).

They were followed by the secular administrators (*amministratori*): the *pretore* or *vicario*, who was the personal representative of the prince, the chancellor (*cancelliere*), the chief notary with responsibility for civil and criminal matters. Then came the town council and the civil servants responsible for administering the municipality (*magistrati di comunità*), the confraternities (*di fraternità*), customs (*della grascia*) and also the administrators of the poor people's bank (*ufitiali del Monte di Pietà*) and other pious institutions.

Taglieschi noted the presence of theologians, philosophers, surgeons, legal experts, agents, notaries and also municipal and state administrators. A total of 25 men bearing the title "doctor" lived there; others were experts in "noble scientific subjects" and "every kind of business and trade".⁶³

A *capitano* was in charge of the troops that were permanently stationed there. Sergeants (*sergenti*), corporals (*caporali*) and administrative staff (*depositario*) were under his command.

Visitors. Here is an excerpt from Lorenzo Taglieschi's diary: "16th July 1630. On Sunday, Countess Silvia of Montedoglio and her daughters Isabella and Lodovica, together with the young Count, the parish priest [of Montedoglio], two servants and five horses arrived at our house in the morning for luncheon. They stayed here until Monday. We talked pleasantly, paid each other compliments and spent money on three meals – more than three *scudi* not including bread, wine, fowl and other things we have of our own. They came to show Isabella Anghiari. She is to enter a convent in Sant'Angelo in Vado".⁶⁴

Distinguished personages are often willing to spend considerable sums. They felt it was an honour to entertain noble visitors. Lorenzo Taglieschi – with a bourgeois businessman's mentality – calculated what it had cost them. Many things could be produced in their own households.

Young aristocratic girls brought up outside the town were apparently very much tied to the family home. Poor Isabella was being sent to a convent by her parents, but had never been to Anghiari, which was less than five kilometres away. It had obviously been her wish to see it.

Infrastructure and road management. Road management facilities were being developed in Anghiari in line with the expansion of the road network. In 1532, the council appointed inspectors to monitor roads, bridges and other public works.⁶⁵ This was a sign of increased awareness of public functions.

It was via infrastructure that the state came to assume the responsibilities it has in the industrial era.

In Anghiari, this process accelerated from about 1950 onwards.

Infrastructure and the food supply. One of the first duties of town rulers from earliest days was to provide a basic supply of food in times of famine (*carestia*). This was followed by stockpiling measures against such famines. Grain was not only a lifesaver, it also became a symbol for a higher-level structure. For this reason, Cosimo I issued a decree in 1546 ordering a granary (*monte di grano per l'abondanza*) to be built in Anghiari.

Grain riots. In 1548, the people rioted to protest against the bizarre fact that the populace was going hungry in a fertile land like Tuscany. They blamed the *vicario* and the administrators of the *monte* for failing to organise things properly.

As the price of grain continued to rise, the poor – and perhaps some of the wealthy too – organised a boycott targeting speculators and administrators. Yelling loudly, they warned their fellow citizens on pain of death not to buy or touch the sacks of grain.

The conflict escalates. Men armed themselves with wooden spade shafts. In their wrath, the people turned against the town beadle (*birro*), hitting him on the head. He died of his injuries. They then turned on the *vicario's* notary, but he hit back and wounded some of his attackers. Nevertheless, he had no chance against the angry mob and fell backwards into the chancellery. The mob yelled “Strike him dead! After him!”. He was carried into the house in a very bad state and died of his injuries two days later.

Flight. The perpetrators fled and, in their absence, were condemned to death by hanging (*alla forca*). They were later pardoned and allowed to return.⁶⁶

In 1578, Grand Duke Francesco I had the granary shut down, an arbitrary act by an absolute ruler that “greatly harmed the poor”. (Lorenzo Taglieschi).⁶⁷

Monte di Pietà. It was not until 1575 that a bank for the poor (Monte di Pietà) was set up in Anghiari. Permission was given for its foundation at this late point in time by Grand Duke Francesco I and the Council of Nine. The confraternity that supported it sold a lot of land in order to raise the thousand *scudi* needed for the initial deposits.⁶⁸

School. Lorenzo Taglieschi, writing in 1614, reported the existence of many schools in and around the towns in 1600.⁶⁹ There was a school for the humanities (*scuola di umanità*) in Anghiari in 1614.⁷⁰

Education in history. Anghiari produced very few writers over the centuries. One writer was Almerigo Brancaleoni, the Count of Piobico and brother-in-law of Agnolo Taglia. In 1440, he completed 75 chapters (*discorsi*) of public recollections from times past (*memorie antiche e pubbliche*), beginning with the origins of Anghiari and ending with the Florentine era.

The historian Lorenzo Taglieschi (1598-1654). For a long time Lorenzo Taglieschi, who was descended from an ancient and well regarded local family, was the only writer in Anghiari to produce any works of substance.

The Taglieschi family held the office of *gonfaloniere* (standard bearer) 25 times from 1393 until the beginning of the 16th century. Lorenzo Taglieschi himself held office from time to time.⁷¹ During the outbreak of the plague in 1630, he was appointed as deputy in charge of health matters (*deputato alla sanità*). His income came mainly from landed property. He had a large house with several servants. As he was unmarried, the family died out on his death. He is buried in Santa Croce church.

Lorenzo Taglieschi's father encouraged, or rather ordered (*per commandamento*), him to write. His main work was a history of the town, from its origins to 1614.

The manuscript of his “Historia d'Anghiari” is now in the Municipal Historical Archives (Inventario

No. 1612).

The fact that this important work remained unpublished until the late 1980s is a sign of lack of interest in the history of the town.⁷²

Lorenzo Taglieschi was also the author of a number of other works that remain unpublished to this day.⁷³ The Municipal Archives therefore contain a wealth of unpublished material.

Taglieschi was a painstaking historian in the tradition of 16th century Tuscan historical writers like Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527)⁷⁴ and Francesco Guicciardini. He visited the archives and had an extensive library of his own.

Unlike the diarist Giusto Giusti, he devoted much space to social history.

His work is now the most important source for the history of Anghiari, since a major part of the archive material Taglieschi had access to has since been destroyed.

Local patriotism. The town of Anghiari and its surroundings were densely interwoven. This was mirrored in local attitudes; the people were connected in positive ways, but they were also capable of raising barriers and treating others as their enemies. This treatment ranged from mockery to all forms of violence.

In 1614, Lorenzo Taglieschi described their fierce local patriotism, basing his judgement on earlier authors' derisive remarks. One story concerned the town of Biturgia (near Sansepolcro), which was built by the Tuscans of Anghiari for the purpose of providing conveniently located stables, no less, for their fight in the wars against Rome.⁷⁵ Of course there was not an ounce of truth in this story, but it indicates what was going on in the minds of the population of the town on the hill and the way they treated their neighbours in the valley.

Notes on:

The rule of the Medici (12)

1 Weber, 1922, 564.

2 See Albertini, 1955. Halle, 1979.

3 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 254/255. Trotta, 1993, 37, illustration pp. 43, 58.

4 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 258.

5 See Günter 1982, Günter 1983, Günter 1984, Günter 1988.

6 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 263/264, 299.

7 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 281.

8 See Günter 1982, Günter 1983, Günter 1984, Günter 1988.

9 Hale, 1979, 169.

10 Weber, 1922, 573.

11 Hale, 1979, 176.

12 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 321.

13 Hale, 1979, 188.

14 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 304.

15 See Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 177. See also Baldassare Castiglione's book "Book of the courtier" (*Il libro del Corteggiamento*) for a debate on nobles and burghers serving their rulers. He imagines the dialogues taking place at the Duke of Urbino's court in about 1507 (Castiglione, 1986. Günter, 2003, 177/178).

16 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 231.

17 In Siena, additions to the front of a building were regularly removed as early as the 13th century. Outside staircases had to be removed as well.

18 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 366.

19 Hale, 1979, 204.

- 20 Weber, 1922, 581.
- 21 The building passed to the Veluti Zati family in the mid-19th century – it was still theirs in 1999. The present-day clock dates from 1879 (Giorgetti, 1999).
- 22 Braudel, 1979, 1, 8.
- 23 Hale, 1979, 209.
- 24 Hale, 1979, 207.
- 25 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 349.
- 26 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 346/347.
- 27 Elias, 1969.
- 28 Mamone, 1981, 76
- 29 Bianconi, 1975, 16.
- 30 See Gascoigne, 1968, 148/155 and illustrations.
- 31 Gascoigne, 1968, illustrations 122/123.
- 32 Hale, 1979, 220.
- 33 Albertini, 1955. Albertini, 1970.
- 34 Hale, 1979, 180.
- 35 On the following, see Radziwonik, 1974, 4/9.
- 36 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 289ff.
- 37 Radziwonik, 1974, 146. The amount was calculated by comparing property values in the land registers of 1532 and 1549.
- 38 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 266.
- 39 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 293.
- 40 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 242.
- 41 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 326/327.
- 42 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 336/338.
- 43 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 345.
- 44 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 351/353.
- 45 Giorgetti, 1999. Torre civica in Anghiari, pp. 8/21.
- 46 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 354.
- 47 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 360.
- 48 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 361.
- 49 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 322.
- 50 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 322/323. On the subject of the murder, see Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 329.
- 51 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 246. For further deaths resulting from accidents and murder, see p. 248.
- 52 Weber, 1922, 572/573.
- 53 Hale, 1979, 246.
- 54 Conti, 1966.
- 55 Nowadays kept in the State archives in Arezzo.
- 56 Radziwonik, 1974, 40/43.
- 57 Radziwonik, 1974, 29.
- 58 Radziwonik, 1974, 140.
- 59 Radziwonik, 1974, 147.
- 60 Radziwonik, 1974, 143.
- 61 Lorenzo Taglieschi, Famiglie di Dentro della Terra d'Anghiari. Manuscript in Archivio Storico Comunale in Anghiari. – Lorenzo Taglieschi, Compendio delle famiglie anghiariesi di Lorenzo Taglieschi. – Parte Guelfa o vero Fuori – Manoscritto 1640 (Archivio Storico del Comune di Anghiari Inventario No. 1617).
- 62 Radziwonik, 1974, 146. The amount was calculated by comparing property values in the land registers of 1532 and 1549.63
- 63 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 43.
- 64 Taglieschi, Le Peste 1630, 1631, 1632. Diary in manuscript form in Archivio Storico del Comune di Anghiari Inventario 19-10-1959.
- 65 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 282.
- 66 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 304/305.
- 67 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 303/304.
- 68 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 337.
- 69 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 95.

- 70 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 43.
- 71 Loris Babbini, in: 1991/1614, 14.
- 72 Delle memorie historiche e annali della terra di Anghiari di Lorenzo Taglieschi. Anghiari 1991 (printed transcript of the 1614 manuscript in Archivio Storico del Comune di Anghiari. Daniele Finzi and Matteo Parteschi (eds.). Cited as: Taglieschi, 1991/1614. Introduzione: Vittorio Dini. Note bibliografiche e scritti: Loris Babbini.
- 73 Memorie d'Anghiari cavate dagli Antichi Registri della Comunità e della Fraternità Raccolte da Lorenzo Taglieschi Anghiarese l'anno 1631 (Archivio Storico del Comune di Anghiari Inventario No. 1613). Compendio delle famiglie anghiarese di Lorenzo Taglieschi – Parte Guelfa – Manoscritto 1640 (Archivio Storico del Comune di Anghiari Inventario No. 1617). Lorenzo Taglieschi, Le Peste 1630, 1631, 1632. Manuscript in Archivio Storico del Comune di Anghiari Inventario 19-10-1959.
- 74 Niccolò Machiavelli, History of Florence (written in 1520/1525, first published in Rome in 1532). Machiavelli's one and only work on history was also his last great work. He was commissioned to write it by Cardinal Giulio Medici, who had hoped for a traditional history book, but Machiavelli developed a new type of historical work, brutally honest in its presentation of facts. It did not offer explanations based on the sacred and divine, but on the shared interests and conflicts of groups – group dynamics. Machiavelli provides an overview from the time of the founding of the city until the plague of 1348. He then gives a detailed description of the Medici era until Lorenzo's death in 1492.
- 75 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 44.

13. Rule by the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty (1737-1759) – the 18th century

Transfer of power

Lorraine swapped for Tuscany. In 1737, while the last of the Medici Grand Dukes, Gian Gastone, lay in his protracted death throes, the major powers were deciding who would rule Tuscany. They decided on the related Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty, known in Italy as the Lorena.

Vienna succeeded in pushing through its candidate Duke Francis Stephen of Lorraine. This involved a form of trade-off, whereby the King of Poland, Stanisław Leszczyński, received the Duchy of Lorraine.

Gian Gastone was still alive when 6,000 Austrian soldiers occupied the key military installation in Florence, the Fortezza da Basso. They turned their canons on the town and waited for the Duke to die.

Tuscan independence. During this time, Gian Gastone and his councillors extracted a promise from Vienna that Tuscany would never be regarded as imperial territory, but would remain formally independent. For eleven years, this was a matter of controversy among the major powers, but Tuscan independence was finally guaranteed under the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748. Tuscany was not to be incorporated into the Holy Roman Empire under the Emperor in Vienna. Its only link to the Empire was through the heir to the imperial throne, who, before his succession, was ruler of an independent Tuscany.

Enduring art treasures. Gian Gastone's sister, Anna Maria Luisa, lived in Palazzo Pitti in Florence until her death in 1743. She bequeathed the entire family fortune to the new grand duke and his heirs, but wisely stipulated that “no part of this treasure, intended as it is for the embellishment of the State, for the people's enjoyment, and to arouse the curiosity of strangers, may be disposed of or removed from the capital of the Grand Ducal state ... [and from] the succession of His Serene Grand Duke”.

This had far-reaching consequences – thanks to her, the artistic riches of Florence have not been scattered across the globe.

The political situation. Duke Francis' representative complained that the government was chaotic. It was almost impossible to unravel the various strands of aristocracy, democracy and monarchy, he said.¹

It is a fact that the Medici rulers had to acknowledge long-established traditions and sanction a hybrid form of government. This accorded with their mindset and the personal preferences of the various rulers.

Politicians with centralising tendencies and supporters of the absolute monarchies of the 17th and 18th centuries were horrified at this system. However, it did have its advantages from a sociological point of view – towns and regions all over Tuscany were granted a considerable degree of self-government.

Rule by the Lorena. As agreed with the major powers, the Council of Regents (*consiglio di reggenza*) nominated Duke Francesco di Lorena (Francis Stephen of Lorraine) to be the new head of state. The Duke, however, preferred to remain in Vienna, where his wife Maria Theresa² was due to become Empress. In fact he had to wait eight years for her accession (in 1745). His unwillingness to move shows the extent to which the Italian peninsula had moved towards the periphery.

Habsburg-Lorraine rule over Tuscany³ lasted from 1737 to 1859, apart from the period of French rule from 1799 to 1814.

Effects. We know little about how this new government affected the Tuscan town of Anghiari. The most important consequence was probably a change in the taxes levied.

Life went on much as it had done from generation to generation. The internal structure of the town was unchanged, the people had no ambition for their town to grow or change in any way, they were mentally self-sufficient and a long way from the centre of government. News from Florence was sparse, apart from a few administrative directives that interested hardly anybody.

Ambivalent attitudes. The situation was ambivalent. The people were lucky in that they were hardly affected by the government in Florence. They basically despised it and believed, as had their forebears, that nothing good would come from it. Instead, they concentrated on the close circle of people around them and above all on their own families.

The disadvantage of such a mindset, which was deep rooted, and is still around today, became apparent in the industrial age, when the modern State wanted to build necessary infrastructure.

In its way, neo-liberalism is in the same tradition. Large corporations are treated like ruling clans. It is difficult, or well-nigh impossible, for the state to strike a balance between such groupings. Berlusconi is a particularly striking example of this.

The burghers' theatre

The ancient world has always been present in Italy, even though Christian theologians have done their best to eradicate it.

In the 15th century, people studied it more closely and developed a kind of philology. Knowledge increased, and methods multiplied. Such scholarship was applied in many ways, especially in paintings.

Ancient ideas were still common currency, especially in the countryside, but mostly at the

subconscious level. Sometimes they did come to the surface, often with Christian labels. A pluralistic society existed mainly in the cities. Ideas from the ancient world persisted alongside Christian beliefs; they were mostly interwoven, but there were also fault lines and contradictions.

For the most part, people practised diplomacy in their thoughts and in their speech, and avoided direct confrontation. In fact, however, it was largely a classical education that enabled them to discover the world.

The ancient world feeds the imagination. Many ancient myths were still alive.

Some parents automatically gave their girls classical names like Atlanta, Aura, Aurora, Eufrasia, Eudomia, Giacinta, Isifile, Marzia, Olimpia.

Ordinary folk often reacted to such names with ironic nicknames (*soprannome*).⁴

Theatre. For many years, travelling players performed at the theatre. In 1562, a theatre group put on a comedy at the house of Giusto Giusti. A fire broke out, and a violent dispute erupted over who should pay for the damage. In the end, the poor players had to pay, not the rich family.⁵

Plays were not only staged in private houses but also in the *palazzo del vicario*.⁶ A stage was erected in the palace hall in 1589 and scenery painted.⁷ Comedies were performed that were to the taste of bourgeois society.

Academies. In the 16th and 17th centuries, four academies opened and shut down again: the Rinverditi (Revivalists) from 1550 to about 1610; the Fedeli (Loyalists) 1620-1650; the Scompigliati 1655-1687 and the Ricomposti (the Reconstituted) around 1700.⁸

The name “academy” was taken from the famous academy in Athens. However, by calling themselves the *scompigliati*, which means “the confused”, the members of that academy were being ironic and making fun of themselves. They formed a club of snobs.⁹ As in the many other academies in the country, the man in charge was known as the *principe* (prince).¹⁰ This too was an ironic title.

Many posts (*cariche*) had to be filled. The meetings dealt with club business rather than work.

In 1645, a play (*giostra*) was staged to celebrate the end of the 1642-1644 War of Castro. The Accademici Fedeli had new scenery built in their theatre, designed by the artist Antonmaria Susini of Florence. Susini completed several works in Anghiari between 1644 and 1649 (Suffragio delle anime purganti; Estasi della Beata Margherita da Cortona in Santa Croce).

One contemporary playwright and author of comedies was Giovan Battista Testi (1624-1685).

A theatre is built. As the 18th century drew to a close, one wealthy family, the Corsi, left their mark on the town.

We are told by a certain A. Benci in the year 1821 that Benedetto Corsi, the Marchese di Valialle, was “rich, stout-hearted and intelligent. He lived in Anghiari off the proceeds of his country estates. His aim was to live a more cheerful and comfortable life [in town], so he bought a number of old houses [on the main road to the north of the piazza], demolished them and built a new *palazzo* (Palazzo Corsi).

He had a beautiful [and extensive] garden laid out [at the back] and ordered a chapel to be built there [Capella Corsi] in 1774. He then undertook one more project.

Corsi, with his twelve children and a house always full of guests, proposed building a theatre in order that good comedies might be a source of instruction for his sons and of entertainment for his visitors.

He did not delay in realising his ideas, but seized the opportunity as soon as Lorenzo Pozzolini, a professor of engineering from Florence, happened to be visiting Anghiari. Having sought the

professor's advice, he immediately had the foundations for the theatre laid. ... It was completed in 1790 and is one of the most beautiful theatres in Tuscany.¹¹

The auditorium is 17 ells long and 13 ells wide. The room was large enough to accommodate the population of Anghiari on those occasions when the Corsi sons admitted them to performances.”¹²

Between 1777 and 1791, Benedetto Corsi set up a “coffee house” with a theatre in an extensive garden behind his palace. The project was under the supervision of Lorenzo Pozzolini.

The theatre was designed by De Vigni, who had done designs in Sinalunga and for Palazzo Albergotti in Arezzo. In 1780, he sent three sketches to Anghiari.

Against the backdrop of the façade of the theatre, the sketches show a stage-like flight of steps descending into a semicircular courtyard, beneath which a terraced slope of “hanging gardens”¹³ falls away, stretching as far as the next hamlet.

The plan was not carried out in its entirety. It was apparently interrupted by the French Revolution, which questioned the lifestyle of wealthy persons, particularly those elements they had copied from courtly society.

The small chapel and the theatre were the only parts that survived.

Theatrical iconography. The façade not only resembled theatrical scenery, it also recalled the plays of Antiquity through its nine statues of the Muses, the source of artistic inspiration, and one of the god Apollo.

Comedy. What do we mean when we talk about learning from comedy?

Comedy was more likely to be found in middle-class theatre, although it absorbed the popular and critical discourse of the Commedia dell'arte, whose actors – although they were sometimes invited to court – mainly played on the streets. This type of theatre, in assuming the rôle of the fool, held a mirror up to an amused courtly society and put it in its place.

Thus, comedy stands for a bourgeois theatrical tradition and, at one level, bourgeois enlightenment. Its origins were practical rather than philosophical. It was above all influenced by developments in the Low Countries.

Inside the theatre, the focus is not only on the stage. The interior is oval in form, so the spectators can see each other – we might say, society is eyeing itself. The architecture aimed at communication, rather than the introspection we are familiar with in such buildings from the second half of the twentieth century. In their way, the audience are also actors in the space in front of the professional theatre. In after years, tourists sense that they are in a country in which the communicative skills of the theatre have been developing since ancient times.

The interior has not only been used for plays, but also for celebrations. At one level, theatre is a festive celebration.

The theatre is characterised by its boxes. We have the impression of lots of small rooms that groups of persons can either retire to or sit in the public gaze, depending on their mood. There are 39 boxes on three storeys, conjuring up the presence of the whole town.

Everything was built close together, mainly on account of the acoustics – electronic amplification was unheard of – and for communication purposes, with the result that the interior is very steep and high.

For this reason, the stage is one storey above floor level. It is neither broad nor deep; plays are therefore acted in somewhat static scenes.

Superlative acoustics. Actors and singers can whisper; words and music are always soft in tone.

Moreover, when the members of the audience all talk at once in the interval, the sound of their voices is like a murmuring on the piazza. No-one is yelling.

Background to the comedies. In his work “Der Mannhaffte Kunstspiegel” (“The noble mirror of art”), published in Augsburg in 1663, Joseph Furttenbach the Elder (1591-1667) wrote about perspective in the theatre and scenic practices.

He said comedies were wonderfully beneficial, they refreshed the sad heart and portrayed men's acts in a whimsical way. They communicated history. All this was done pleasantly, reflecting manners and with the use of gestures. The audience were interested in the clothes sewn for decorative purposes, he said.

Comedies soothe away people's fears. He went on to describe how the audience watched the characters in a comedy finding protection, being saved from violent acts, defying their enemies. They experienced the overthrow of the mighty and the humbling of the proud and magnificent.

The astrology experience. Sun, moon and stars lit up the stage. The forces of nature were conjured up in the form of thunder and lightning, rain and snow, the raging sea. All these things compounded to provide a sensual experience.

A further effect. According to Furttenbach, the rational spectator was therefore able to wander around a new, different and delightful world.

Applied psychology played its part in cheering and invigorating those with melancholy dispositions, enabling them to live longer.

Furttenbach said that at the time he was writing, such buildings were mainly to be found in Italy. Vast sums of money had been spent on theatres there.

He claimed that half a ton of gold had been spent on seven changes of scenery in a play that was only performed once at a princely wedding, at which only great persons were present. However much the other thousands of townsfolk might have liked to watch the play, this pleasure was denied them.¹⁴

A theatrical society. In 1810, twenty wealthy families in Anghiari, which at that time had a population of five thousand, bought the theatre from Benedetto Corsi's heirs. It became a place for high society meetings and events. Travelling theatre companies made guest appearances.

Five years later, the twenty families founded a theatrical society, the Accademia dei Ricomposti.¹⁵ The name suggests a re-grouping of the founders.¹⁶

The theatre became the base for the two academies, the Scompigliati and the Ricomposti, that now merged.

In later years, a workers' amateur theatre group used to perform there. They gave themselves the ironic name of Don Pasticcio (*pasticcio* being a mess).

The Corsi family dominated the town in the 19th century too. They owned a bank (Banco di Zenobi Corsi, Marchese di Baly). Around the year 1879, Giuliano Corsi was an oligarch and the holder of many offices in Anghiari; he served on the committee of a large number of associations.¹⁷

Decline and Habsburg-Lorraine reforms

Poverty and crime. The Thirty Years' War, which ravaged (mainly) the centre of the continent of Europe in the first half of the 17th century, had an indirect impact on the Italian peninsula. Italy sank slowly but surely into poverty.

Inland areas, where the social network was relatively stable, did not suffer as much as the coastal

regions. The interior was largely defined by its small business cycles.

However, poverty was on the rise here too. How did poverty affect housekeeping? What happened to the wealth of past centuries? The ebb in building activity indicates that there was little money available for reconstruction or new building projects in the 17th century. Centuries of prosperity became a myth masquerading as history.

Did local culture survive despite the poverty?

Poverty breeds crime. The central government used severe methods of prosecution to tame its citizens.

The visual impact this had on Anghiari's architecture was the 18th century reconstruction of the entire ground floor of the town hall, which was turned into a prison.¹⁸

Pietro Leopoldo. The Austrian Archduke Pietro Leopoldo (Emperor Leopold II), who reigned as Grand Duke of Tuscany from 1765 to 1790¹⁹, tried to find enlightened solutions to serious difficulties. He surrounded himself with excellent advisers, and attempted to reverse Tuscan decline.

He did this in the context of the “Enlightenment”. Some enlightened absolute monarchs in Europe were putting reforms in place on the basis of a close scrutiny of the facts, an examination of available resources and rational organisation. This was before the French Revolution, which went on to radicalise the process and win over the initial support of wide sections of the population.

Under Pietro Leopoldo, Tuscany became a model for many kinds of reform. He was successful in putting economic reforms in place and making changes in the areas of finance, administration, the church, agriculture²⁰ and roads²¹. Free trade was introduced. He tried to close the gap between town and country, and encouraged farming and forestry.²²

The prince sought to make administrators more rational in their dealings with those they administered.

Pietro Leopoldo simplified the process of administration, abolished self-government in small communes (*comunelli*) that, although covering large stretches of territory, were often just a cluster of hamlets. In the Anghiari area, Vaglialle, Pianettone and Carciano were affected by this reform.

The Habsburg-Lorraine rulers appreciated the worth of the people of Tuscany and introduced a cosmopolitan element into the Grand Duchy.

Reform of the church. The Grand Duke encouraged reform of a type that originated with the Jansenists in France. The Synod of Pistoia was held in 1786 in this spirit. The Jansenists²³ were the followers of Cornelius Jansen, who was born in the province of Acquoy (Holland) in 1585 and died in Ypres in 1638. They were reformers who based their beliefs on the teachings of St. Augustine and developed personal asceticism and strict moral principles. Having witnessed the horrors of the Thirty Years' War, they stressed the innate depravity of Man, emphasised the need for divine grace and denied the doctrine of human free will.

Jansenism spread in Catholic areas, especially in France and the Low Countries, particularly around Utrecht. In 1642, Pope Urban VIII condemned Jansenist ideas, as did Pope Innocent X in 1653. The movement attacked the Jesuits, their main opponents.

One effect of Jansenism. Pope Clement XIV suppressed the Jesuit order in 1773. Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo confiscated its Tuscan properties.

The rule of law. In 1776, the Grand Duke took a huge step forward towards creating a state that guaranteed the rule of law and human rights. He banned torture and abolished the death penalty.

What does this signify? In what way did past experience change their views on the law?

Torture never produces evidence. Under the extreme pain of torture, nearly all victims will admit to anything their tormentors suggest in order to stop the agony, even for a moment. Instead of obtaining sham evidence, prosecutors are forced to look for genuine evidence that will hold up before a court of law.

The death penalty is abolished. Tuscany was the first state in Europe to abolish the death penalty.

The Tuscans manifested their commitment to the civilisation of violence. Culture in Central Italy had such strong roots that it influenced the mentality of the population – even when city culture was in decay – even enabling it to evolve under certain circumstances.

The outstandingly intelligent scholar who promoted this civilising influence and formulated it in legal treatises was Cesare Beccaria (born in Milan in 1738 and died there in 1794). He was a member of the Milan Enlightenment. He put forth his ideas on the abolition of torture and capital punishment in his work “*Dei delitti e delle pene*” (On crimes and punishments), published in the Tuscan city of Leghorn in 1764.

Cultural synthesis. At this point, we might consider whether the culture of Austria, with its relatively enlightened attitudes, synthesised with that of Central Italy during Austrian Lorena rule.

Let us call to mind the fourteen Etruscan states, that, as far as we know, never waged war against each other, or the development of city culture that sought a civilised and non-military solution to conflicts. Even the Medici, who were absolute rulers, skilfully managed to avoid getting involved in European disputes. At any rate, this non-military attitude remained a strong undercurrent.

The reforms did not happen overnight. Those with property wanted to hold on to the status quo; those managing public affairs, in their self-sufficient and easy-going way, wanted things to proceed as always.

In his reports *Relazione sul Governo della Toscana*, the Grand Duke wrote, “... a land with many prosperous families who lack neither the talents nor the means to exert themselves, [were it not for] the ignoramuses, lazybones and sluggards; [it is moreover] a land full of intemperance.”²⁴ Pietro Leopold knew that those appointed as his *vicario* were mostly uneducated and incompetent.²⁵

Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo visited Anghiari in 1777 and stayed at Palazzo Doni, which is now house number 24 on the long street. It bears a plaque to commemorate the event.

Legal reforms in Anghiari. Eleven years (1776 to 1787) passed before the gallows on the road to Sansepolcro were taken down. The order was given by the *magistratura*, with Carlo Tutti presiding, in response to a request by the enlightened citizen Ermengildo Ducci.

The gallows had been erected on the spot where the Battle of Anghiari was fought on the feast of Saints Peter and Paul.²⁶ The wood of this unhappy murder apparatus was auctioned off, Ermengildo Ducci being among the bidders.

At the same time the instruments of torture were removed from the torture chamber in the town hall.

Secularisation. Leopold's reforms also put an end to the church-run organisations that had been a feature of public life and had become increasingly ubiquitous since the Counter-Reformation. The associations, which had become internally weak but wanted to keep their hold on public life, were dissolved.

The two hospitals of the Fraternità di Santa Maria del Borghetto in Anghiari were shut down as early as the first half of the 18th century. The confraternity had lost its zeal and its ability to persuade donors to contribute the necessary funds. The remaining income was sent to the *Ufficio del Bigallo* in Florence.²⁷

In 1784, the Grand Duke dissolved the *Badia*, which had been taken over by one of the military orders in 1508.

Many centuries had passed since the founding of the confraternities, which by this time were obviously suffering from sclerosis. While they had initially acted as a focal point for necessary municipal infrastructure, they now held a restrictive grip on society and had become clubs. In order to avoid the threat of dissolution, Misericordia, Sant'Antonio and Corpus Domini merged in 1783, but this failed to avert their downfall. In 1785, the Grand Duke dissolved all religious confraternities.

What are we to make of these measures? For centuries, Christianity had been ambivalent. In one way, it offered enlightenment in the face of world views that were hidebound by magic; some of its social religious movements (the Augustinians and Franciscans, for example) had been very powerful; but by this time Christianity had lost its ability to enlighten.

Hardly any voices were raised against the dissolution ordered by the authorities.

Secularisation of church property. In the same way, very few protested against the wide-ranging sale of church property, particularly under Napoleonic rule.

Over the centuries, the various Catholic institutions had come to own about one quarter of all land. These properties had been bequeathed to the church by the many faithful who were afraid of death and the Last Judgement, which was how the church became the largest single land owner.

Secularisation had taken place in Protestant areas of Northern Europe much earlier, at the time of the Reformation (16th century). The assets that were expropriated were mainly used to finance infrastructure and new educational projects.

In Catholic parts of Northern Europe, secularisation did not take place until Napoleonic times (around 1800). Church assets were confiscated by the various states and sold at a favourable price to wealthy families.

This happened in Tuscany about ten to twenty years earlier. Prosperous families were able to increase their wealth at little expense to themselves. Secularisation made the rich richer.

There was also antagonism within the church itself. Relations between the clergy in the various ecclesiastical institutions were sometimes strained, and not always harmonious. In 1788, the priests of the parish church (*Propositura*) were in favour of the dissolution of Sant'Agostino monastery.²⁸ Therefore we must not imagine that the idea of dissolving a monastery only came from outside the church.

Both monasteries in Anghiari, the Franciscan house at the head of the *stradone* and Sant'Agostino, were dissolved in Napoleonic times.

Reforms in the countryside: farm houses. The most important economic sector in the 18th century was agriculture, which was why Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo and his councillors paid particular attention to agricultural reform. In this context, the most important personage was the Grand Duke's minister Vittorio Fossombroni (1754-1844), an economist, mathematician and hydraulics engineer. He is particularly known for his work on improving the land in the Valdichiana through drainage (*bonifica*).

Criticism was sparked by living conditions in the farm houses. People said farmers were worse off than the horses in the *padrone's* stables. Critical voices were raised more loudly in the 19th century.

In 1769, Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo expressed his concern at some of the farm workers' living conditions on the grand ducal *fattoria* in Altopascio, one of his own properties. He proposed that action should be taken to improve the homes of *fattoria* workers on the ducal estates.

This prompted a debate on the relationship between living conditions and economic efficiency.

Several different types of house were common in the countryside. Detached farm houses were frequently to be found, as were villas for individual families. These latter might be the country houses of townsfolk or the dwellings of tenants under the system of métayage. Villas pure and simple were rare, but a farm house was often converted into a villa.

In some parts of Tuscany, new buildings were constructed according to the pattern of 16th century mansions and castles (including those built by Baldassare Peruzzi and Bernardo Buontalenti). Later architects took up their ideas, applied them on a smaller scale and modified them as necessary.

In connection with land reform, Grand Ducal planners designed a new type of farm house, especially for the areas that had become available through drainage (*bonifica*).²⁹ Its origins lay in the mediaeval tradition of converted tower houses. The central building comprised a tower. This tower was surrounded by rooms, so that the resulting shape was that of a cube. The later version contained the following additions: a downstairs portico, a flight of stairs and an upper-level open-sided gallery (*sistema portico-loggia*). In times of relative peace, the tower in the middle was neither a refuge from danger nor a look-out tower (*belvedere*), but a dovecote (*torre colombaria centrale*).

The simpler, but spatially improved version of the tower house was the square house – a large cuboid block with a pavilion roof, and without a dovecote tower. This type of farm house was often built on a plateau. Other smaller houses were built around it. You can see a house like this at Le Strelle, on the road to Ponte alla Piera, before the turning to Motina, north of Pietto.

This is not the same as a detached farm dwelling for tenants under the system of métayage. These were villas in which farmers lived. The upper storey with its gallery and tower was reserved for the master and his family.

The first places to receive state aid were the western and southern parts of the province of Pisa. Beginning in the year 1784, for a period of six years, a quarter of expenditure on all new buildings and restoration work was refunded.

The Grand Duke's innovative ideas were not uniformly effective. His reforms did not reach much further than the *fattoria*. They were most successful in the land improvement (*bonifica*) areas carried out along the Chiana Canal in the Chiana basin near Arezzo around 1780. To a certain degree, they spread from here to other areas.

In 1790, Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo succeeded to his Austrian possessions and returned to Vienna (1790-1792). However, this enlightened ruler died two years later.

Ferdinando III. Pietro Leopoldo appointed his second son Ferdinando as regent in Tuscany, who proved to be a weak ruler. During the nine years of his regency (1790-1799) there were numerous popular uprisings. The protests, mainly in Florence and Arezzo (1795), were against rises in the cost of living and unemployment.

Notes on:

Rule by the Habsburg-Lorraine dynasty (1737-1759) – the 18th century (13.)

1 Quoted in Hale, 1979, 200.

2 Maria Theresa (1717-1780), queen from 1740, empress 1745-1780. She was the second-born and eldest surviving child of Emperor Charles VI and Princess Christine of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. She married Duke Francis Stephen for reasons of true affection; they had 16 children. Her husband was a grandson of

Charles V of Lorraine, who had helped conquer the Turks and liberate Vienna. Stephen Francis ruled as Emperor Francis I from 1745 until his death in 1765. After he died, Maria Theresa increasingly handed affairs of state over to her son Joseph II and Minister Kaunitz. Maria Theresa spoke of her “four Italian colonies”: the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, under the regency of her son Leopold; Lombardy, ruled by her son Ferdinand; the Duchy of Parma, ruled by her daughter Maria Amalia; and the Kingdom of Naples, ruled by her daughter Maria Carolina. Her youngest daughter, Marie Antoinette, married King Louis XVI of France (he acceded to the throne in 1774). Joseph II (1741-1790) was co-regent from 1765, and ruled alone from 1780. In 1775, he abolished torture, against the wishes of his mother. His brother was Leopold Grand Duke of Tuscany.

- 3 Diaz, 1988. Ciuffoletti/Rombai, 1989.
- 4 Names in Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 57/58.
- 5 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 321/322.
- 6 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 58.
- 7 On the subject of the plays, see Babbini 15/17.
- 8 Merendelli, 1992/1993. Merendelli, 1997, no. 2, 81/96.
- 9 See Bianchini, 1978.
- 10 Babbini, 1989, 14.
- 11 Zorzi/Zangheri (eds.), 1994, 129/134. Allegretti, 1999-2000.
- 12 Benci, 1821,44.
- 13 Di Pietro, in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, Illustration 53. Catasto (19th century), in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, Illustration 2. A baroque garden as far as the hamlet in the north.
- 14 Taken from: Schumacher, 1977, pp. 67/68.
- 15 Costituzione per l'Accademia del Teatro di Anghiari, Firenze, 1917.
- 16 In neighbouring San Sepolcro, 18 aristocratic families collaborated in the building of a theatre on the main street. In 1836, Teatro Dante opened its doors with a performance of the opera *La Sonnambula* (composed by Vincenzo Bellini in 1831). A century later, in 1935, live performances were halted, and the theatre was turned into a cinema.
- 17 Giabbani/Fabiani, 1987, 53.
- 18 Fanelli, in Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, Illustration 22 (plan dated 1764).
- 19 Diaz, 1988.
- 20 Biagioli, 1975.
- 21 P. Bellucci, 1989, 477/490.
- 22 Azzari/Ombai, 1990, 33/53.
- 23 P. Honigsheim, *Die Staats- und Soziallehren der französischen Jansenisten im 17. Jahrhundert*. Reprinted Darmstadt, 1969. J. Orcibal, *Les origines du Jansénisme*. Three vols. Paris, 1948.
- 24 “È terra popolata con molte famiglie benestanti che non mancherebbero di talenti e mezzi per applicarsi ... [se non fossero] ignoranti, poltroni e infingardi, [essendo fra altro] un paese pieno libertinaggio.” Quoted in Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 61.
- 25 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 62.
- 26 Babbini, 1989, 71.
- 27 Babbini/Benedetti, 1987, 16.
- 28 Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 53.
- 29 On the subject of these farm houses, see: Imberciadori, 1953. Di Pietro, 1980. Greppi/Tini, 1983. Di Pietro, s.a. – Two cadastral surveys were set up: the Catasto lorensse in 1823, and the Catasto in 1936. (Both are housed in the State Archives in Arezzo.)

14. The 19th century 1800-1914

Napoleonic rule and the Restoration

Napoleonic rule. In 1796, Napoleon Bonaparte crossed the Alps with his army and occupied northern Italy. The people welcomed him enthusiastically, setting up trees of liberty on many of the squares. A

large number of citizens hoped for fulfilment of the aims of the French Revolution¹.

In 1797, the Cisalpine Republic was created along the lines of the French one. After 1802, with Napoleon as its president, it was known as the Italian Republic.

Having lost Upper Italy, the Habsburgs went on to lose Tuscany as well. In 1801, Napoleon overthrew Grand Duke Ferdinand III with the support of reform-minded citizens, and made the Duke of Parma's son King Louis I of the newly created Etruria. After his death in 1803, Louis' widow Maria Luisa of Spain assumed the regency of the former Tuscany during the minority of her son, but Napoleon annexed it in 1807.

In 1804, Napoleon had himself crowned emperor. His sister Elisa Baciocchi was given the title of Grand Duchess of Tuscany. The Italian Republic was renamed the Kingdom of Italy, and Napoleon crowned king in 1805.

The Napoleonic Code was introduced, and extensive changes were made to the status of the middle classes and parts of the aristocracy. Napoleon liberalised the system of government, revived economic activity and emancipated the Third Estate.

Napoleon boosted road building on the Italian peninsula, encouraging mobility and extending the economic reach. He promoted those sections of the citizenry that were engaged in productive work, and introduced agricultural reforms that produced higher yields. Small-scale farmers were allowed to buy their land, as they treated it with greater care than the great landowners. This measure resulted in the re-cultivation of waste land.

Counter-productive measures. A number of Napoleonic measures were self-defeating, however, in that they provoked a counter-reaction. Napoleon introduced a repressive police force and a heavy tax burden; he refused to allow citizens to participate in the political process and strongly promoted French interests, for instance by placing a ban on a number of Italian manufacturing sectors. Above all, his enlightened reforms were discredited as a result of military policies that laid a huge burden on the people. Furthermore, his administrators behaved in a high-handed way.

Napoleon fell in 1815.

The Restoration was engineered by the Congress of Vienna in 1814/1815. Austria sought a patriarchal middle way between restoration and enlightened reform from above. The major powers re-instituted rule by Habsburg-Lorraine, allowing Grand Duke Ferdinand III to return.²

For the people, matters went from bad to worse. Enlightened reforms were quickly repealed by the Grand Duke.

On the religious front, the rise of Viva Maria was one such retrograde step. It was a pious movement supported by the former religious congregations that had been dissolved in 1785.

As Habsburg-Lorraine was a politically tolerant dynasty (it admitted many asylum seekers into its territories, for example) the opposition movement of the Carbonari (charcoal burners) had little influence in Tuscany in the years 1820, 1821 and 1831.

A fattoria in Sant'Agostino. During the Restoration, in order to pay off his debts, Grand Duke Ferdinand III made over the three ducal properties that used to belong to St. Augustine's monastery to the faraway Tuscan town of Pistoia.

Pistoia set up an estate office and manager (*fattore*) in Sant'Agostino monastery buildings. The entrance to the office was via Porta Sant'Angelo, the eastern gate. Grain, maize, potatoes, onions and grapes were brought from the plain by cart. The estate manager lived on the upper floor of the building.

Only eight years later, in 1824, the town of Pistoia sold the *fattoria* to a local landowner, Domenico

di Francesco Galardi in Sansepolcro. It remained in his family until 1876, when it was bought by Zanobi di Angelo Corsi, the Marquess of Valialle, whose family was the wealthiest in Anghiari in the 18th and 19th centuries. Zanobi Corsi owned vast estates and was licensed to cultivate the greatest quantity of tobacco in the area. He also owned a bank and had wealthy relatives. In 1894, following the marriage of his daughter Vittoria, the *fattoria* came to be owned by Pietro di Teofilo Bartolomei. They ceased to cultivate the land in 1945.³ The building is still owned by the Bartolomei family, but they have left it empty, and it is going to rack and ruin.

No services have been held in the church since 1983, but public funds were used to restore it in the 1980s. Exhibitions are held there from time to time.

Improvements to country living were debated in the Habsburg-Lorraine era, and the subject was taken up again in the 19th century.⁴ The old houses of the métayage tenants were roundly criticised in the year 1828: “A house of this kind is not merely squalid and dismal on account of its age, and deformed as a result of the unseemliness of its parts, it looks like a proper fox's den ... the few rooms are so tiny that the householders can hardly put a double bed in them ... there is also the smoke from the usually damaged and decrepit chimney. ...”⁵

In the post-1950 era of industrialisation, many of the métayage tenants left. The worse their houses, the more likely they were to leave. This was of no advantage to the owner.

Conservative commentators like Matteo Tolomei Bifti made the usual objections. In 1804⁶, he argued that converting a house would cost two-thirds more than building a normal house from scratch. Two houses could be built for that price, he said.

This argument was again put forward in the short-term planning of the social movement, when quality was sacrificed in favour of quantity.

Those on the conservative wing countered with a reform rhetoric that was deployed to save them money. They spoke warmly of the “*ottimo padrone*”, a landowner who cares for his tenants.

Back to the Middle Ages and earlier. In 1809, the mayor Carlo Tuti described the situation to the subprefect of Arezzo, saying agriculture was in complete decline and countless changes would have to be made.

He said the forest areas with oak, turkey oak and sweet chestnut were in good condition, covering one third [!] of the area of the commune.

The area was rich in wildlife, which meant the population were able to go hunting regularly.

As far as health matters went, the mayor described the situation as distressful. The people had many different diseases, and the poor had to die without help of any kind. He suggested a hospital in Anghiari would be a worthy monument [!] and would alleviate the greatest amount of suffering.

There was plenty of excellent water, even in lengthy periods of drought.

In general, the population were obedient and peaceable, but some people, in their wickedness and ignorance, tried to destroy the harmony, he said.

In May, they had a custom of ringing the bells early in the morning for the benefit of the sleepyheads in the town. Traditionally, this ended with a country festival and folk dancing. (Scampanata).

His comments show that even though the area was rich in natural resources, agriculture and infrastructure were lagging behind the standards of the Middle Ages and the early modern era.

The hospital (behind the *Badia*) had disappeared together with the voluntary health workers of the confraternity. No new social organisations had yet been set up to replace the pre-dissolution ones.

Population size. Despite difficulties in the living conditions, the town grew from a population of 3,387 in 1745 to 6,417 in 1833. These numbers refer to the town itself and the 25 administrative areas in the country around Anghiari. The population density of 145 per square mile was quite high in comparison with nowadays.⁷ The number of persons living in the centre of town was 1,449; there were 265 in Toppole, 295 in San Leo, 486 in Micciano and 161 in Verrazzano.

Agricultural activity was subsistence farming. Farmers still produced food for their own needs. Anghiari was a small country town. Large numbers of people poured into the town for the annual fairs on 1st May, 29th/30th June, 29th August and for the three days from 11th to 13th November.

Church organisation. There were seven parish churches in the area as a whole.

Health service. Two physicians and one surgeon worked in the area. It was mostly the wealthy who called on their services.

The sick had to get better on their own, mostly taking advice from other family members. Serious cases (of appendicitis, tuberculosis and other illnesses) were nearly always hopeless, which was why many people failed to reach old age. Red wine and honey were taken to stabilise the genetic system – with an effect similar to that of penicillin. This was a remedy based on people's experience, but its efficacy was later confirmed on the basis of scientific evidence.

Education. Two teachers taught at the school, and the children who attended it had to pay fees.⁸ As a result, the population remained largely illiterate. Many pupils learned next to nothing.

Other children, especially from country areas, were not sent to school at all. They did not need any education for the life they lived. They learned by doing and from their parents. It was not until the advent of industrial farming that they needed to widen their knowledge and acquire new skills.

Poor girls could get a free education from the nuns of San Martino, but most girls were made to stay at home.

The beginnings of an industrial society

In the first half of the 19th century, living conditions worsened considerably in the Upper Tiber Valley. However, in the middle of the valley, around Anghiari, Monterchi and Sansepolcro, the population increased and productivity rose. The soil was improved in the flood plain. One result of this was the establishment of the Buitoni food business in Sansepolcro in 1927.

Early industry. During the early industrial era, the inhabitants of Anghiari were said to be the most hard working in the Upper Tiber Valley.⁹ The town contained a surprising number of trades and, at an early stage, a cluster of small factories. This was a good situation for industrial start ups.

Thirteen water mills kept up the tradition of working with water. In 1833, there was a mill with a staff of 30 persons employed in spinning wool for both fine and coarse cloth. Furthermore, there were eight fulling mills, five dye works, including one for wool dyeing with a total of 25 employees. There were also two factories for making felt hats, two powder factories, a leather tanning factory with six employees and a factory making window gratings and iron parapets. Four potteries employed a total of 25 artisans. The iron trade was fairly well developed too, with a number of blacksmiths, two gun-making factories and a smithy producing instruments used in obstetrics and surgery.¹⁰

Some of the buildings housing the businesses on the *stradone*, below Piazzetta della Fontana, can still be seen today.

Nevertheless, only about two per cent of the population were employed in these early businesses.

Even so, this was a considerably higher proportion than in neighbouring Sansepolcro.

Piazza del Mercatale. In the service sector, there was a need for office space. Plans were made for demolishing houses to make way for a new building. First, the arcades were pulled down, to make the square “larger”.¹¹ This was a huge loss for the town, and protests were so fierce that the wider project had to be abandoned. Other projects also ended in quarrelling.¹²

The attempt to re-make the square and the reactions to it demonstrate how planning for the future came into conflict with people's awareness of the need to preserve their identity. This has been played out time and time again all over Europe, reflecting a lack of intelligence and the social skills required for non-destructive and successful conflict resolution.

In 1836, the square was enlarged on the roof of new arcades that were constructed at the bottom end of the square in front of the well.

New infrastructure. In the 19th century, paperwork increased enormously. However, it was not the state, but Augustinian monks, who put the appropriate new infrastructure in place. Between 1857 and 1908, they established an elementary school for girls, a kindergarten, an approved home and a hospital (*ospedale*).

This indicates that a still very weak state apparatus – one that had grand ideas of becoming an overarching nation state – was not in fact interested in the day-to-day living conditions of the broader populace. The state held itself to be conservative, which meant leaving things as they were. It failed to understand that the state has to be proactive in creating those structures that the individual cannot set up by himself.

Basic essentials were again left to the old religious institutions. They, however, were recovering only very slowly. Above all, they were incapable of providing any impetus or ideas to assist the birth of an industrialised society.

The Misericordia. In 1785, the confraternities had been dissolved by a law issued by the Habsburg-Lorraine government. However, as charitable work was still needed, permission was given in 1791 for a newly established association to function under the name of Confraternità di Misericordia. The seeds were sown for modern social services, continuing the tradition of mediaeval associations.

The Misericordia set up its new headquarters opposite the Abbey church (*Badia*) at 15 Via Nenci. Initially it rented the premises, then it bought the buildings in two stages and converted them. The Abbey church was their house of prayer.

Their traditional duties were expanded to cover the transportation of the sick to hospital and financial support for the poor who had fallen ill. This latter was then extended to include support for those who had lost their homes as a result of fire or destruction, especially through natural disasters.¹³

In 1869, Orazio Nenci, the mayor, asked the confraternity to set up a hospital, which became the Ospedale della Misericordia. The mayor offered them rooms in the old *cancelleria* at 15 Via Nenci. These rooms had been left vacant since the municipal offices (*Ufficio Comunale*) moved to the *vicario's* palace in 1866. The Ospedale della Misericordia had ten beds to begin with.

Some years later, in 1879, the kindergarten and hospital came under fire for their poor working and living conditions.¹⁴

In 1970, the Misericordia Confraternity took over the old Fra Damaso hospice (Ospizio Frate Francescani della Verna) on the long road (*stradone*). It was built in the 17th century, but the portal dates from 1836. The Franciscans ran the hospital for many years, in gratitude for their new headquarters. A large part of the expense involved in fitting out the premises was borne by Marco and

Celeste Buitoni, who owned a family business with a factory in Sansepolcro, but who lived in the municipality of Anghiari. In their honour, a chapel was dedicated to St. Mark.

The Museo della Confraternità di Misericordia (15 Via Nenci) documents the association's activities in the 19th and 20th centuries. Exhibits refer to the hospital and the transportation of the sick, including historic ambulances.

Villas. Many ambitious and wealthy persons had houses like former country villas built in the surrounding countryside, particularly after 1900.

In the industrial era, factory owners also built themselves villas. On the one hand, they modelled them on the seats of the nobility, on the other, on English industrialists' country houses.

Villa Buitoni. In his factory in neighbouring Sansepolcro, Buitoni successfully manufactured pasta, the Italians' most important food. In 1910, he built Villa Buitoni (93 Villa Rimaggio) near Anghiari, behind the hamlet of Motina, to look like a Tuscan villa.

Industrialisation of routes: road and rail

Routes. For centuries, the area had mainly been accessible by footpath. The same was true of access to the surrounding regions – to the Chiana Valley and Arezzo, to Umbria, the Marche and Romagna. Given their self-sufficiency and low purchasing power, subsistence farmers hardly needed transport, nor did the artisans, whose trades were in decline. The few goods that had to be moved to distant parts could be carried by mule or horse.

It was not until the early stages of the industrial age that traffic routes for vehicles simply had to be built, as more and more heavy goods needed to be transported.

Just how slow this process was is illustrated by the fact that it took them a generation, from 1787 to 1808, to build one of the most important roads, from Arezzo – via Colle dei Boci, Monterchi-Le Ville – to Sansepolcro (Strada Regia dell'Adriatico; Via dello Scopetone).¹⁵ (However, in the years after the war, construction work on the Superstrada dei due mari dragged on for many decades as well.)

Around 1830, work was going on to widen the most important road: the narrow road from Arezzo to Anghiari over the Chiaveretto Pass and across the Sovara Valley. This “Via Libbia”, a somewhat shorter route, now acts as the northern Anghiari bypass.

Between 1821 and 1829, construction work was taking place on the link road between Pieve Santo Stefano and Città di Castello, via Sansepolcro, in the Upper Tiber Valley, to make it suitable for carts pulled by strong oxen.¹⁶

Infrastructure around the town itself was not upgraded until late in the day. In 1872, they built the road to nearby San Leo, and in 1890 the road to Toppole in the mountains.

Travellers' images. Now that it was becoming more accessible, the travelling upper classes grew more appreciative of the countryside; for instance, of the road between Sansepolcro and Città di Castello (a very unattractive road nowadays) and above all the “big road” in Anghiari, with its beautiful view of the portico.¹⁷

One view of Anghiari is famous, and has been reproduced many times over, and that is Antonio Terreni's engraving of 1789, later published in a book “Viaggio pittorico della Toscana”.¹⁸

Cartography. Maps reflect spaces and social relationships. They can aid reconnaissance and provide information for military strategists. Administrators use them to provide legal certainty in dealing with the territories under their control. This “cadastral” mindset goes back to ancient times. It

brought about a desire to categorise the world, tidy it up and define it accurately, using calculations and reasoning.

A well-developed sense of topography had existed since the Middle Ages.¹⁹ In the 17th and 18th centuries, the leading cartographers were Dutch.

The practical value of a land registry kindled interest in mapping, and in producing detailed geodetic maps. The first one that aimed to establish the exact boundaries of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany was drawn by Giovanni Inghirami in 1830, in response to disputes over territorial boundaries with neighbouring states.²⁰

Comprehensive works were written by authors with a newly awakened interest in geography, including A. Zuccagni-Orlandini's "*Atlante geografico fisico e storico del Granducato di Toscana*", published in Florence in 1832, and E. Ripetti's "*Dizionario geografico fisico della Toscana ...*" published in six volumes in Florence in 1833/1846.

Books like these gave the public access to comprehensive studies and fostered interest in hydrography (the charting of bodies of water)²¹ and the expansion of the road network.

They were of use to people going on their travels, and in this context, those interested in culture and education.

The Tuscan-Umbrian railway. As goods came to be increasingly produced in bulk, it became necessary to introduce a means of transport that the English had developed. The first railway in Italy ran between Naples and Portici in 1839. In the same year, the banker Emanuele Fenzi financed the planned construction of a railway linking Florence and Leghorn. The lines linking the following towns were built as follows: Milan and Monza (1840); Testa Ponte Laguna and Padua (1842); Naples and Caserta (1843); Portici and Torre Annunziata (1843); Leghorn and Pisa (1844); Pisa and Pontedera (1845); Lucca and Pisa (1846); Pontedera and Empoli (1847); Empoli and Florence (1848).²²

In the Papal States, a railway-building programme began in 1846, which led to the construction of the Umbrian line linking Foligno, Perugia and Città di Castello.²³

It is striking that it was not until 1880, at the time of the consolidation of the Italian railway network, that the co-operative known as the Consorzio Umbro-Aretino was set up. It planned to create a Tuscan line with stops at Arezzo, Monterchi, Anghiari, Sansepolcro and Città di Castello. It was given its licence in 1881. The estimated cost of construction was 5,885,000 lire, of which the state contributed 3,531,000 lire and the province 200,000 lire. A firm from Rome worked on it for five years. However, the slipshod way in which the estimate was calculated meant the final bill was nearly three times that amount, namely 15,324,000 lire.

Amazingly, the project was finished only a few days after the agreed date. In May 1886, the line between Arezzo and Anghiari was opened.

The Ferrovia Centrale Umbra from Umbertide to Terni was opened in 1915. It was operated by the F.A.C. (Ferrovia dell'Appennino Centrale), and the line now ran over a distance of 133 kilometres from Arezzo via Anghiari and Città di Castello to Fossato di Vico (near Fabriano in the Marche). It enabled goods to be more easily transported at a time when roads were still bad.

The difficult section of the line between Arezzo and Anghiari. On leaving Arezzo, trains climbed a steep gradient up to Colle della Giostra, passing through six tunnels dripping with water. The steam locomotives produced great quantities of smoke, particularly during the ascent through the tunnels. They had to take on fresh water quite soon, at Palazzo del Pero. The journey continued down the steep slopes of the Cerfone Valley, where sand had to be thrown on the rails to help the engines to brake.

They passed Ville Monterchi and Citerna, and went through the Galleria del Pantano near Citerna, which at 261 metres was the longest tunnel. They climbed again in the Valle dei Gatti before making the steep descent into Anghiari.

The difference in altitude on this stretch of the line was enormous. The engineers had sought to minimise this by cutting through the mountains and laying the tracks high above the valleys, which meant constructing a total of 19 bridges and 23 tunnels. The train from Arezzo to Città di Castello took all of three hours to cover 61 kilometres. This very slow average speed was nevertheless five times quicker than a horse-and-cart or the fastest means of transport at that time, the horse.

Travellers still had the feeling the journey was an adventure. People made wry comments, calling the “treno del Alta Valle del Tevere” (the Upper Tiber Valley Railway) “*macinino*” (coffee grinder); “*sputafuoco*” (fire breather); “*fischiasempre*” (constant whistler) and, in the spirit of early environmentalists, “*veleno*” (poison).

Changes in perception. People's perception changed with the acceleration of speed in many areas, especially with the advent of the motor car. The once mighty train became diminished in their eyes, and they called it “*il trenino*” (the little train) and “*caffettiera*” (coffee pot – a tongue-in-cheek expression for a slow train). They laughed at it for moving so slowly, saying “It's quicker to walk!”. Nevertheless, the railway was nearly accident-free.

Stops. In the beginning, there were 22 stations on the line; another eleven were added later. The most important stations were Arezzo, Palazzo del Pero, Molin Nuovo, Le Ville-Monterchi, Citerna (which has been preserved), Anghiari (also preserved), Sansepolcro (preserved), Città di Castello and, when the line was extended, Umbertide, Gubbio and Fossato di Vico.

Small stations comprised no more than a house for the station master and his family. The job was badly paid²⁴, so it was usually carried out by the wife or a daughter, while the father of the family had to go to work elsewhere. When the weather was bad, the people waiting for a train stood in the open, because there was as yet nowhere for them to shelter. Part of the ritual consisted of the station mistress shining a red lamp to the incoming train, to show she was there and aware of its arrival.

Locomotives. The railway line had twelve small tender engines (Couillet-Marcinelle) from Belgium, one of the leading industrial nations of the time. In the 1930s, they operated diesel-powered rail cars that shortened the journey time from 180 to 80 minutes.

Anghiari station. The station was built at the foot of the hill, 300 metres south of the *stradone*.²⁵ A hamlet, and later a small industrial estate, grew up around it.

War damage. In the Second World War, bombs hit Arezzo station on 2nd December 1943 and devastated the railway. After the war, the line between Sansepolcro and Arezzo was not rebuilt.

Change. The tracks were removed after the Second World War, but Anghiari station and the station master's house on the crossroads to San Leo are still standing. Some railway installations can still be seen near the road to Arezzo.

In the quarter that grew up around the station, the large gardens, interspersed with small factories, remind us of the former farmers that might have tended them. Workers drink their espressos in the large old house next to the station, which has been owned by the Mondani brothers since 1978. They built a restaurant called “La Stazione” next door in 1983.

In the 1970s there had been a plan to turn the old station (*vecchia stazione*) into a place where the elderly could meet, but no funding was available. In 2001, the meeting point for the elderly was set up in Palazzo Corsi, opposite the Mercatale.

Railway and station are still functioning in nearby Sansepolcro, which is served by the line to Città di Castello, Umbertide and Perugia.

On the way to a “second bourgeois society”

The Italian *Risorgimento*. Italian unification began, as did similar movements in France and Germany, with a well justified search for the country's roots.

In bourgeois circles and among the populace, the dream of “resurgence” (*Risorgimento*) had been bubbling beneath the surface since 1815.

The early stages of industrialisation in the north prompted the need for expansion throughout Italy.

“Unification” became an ideological key word. Writers and artists, and especially operatic composers (Giuseppe Verdi), put their skills at the disposal of unification.

The political force behind this movement was the republican and permanent revolutionary, Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872), a lawyer by profession. The guerilla leader Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882) was responsible for military planning.

Mazzini went into exile in 1831. During his time in exile in Marseilles, he founded the political society known as “*La giovine Italia*” (Young Italy). In Berne, he founded “*La giovine Europa*” in 1834. His writings, which brought the revolutionary republican-unitarian wing of the “*Risorgimento*” into being, were widely circulated.

The idea was supported in a mood of intoxication by radicals, democrats and republicans, but it proved illusory. They had believed unification would be the end of all evil.

Giuseppe Mazzini, who later had a street named after him in Anghiari, as in every town in Italy, became a mouthpiece for many who looked for a unified Italy, the end of all monarchies, the establishment of a republic, social equality and justice.

After 1821, the Austrian rulers of Upper Italy were regarded by the nationalist movement as the enemy.

In 1843, the first popular rising against the Grand Duke broke out in Leghorn, where there had been considerable opposition to the restoration. The Grand Duke lost a great deal of support due to his harsh and oppressive measures, so that he was forced to make concessions to the democrats. There was a joint meeting of the two Tuscan parliaments in the Hall of the 500 in Florence City Hall.

The Piedmontese dynasty was the only one to have a strong army. In 1848, King Charles Albert of Piedmont took charge of the nationalist movement.

In 1848, Austrian troops occupied Tuscany.

Together with volunteers, the guerilla leader General Giuseppe Garibaldi, inspired by Mazzini, fought the Austrians in 1848.

The opposition, comprising romantic nationalists and moderate liberals, were active as journalists. They moved their headquarters from Milan to Florence, which was the freer city.

The short-lived Roman Republic (1848/1849). During the 1848 European Revolutions, the pope fled to Gaeta, and Mazzini organised the Republic in Rome with a triumvirate (Mazzini, Saffi and Armellini) at its head.

French troops marched on Rome. Garibaldi defended the city with his volunteer army, but the invaders were soon victorious.

Italian Unification. The war waged by Piedmont and France (under Napoleon III) against Austria

began in 1859. Austrian troops were driven out of Upper Italy after losing the battles of Magenta and Solferino. In the Treaty of Zurich (1859), Austria ceded Lombardy to Napoleon III. The rulers who had been expelled from Tuscany, Modena and Parma were to be reinstated, and the pope's rule in Emilia-Romagna re-established.

In a second treaty, Napoleon III ceded Lombardy to Piedmont.

The Piedmontese Prime Minister, Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour, ceded Savoy and Nice to France, in return for which Napoleon III agreed to Piedmont's annexation of Tuscany, Modena, Parma and Emilia-Romagna, an annexation that was ratified by plebiscites.

When Grand Duke Leopold II refused to fight in the Italian War of Independence in 1859 against – among other powers – his home country of Austria, he and his family were forced to leave Tuscany.

Cavour secretly supported the rebel movement in Central Italy.

In the Tuscan plebiscite of 1860, less than five per cent of the population voted in favour of keeping the Grand Duchy. They preferred annexation to Piedmont, which stood for a united Italy.

Garibaldi and his band of volunteers ("The Thousand") landed in Sicily in 1860, conquered first the island and then southern Italy as well. They fought hard for, and gained, a unified Italy. A united Kingdom of Italy (*Regno d'Italia*) was proclaimed in March 1861.

It had been fought for by the rank and file, by the people, under the leadership of Garibaldi, who talked about universal brotherhood, equality between the social classes and socialism. In fact, however, he was without a political concept.

Garibaldi's movement failed on the political front.

It was the astute Count Cavour (many streets have been named after him as well) who turned unification around by instituting a monarchy rather than a republic.

In 1861, Victor Emmanuel II of Piedmont assumed the title of King of Italy, following a decision by the first Italian parliament. Italy – with the exception of Veneto and what was left of the Papal States – became a liberal state with rule by parliament.

Failure. The "*Risorgimento*" was a revolution that failed, rather than otherwise. The upper classes distorted its original aims. "Garibaldi is a mere tool, blind to the fact that he is working for us", remarked Costantino Nigra to Cavour. The socialists mutated into nationalists, and new lords ruled in place of the old ones. A monarchy was established rather than a republic. Economic and political imperialism became inevitable; the fascists later carried this to extremes. Peasant and regional traditions were being slowly eradicated and replaced by bourgeois culture. Piedmont, which at that time was the "Prussia" of Italy, imposed bureaucracy and militarism on the whole country, but also gave it the art of diplomacy.

The upper classes were afraid and had no intention of leaving matters of governance to the people. All over Italy, the peasants remained indifferent, even though their immediate interests were repeatedly put on the line, and they descended steadily into poverty. Sometimes they joined forces with their lords, but received nothing in return.

The language used in the drawing up of constitutions was always vague, in order not to put vested interests at risk. New ideas could not be put into practice if no new laws were enacted.²⁶ Even when changes were made, it was the masters in delaying tactics who were at the helm. It became apparent that Italy could only be unified in accordance with the lowest common denominator. Barren pragmatism won the day. The country was at heart structurally conservative.

Within this framework, however, people could come to an understanding at the practical level, in a

way that would hardly be feasible in other countries.

As far as politicians went, their ambiguity and manoeuvring were cheered on by the media. In actual fact, this often meant “muddling on”.²⁷

Rigorous census suffrage meant rule by the upper middle classes, right up to the First World War.

Florence, the capital from 1864 to 1871. Florence wanted to be the capital, on account of its great cultural history and the Italian language spoken there. It was indeed capital for six years, until Rome was captured in 1870.

The Papal States. Garibaldi had tried to seize the Papal States in 1862 and 1867, but France had given military protection to the remaining territory, the city of Rome. In 1864, the pope condemned the social principles of liberalism. During the Franco-German War of 1870/1871, France had to recall its troops from Rome in order to focus on its own battles, leaving the pope unprotected. Garibaldi entered Rome and conquered it.

The pope had to reside in the Leonine City, from where he resentfully condemned the times. For the first time in centuries, he lacked any territory.

The Italian state was generous in guaranteeing the pope freedom to rule the church. However, Pius IX more or less unsuccessfully ordered Catholics to play no part in Italian politics.

Dialectics. Having lost all temporal power, Pope Pius IX used the First Vatican Council to declare the doctrine of papal infallibility, in the face of severe opposition from Germany and Austria, which brought about the secession of the Old Catholics.

Opposition to the *Risorgimento*. The pope claimed the *Risorgimento* was an attack on Catholicism. He told Italians to boycott the state by refusing to cast their votes in elections. This had little effect in Central and Northern Italy.

Owners of large estates (*latifondisti*) shared the Vatican's dislike of the new state. The pope, who had lost the Papal States in 1870, declared himself to be against the new ideas and supported anti-state banditry in Southern Italy (including the Mafia). He said Catholics would not co-operate with the new regime.

Nationalism. In the search for their roots, people gradually became nationalistic. Nationalism ceased to be a remedy for healing historical wounds; rather, it began to inflict wounds in an aggressive way.

Ways of life. According to the census of 1881, there were 286 houses in Anghiari, 26 of which were standing empty. These belonged to prosperous citizens of Anghiari who mostly lived in Florence. The remaining 260 houses were inhabited by 404 families, or 1,475 persons in all. On average, each family was made up of 3.6 members.

Only 100 dwellings comprised more than one storey, 304 had only one upper floor. Seventy per cent of the townsfolk lived in 0.7 of a room each.

In 1873, there were 137 names listed as receiving free bread rations from the Fraternità del Borghetto. If we multiply this number by the average number of members in a family, we see that about 500 persons were living in reduced circumstances, or 35 per cent out of a population of 1,400.

In 1879, ceramic workers and silk manufacturers made up the largest group of artisans. There were 26 tailors, 15 shoemakers, 15 stone masons, twelve carpenters and joiners and seven blacksmiths.

Social gatherings took place in 30 pubs.

The town was well guarded and policed by six full-time *carabinieri* and 19 soldiers.

The old cancelleria (Via Nenci) was home to the local government offices (*ufficio comunale*) until

1866, the year they moved to the *vicario's* palace, or the present-day town hall. The Ospedale della Misericordia moved into the rooms they had vacated.

From *vicario's* palace to town hall. The *vicario* once occupied the entire east wing of the present-day town hall²⁸, where he also had his lodgings. In the 17th century, the judge used the room that is now the mayor's. In 1849, the office of *vicario* was abolished, and the *pretura civile*, or police, moved into the building.

When the old tribunal was closed down, the court bell and the frame it hung in were presented as a gift to the Compagnia della Misericordia, who fixed the bell to the church tower of Sant'Agostino, to be rung in times of emergency.²⁹

In 1866, the *pretura* was abolished.

When the *ufficio comunale* moved in in 1866, furniture was bought for the council hall and a balustrade erected to separate the council members from members of the public.³⁰

A politically motivated crime on the piazza (1879)

Disappointing governments. The buoyant hopes of the *Risorgimento*, the re-birth of Italy, were dashed by the Piedmont-led Monarchy. Everyday life was difficult. The right-leaning liberal government was incapable of innovative action.

Intoxicating illusions evaporated rapidly in the face of rising government expenditure (on bureaucracy, outward show, clientelism, the military) that failed to benefit the people. Pressure mounted, particularly on the farmers. Propaganda was used to justify “financial restructuring” – just like nowadays. Frustration led to outbursts of anger, and even to banditry.

In 1876, the liberal to right-wing government had to resign. However, the left-wing liberals under Agostino Depretis, who were in power from 1881 to 1887, failed to push through the social reforms the people hoped for. Instead, they spent money on expensive armaments and risky colonial politics.

This situation gave rise to considerable discontent. Many a republican circle (*circolo repubblicano*) was founded, attracting members from all social classes and with very different ideas.

The left-leaning liberal government, which contained many former supporters of Garibaldi, did have a programme for reform, but it was vague and weak. The government panicked in the face of widespread public criticism and reacted in a rough and authoritarian manner, curtailing important and heavily symbolic rights. Demonstrations and the republican flag were banned. Increasingly, its response comprised military measures.

This, in its turn, provoked counter-aggression, culminating in 1878 in the failed assassination attempt on King Umberto I (1878-1900).

The government militarised the prefects and the *carabinieri*, a government-controlled police force that to this day is still one of the armed forces, using them as tools to implement its measures. They were not squeamish in their use of power.

The conflict became polarised; people rallied to one symbol or the other: to king or Garibaldi. Neither side made any gains, however, at this abstract, symbolic level.

Republicans in Anghiari. Anghiari, with its 1400 or so inhabitants, was divided into two camps: Catholics and Republicans. The latter had many supporters and wielded considerable influence in the town.

In 1876, Carlo Ducci and Giuseppe Ghignoni helped found a Circolo Repubblicano Democratico in

Anghiari under the chairmanship of a wealthy young man called Giuseppi Fusai.

At this time, the hero of the *Risorgimento*, the ageing Garibaldi, was in voluntary retirement in Caprera. Although some regarded him with suspicion, other left-wing republicans were inspired by his example to found a third freedom movement.

His name day was celebrated all over the land, especially by his former volunteers. About fifty of his volunteers had hailed from Anghiari, and in 1877 they formed an association with 35 members.

This was also a time of growth for the Società Operaia Artidoro Frini. In 1880, it had grown from 134 members to 163.

Their meetings became very lively from 1878 onwards. That was the year in which a republican democratic newspaper called *L'Aretino* was founded. It was printed in Montevarchi by Galassi, a freemason.

The newspaper printed a succession of well-researched critical articles on certain institutions and some wealthy establishment families (Leporo, Corsi and others) in Anghiari. The author used the pseudonyms Enofilo and Baldaccio, but his real name was Giuseppi Ghignoni, and he was a highly intelligent schoolteacher.³¹ It was not long before he was murdered.³²

The democrats' outing. The date was 19th March 1879, and the political situation was tense. Four months previously, an unsuccessful attempt had been made on the life of the young king Umberto of Savoy. Prime Minister Cairoli's government, which had had the support of the left-leaning deputies, collapsed. Where had the hopes of 1859 and the promises of 1860 gone?

A group of about one hundred people, including the head of the municipal tax office and musicians from the Società Filarmonica, went for a day out in the countryside to celebrate Giuseppi Garibaldi's name day.³³

They ate lunch together in an *osteria*. While the musicians were taking a break, the people sang the Hymn of Garibaldi and other republican patriotic songs. They raised their glasses alternately to Garibaldi and Giuseppi Mazzini.

The 32 year-old schoolteacher Giuseppi Ghignoni, a prime mover in the group, made an inflammatory speech from the terrace, praising Garibaldi and condemning the government. He hoped for the establishment of a republic and denounced the concentration of *carabinieri* and their aggressive and provocative behaviour in Anghiari. Furthermore he said the church was the monarchy's greatest ally in preserving the old order of things and in preventing the establishment of democracy. He further denounced those who treated others as their vassals, did shady business deals and were involved in intrigues and sleaze. He said they were following in the footsteps of the Inquisition and trying to blot out the words democracy, socialism and the republic. He then went on to perform a kind of "canonisation" of Garibaldi.

Another speaker, the 40-year-old Carlo Ducci, traced a line linking St. Joseph, the humble carpenter of Nazareth, the philosopher Mazzini, and Garibaldi. All three were guided by, and were shining examples of, mercy, equality and fraternity. He also counted Dante among their number, followed by Michelangelo and Ferruccio, who both defended the Florentine Republic in 1530. He then sang the praises of the short-lived Roman Republic under its triumvirate of Mazzini, Saffi and Armellini.

An evening of drama. The day trippers walked back to Anghiari, where the piazza was lit up as for a celebration. There was music, singing and cheering.

They watched a gymnastic display in the amusement hall, the *sala dei divertimenti* (now a bar at the corner of Via Mazzini and Via Matteotti). Afterwards, they all went home to supper.

When supper was over, at about 10pm, a small group of men and women, young and old, returned to the piazza. Some musicians wandered across the square and played the Garibaldi Hymn.

At this point, when all were behaving peacefully, the *carabinieri* turned up, apparently to make up for lost opportunities. They grabbed a small man named Ulisse Favilli, a blacksmith by trade.

The crowd shouted at the *carabinieri* to let him go. Giuseppi Ghignoni, the schoolmaster, who had just left his friend the municipal secretary and was on his way to have a game of cards, called out “What’s the lad done? Why are you arresting him?” One of the *carabinieri* named Eraclio Ameroghi replied in his own manner by drawing his pistol and shooting the teacher at a distance of one metre. His comments as he did so suggest he wanted to punish the awkward journalist for his newspaper articles.

The *carabinieri* then yelled at the crowd to get back in the name of the law.

They attacked the crowd at random and made some arrests. In an atmosphere of civil war, they started shooting uncontrollably from their barracks on the main square (*caserna*, 25 Piazza Baldaccio)³⁴, firing shots across the square.

People called out “Bandits!”, “Sons of bitches!”, “Cat murderers!” “Scoundrels!”

Razzia. The *carabinieri* fetched eight persons from their homes during the night, four others fled. In the next few days, the number of those seized reached 21. Charges were brought against them; they were accused of taking part in a rebellious demonstration, resisting police officers and rioting. A mere suspicion sufficed. It was enough for a person to have called out “Long live the Republic!” Day after day others, from all walks of life, were arrested.

Charges filed. The widow of the murdered man, his brother Pietro Ghignoni and a large number of townsfolk signed a petition charging the *carabinieri* with murder and attempted murder. They demanded justice, not revenge.

One hundred and fifty persons, followed by a further 50 – more or less all those eligible to vote – publicly posted a printed “Declaration of truth”.

Houses searched. The *carabinieri* reacted by searching many houses at night without warrants.

The authorities buried Ghignoni secretly, denying his family the comfort of a funeral.

Counter-attack. The government and the prefect of the province prompted the court to pass a judgement in their favour by covering up all the *carabinieri*’s deeds, swapping the rôles of victims and perpetrators, blaming Ghignoni’s death on the Republican Circle and banning it.

A sensation in Italy. As a result, the Circle became as famous as the Milanese Brotherhood of Artisans (*Fratellanza Artigiana*), which had also been banned.

The murder case caused a sensation and was debated in parliament. The debate centred on the choice between liberalism and authoritarianism. For Italy, an untouchable monarchy was a novelty. Had the laws guaranteeing freedom been annulled in the free Italy? How was this possible after the fight for Italian unification? Did those in authority have the right to intimidate citizens?

Dialectics. It became obvious that the more society was in a state of flux, the greater the efforts to establish authoritarian rule and to regiment people’s minds. The same was happening all over Europe. As a result, people on both sides interpreted things in a strictly ideological way. In the end, fights erupted over symbols.

Rows in parliament. In reply to an ironic speech by the MP Felice Cavallotti, in which he accused the government first of deeming rights to be offences and then of abolishing them, the prime minister, Agostino Depretis, replied in the time-honoured way of upwardly mobile left wingers who hold

government office. He said the country needed peace and quiet, and a firm hand.

People were surprised at how ready a member of the government was to forget his origins.³⁵

The government took the liberty of repressing every “offence”, even in its preparatory stages. Depretis said he had sent an investigator to Anghiari, and had had the *carabiniere* immediately transferred. He would probably be subject to disciplinary proceedings. A rebellion had broken out in Anghiari, he said, and the *carabiniere* had acted in self-defence. The *carabinieri* were obliged to uphold the rule of law. The prime minister then went on to mock the Declaration of the 150 citizens, saying 30 of them had been women. The MP Cavalotti heckled him, calling out, “Women have eyes too!”, whereupon Depretis replied to general mirth, “True. And mouths as well.” His conclusion was that they were all relatives and friends.

The court case in Arezzo. The court heard the case from 30th May to 25th June. Francesco Tuti, a municipal engineer (*tecnico comunale*), was one of the witnesses. He stated the 28-year-old *carabiniere* Ameroghi of Altopascio had been bragging that he was not afraid of the people and that he had already shot five people with his revolver during a festival in the Maremma. Ameroghi had arrested Bruschi because he was after the same girl. He had had a score to settle with Ghignoni.

The *carabinieri* erected an edifice of false assertions. They said nearly everyone on the piazza had been armed and was attempting a popular uprising. Ameroghi had wanted to defend a colleague who was in mortal danger. The crowd had besieged the barracks and was on the point of storming the building. This was when the *carabinieri* had fired shots, as a result of which Ghignoni had fallen down dead.

The prosecution were unable to call a single witness from among the people. The mayor amended his previous statement, the public prosecutor panicked and attempted to discredit the mayor.

The case ended thus: 15 persons were acquitted, five were given five-month custodial sentences for rioting and Francesco Tuti was fined 50 lire for possession of an antique pistol.

The next election was won by the “maltreated”. Camillo Galli, the initiator of the “Declaration of Truth”, was elected mayor.

The first monument to Garibaldi. The first monument to Garibaldi on Italian soil was erected on the very spot where Ghignoni was murdered on 19th March 1879. Garibaldi had been dead for one year when it was dedicated on 22nd July 1883.³⁶

The monument had been designed and funded by the *tecnico comunale*, Francesco Tuti. Soon afterwards, he built the Galleria Magi, the covered market, on the opposite side of the road.

Some republicans and socialists distributed pamphlets, refusing to participate in the dedication ceremony and calling it “hypocritical”. “The small-minded folk who gravely wounded Garibaldi are now letting his heroic shadow fall on them. Garibaldi’s true ideals live on in red shirts.”³⁷

In the same year, they changed the name of the main street in the Old Town, formerly known as Via del Borghetto di Sotto, to Via Garibaldi.

The second monument to Garibaldi. One generation later, the monument was replaced by one erected by the Association of Garibaldini. Having compared the old one to those standing in other places, they found it too insignificant. In 1914, they purchased a huge bronze statue of Garibaldi from the sculptor Pietro Guerri of Montevarchi.

Art historians are unable to find any truth in the story that is widely believed in Anghiari, whereby the statue was originally intended for the piazza in Montevarchi in the Arno Valley. Legend has it that the statue was not wanted in Montevarchi.³⁸

The Garibaldini of Anghiari placed the statue on a high plinth on the Mercatale.

An agreement had to be signed with the elderly Francesco Tuti before the statue could be erected. A decision was taken to hang a painting of the original monument in the Council Chamber, accompanied by the following text: “This painting recalls the first [monument of its kind] in Italy. A harmonious [?] decision was reached to set it up in Anghiari in 1886 [this should read 1883] in memory of Giuseppe Garibaldi. It was created by the altruistic engineer Francesco Tuti. … The creator has agreed that this faithful image be hung in the town hall. It is to be kept in the Council Chamber for all time.”³⁹

On 14th April 1914, crowds filled the piazza for the dedication of the great monument to Garibaldi.⁴⁰

The large square (Mercatale) was renamed Piazza Garibaldi (it is now Piazza Baldaccio Bruni), which reflected the political views of the majority. The first café in the town (later known as a bar) was called after Garibaldi.

The statue was sculpted by Pietro Guerri under the influence of the naturalistic Belgian sculptor Constantin Meunier.

The sketch⁴¹ for the Garibaldi monument shows a very different plinth from the one we see nowadays. The pedestal rises out of rocky cliffs (like in mediaeval frescoes) and a scene depicting Garibaldi's *franc tireurs*.

The dates on the present-day plinth recall the dedication of both statues: “1883-1914”.

Garibaldi is making his typical expansive gesture with his right hand – the “segno di Garibaldi”. Some say he is pointing the way to Rome.⁴²

Electricity. It is perhaps symbolic that on 19th April 1914, the day the second Garibaldi monument was dedicated, public electric lighting (*pubblica illuminazione elettrica*) was introduced – a sign of progress in the industrial age.⁴³

A supporter of Garibaldi. The Piazza del Borghett was renamed Piazza Mameli. Goffredo Mameli (born in Genoa in 1827, died in Rome in 1849) was a poet and patriot. For a short time, he was an adjutant to Garibaldi. He wrote battle songs for the *Risorgimento*, the most famous of which was the rousing “Brothers of Italy” (“*Fratelli d'Italia*”), which appeared in the autumn of 1847. When the Republic was founded in 1946, it became the Italian national anthem.

Anti-clericalism was behind naming one of the streets in the Old Town after Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), a philosopher tried by the Inquisition and burnt at the stake in Rome. We may be sure this was preceded by many discussions.

The covered piazza, Galleria Magi (1882/1889)

Loss of the arcades. In the 19th century, Anghiari treated its mediaeval arcades badly. In 1825, the administration demolished the grand arcades on the market square. The smaller arcades (built in 1466) were walled up. In 1853, the arcades in front of the Franciscan church of Santa Croce (1595) were shut, but they were restored and re-opened in 1987.

Covered markets. Many towns in Europe were building covered markets in places that were exciting from a town planner's point of view. This trend was the result of expansion in the production of goods, a rise in standards of hygiene and, above all, a middle-class desire for prestige.

Covered markets had their roots in the ancient world. The Romans had their basilicas, where many small and diverse retailers had their businesses. This tradition was carried on for two thousand years in the bazaars of the Mediterranean region, in Istanbul for example. In the Middle Ages, the cities of

Northern Europe had extensive covered markets (as in Paris, Bruges and Cologne). Trade was mostly specialised, focussing on such things as textiles, jewellery or even meat. In the 19th century, covered markets took the form of department stores in cast iron and glass.

But why did they demolish the centuries-old grand arcades in Anghiari? Why did they replace them with a new covered market on the opposite side of the road?

The new market was a reflection of a consumer phantasmagoria that reached its climax in Paris. The author of an illustrated guide to Paris published in 1852 described the newly invented passageways as the product of industrial luxury, glass-topped and marble-lined alleys passing through a mass of buildings, whose owners had joined forces in order to profit from speculation.

The most elegant shops, lit by natural light from above, were to be found on both sides of these alleyways, he said. They formed a world in miniature, in which shoppers could find whatever they wanted. They provided shelter in the event of a sudden downpour. People out for a stroll could push their way through the crowds without getting wet.⁴⁴

Walter Benjamin reflected on the circumstances surrounding the building of covered markets like this.⁴⁵

Model for covered markets. Covered markets in Italy from the early industrial age were modelled on the Galleria in Milan (1861/1870).⁴⁶ The Galleria Mazzini was built in Genoa in 1880 and Galleria Umberto I in Naples in 1887/1890.⁴⁷

Covered markets were created according to similar patterns in Paris (Les Halles Centrales, built by V. Baltard in 1853), in Florence (Mercato Centrale, built by Giuseppe Mengoni in 1874), in Leghorn (Mercato Nuovo, built by Badaloni in 1893) and the covered market in Lucca, which was built around the cloisters of a former convent.

Francesco Tuti. Anghiari wanted its own covered market. Francesco Tuti, the municipal engineer, gave a lecture on the subject on 1st August 1882, proposing the municipal authorities should build covered arcades (*loggiato all'interno*). They were intended to provide extra space for the weekly market on the Mercatale, following the example of cities that had a covered market (*mercato coperto*) for grain and fruit.

Tuti presented several alternative proposals. The first draft provided for the covered market to be built on the long road – in its present location. This was where the great Ceramessi house stood, which the authorities would have to expropriate, and a café owned by Tuti. Costs were estimated at 18,000 lire.

The second draft provided for a construction project on Via Libbia that would amount to an extension of the commercial area under development. This would cost 16,000 lire.

It is obvious that the project had already been discussed in advance, because a decision in favour of the first solution was taken as early as 10th August. Tuti was entrusted with the task of carrying out of the project.

On 10th October, Tuti put his revised draft on display. The façade was to be 10.5 metres high and 26 metres long. Six pillars with round arches were to bear the metal construction for the glass (*cristallo*) roof. Behind the building, there was to be a 160 square-metre piazza with a well. Costs were now estimated at 27,150 lire.

On 20th October 1882, a commission comprising Nevio Arrighi, Ugo Testi, Giovanni Battista Testi and Mayor Camillo Galli held a meeting. The plan, or the rise in estimated costs, had apparently become a matter of controversy, as the commission did not officially approve the proposal until 13th

May 1884. We do not know why another three years were to pass before building actually started. Maybe conflict arose over other matters too.

On 9th May 1887, Tuti wrote that a wooden model would be useful in the manufacturing of parts.

This indicated something quite new in the architecture of Anghiari: an early use of pre-fabricated parts. Ideas of this kind originated among the engineers of northern Europe, where iron constructions were used for many railway stations, markets and exhibition halls.

The model was put on display at the Esposizione di Firenze that same month, earning Francesco Tuti a medal.

On 4th June, permission was given for the demolition of the house. Everything that could be sold was sold; takings amounted to 1,015 lire. On 4th March 1888, Italo Vagnetti asked whether he could put up a marble version of the Florentine coat-of-arms with its fleur-de-lis. This request was turned down.

The arcades, which had taken seven years to plan and construct, opened in 1889. Official acceptance of the work was in 1890. The total cost was well below the estimate, amounting to only 22,826 lire.

Dedication. The covered market was dedicated to Girolamo Magi (1525-1572), military architect, historian and poet. He was born in Anghiari, served under the grand dukes and died in the Ottoman Wars. A portrait bust of him is to be found on the north side.

The other dedication of the covered market was to trade and industry. The words: INDUSTRIA E COMMERCIO have been visible for many years on the façade built of rustic ashlar.⁴⁸ This indicates that at the time of its construction, Anghiari was a small but important centre for production and trade. The covered piazza, with its symbolic forms, represented a general economic upswing.

The size of the covered market showed that agricultural production was rising, trading was becoming centralised and people had a new attitude to hygiene. Finally, the market was evidence that groceries were being imported (or plundered) from the colonies.

Aesthetics. The space with its high ceiling “breathes”, as many buildings in Italy have “breathed” since the days of Antiquity. The side walls stand in a tradition that has been in existence for 2,000 years, and they echo the expressiveness of the famous Teatro Olimpico (1585) built in Vicenza by Andrea Palladio.

The industrial age is reflected in the materials used in the upper regions. The beams and glass form a frame that is both constructional and elegant in character. One would guess they had used iron, the most important material of the time. However, what looks like iron is actually wood, which was cheaper and more readily available.

In 1889, the year in which the covered market was built, Giuseppe Busatti founded a mill for weaving with mechanical looms.

Twenty-five years later, this urban “salon” was beginning to decrease in value. There was no need, from a town-planner's point of view, to divert the traffic from the Via Nova (the by-pass built between 1900 and 1914) to the Mercatale via Via Gramsci.⁴⁹

An uneasy transition to the industrial era

The first left-wing government. In 1875, the right-wing government fell.

Following this historic event, Prime Minister Agostino Depretis (1813-1887), the long-time representative and unifying figure of left-wing politicians, formed the first left-wing government in

1876. He was a reformer in the years before 1882: education became free and compulsory, and the tax on mills was abolished.

Trasformismo. In the second phase of his rule (1882-1887), when the political parties were going through a process of disintegration, he developed the policies known as *trasformismo*. Candidates joined alliances between local groups and central government, some aspects of cronyism appeared, the central government interfered in elections, and so on. Gradually the government changed; Depretis included politicians from the right in his government and became more and more conservative in his approach to economics and social matters.

Other politicians linked with *trasformismo* were the later prime ministers Francesco Crispi and Giovanni Giolitti. They did deals with local pressure groups in order to get the support of their deputies.

A critical opposition rebelled, deplored such signs of the falling apart of democracy. They concluded that, to some extent, people were rejecting the political system as a whole.

Oligarchy. Changes in government were merely a sham, a conjuring trick. Rule by a small group of men persisted, despite an extended franchise and the rise of parties with mass followings. Oligarchy as a principle has been much stronger in Italy than in other places.⁵⁰

Antagonism between north and south. A small elitist group took over the reins of government in the north and abandoned the south to its reactionary landowners.

Expansionism. In 1877, Matteo Renato Imbriani-Poerio (1843-1901) founded the association known as *Italia irredenta* (Unredeemed Italy). It was an anti-Austrian movement that demanded the annexation of Trentino, Trieste, Friuli and Istria.

In 1882, Italy concluded the Triple Alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary, the Central Powers.

Depretis' government was moving ever closer to imperialism. It fostered rearmament, and thereby strengthened the economic importance of the iron industry (1884 in Terni, then in Liguria, Piedmont, Lombardy and Tuscany).

Italian colonial adventures in East Africa began in 1882 with the seizure of the ports of Assab and Massawa on the Red Sea. In 1889, Italian troops conquered Ethiopian territories, and in 1890 Italy claimed Eritrea as its colony.

Administrative reforms and authoritarianism. Francesco Crispi (1819-1901) was prime minister from 1887-1896. In 1848, he had held extreme left-wing views, and he had been a member of parliament for the left since 1861. He came to revere Bismarck after meeting him in 1877. His government was based on an alliance between conservative farm owners and industrialists, who were protected by import duties.

His aim was to make the state function better, above all in its complex administrative sphere and in the field of justice. He was the declared enemy of *Italia irredenta*. Strikes were made legal for the first time ever.

Economic crisis. Banks collapsed, there was widespread hardship, many emigrated. Crispi acted the strong man, authorised repressive measures, ended up illiberal and authoritarian.

Socialists. The Socialist party was founded in 1892.⁵¹ It came under attack from the Crispi government.

As in the rest of Europe, different wings were forming within the party with regard to policies and methods of enforcement. Fierce fighting broke out between them.

These fights culminated later (1921 in Leghorn) in the secession of the communists from the older socialist mainstream.

In 1898, the government crushed hunger riots that broke out in many regions, especially in Milan, using brutal force and shedding much blood. Socialist leaders like Filippo Turati and Anna Kuliscioff were imprisoned; socialist newspapers were banned. However, Catholics and representatives of republican and radical movements were also targeted. As a result, the number of socialist deputies in the Italian parliament rose from 15 to 32.

In the wake of this crisis, the left supported the moderate Luigi Girolamo Pelloux (1839-1924) in 1898. Once he took office as premier, he swung to the right, and repressive laws were devised by his government. However, these laws were overturned by a court, Pelloux lost the 1900 election and resigned.

In 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued his encyclical “*Rerum novarum*”, setting out the programme for the Catholic church with regard to the working classes. It rejected both socialism and capitalism.

Colonial war. The government again waged war in Ethiopia in 1895/1896, but *Negus* (Emperor) Menelik annihilated the Italian army at the Battle of Adwa. The Italians were long traumatised by this catastrophe. Crispi was forced to resign; later he became a symbolic figure for nationalists and fascists.

Brigandry

Discontent and future prospects. For many years, the *Risorgimento* was the movement that gave Italians an opportunity to air their feelings of discontent with politics.

However, unification failed to deliver the expected and promised improvements, causing some Italians to react extremely resentfully; some became anarchists.

Consequences of poverty. Armies of vagabonds and beggars roamed the land. The poverty that originated in the 17th century was one cause of the occasional redistribution of wealth through robbery. Robbers stole in order to survive.

Poverty gave birth to *brigantismo*; it was a protest against the king, unjust administrators and the establishment. Legend has it that the brigand Gnicche stole to help the poor.

Brigands had existed in Italy since the 12th century. One famous one was Ghino di Tacco, from southern Tuscany. Brigands, subversive and anarchic, typically operate in country areas.

To the east, in neighbouring Romagna, brigandry particularly flourished in the 19th century, making the land unsafe. The main cause was the wretched situation in the Papal States, with their poor administration and indifferent ecclesiastical lords, who held on to the reins of secular power but were unwilling to learn how to govern properly. Many citizens were forced to disappear overnight, or crossed a frontier into exile.

The Maremma was another hotbed of brigandry. Around the year 1860, at least 300 brigands, some of them women, were operating in the Grosseto area. They found shelter with many sympathisers.

Civil war. Both the pope and the Grand Duke made civil war on the brigands between 1861 and 1865. They deployed large numbers of troops (reportedly 250,000 soldiers) and *carabinieri*, but without any real success.⁵² In Tuscany, 20,000 prisoners were taken, 7,000 died and 2,000 were executed. It took the authorities twenty years to find and kill the legendary, and by then exhausted, brigand Domenico Tiburzi in his retreat in Capalbio (Maremma).

Robbed near Anghiari. Brigands were roaming the Anghiari area too. In 1883, four men attacked

and robbed a lawyer and parliamentary deputy named Severi near Tavernelle. They left him with nothing but a medal of his wife's.

Legends. Ordinary people were to a large extent powerless and lived a life of hardship. They came to admire many of the brigands, who became the stuff of legends, some of which were not true, but others were. The brigands with a social conscience – those who robbed the rich and gave to the poor – were highly regarded.

Their stories were told of an evening, in farmhouses and on piazzas. They were often the subject of ballads sung by wandering musicians. Brigandry was a topic for endless debate in the early days of the workers' movement.

Gnicche (Federico Bobini) came from Valdichiana.

Nello Panchi told the following tale: "There was a man in Anghiari nicknamed Barullino. He was always going to Arezzo with his mule and cart.

One evening, Gnicche, the bandit, jumped out of the bushes and cried, "Stop! Where are you going with your feeble mule?" Barullino replied, "I'm going to Arezzo to collect something". "No!" said Gnicche, "Not with that mule, you aren't. It's on its last legs." He then gave him money to buy a new mule, adding "Come back this evening, because I want to make sure you really have bought a new mule."

Gnicche robbed the rich to give to the poor.

One evening Gnicche was invited to supper by a family in Sargiano (Valdichiana). Someone heard of this and informed the *carabinieri*, who came and, when Gnicche stumbled and fell to the ground while trying to flee, shot him dead.

There were other bandits when I was a small boy: Stoppa, Guazzino, Lampo, Fulmine, Tremendo and others. The young ones came from Anghiari. They took from the rich and gave to the poor."

The story of Gnicche was written down by Giovanni Fantoni of Ponte Buriano. His deeds have been sung by wandering minstrels at fairs in the province of Arezzo.

Il Sagresto. Raffaello Conti, known as Il Sagresto,⁵³ was born in the Casentino in 1863. He began his career at the age of 16 and was thrown into prison several times. One day he was discovered in the Anghiari area, got mixed up in a gunfight with the police and was taken with severe stomach wounds to hospital in Anghiari, where, after lying in a coma, he died two days later.

In 2003, the Ricomposti theatre group enacted his story in literary form on Poggiolino square in Anghiari.

The Giolitti era: a time of economic boom, corruption and militarisation

Assassination. In 1900, an anarchist killed King Umberto I (1878-1900), in the wake of which there were riots and acts of repression. Umberto was succeeded by Vittorio Emanuele III, who ruled until 1946.

The Giolitti era. Giovanni Giolitti (1842-1928) held the office of premier from 1903 to 1914 (with short breaks).

He was a liberal. The liberals were an ambivalent party, and Giolitti was typical of their mentality, which was specifically Italian in character.

Giolitti pursued relatively enlightened policies aimed at establishing social equity. He hoped to integrate the opposition into a liberal state. He therefore took seriously the industrial proletariat that

was organising itself into a working-class movement.

Giolitti received some support from reformist socialists. However, the opposition was made up of revolutionary socialists who had been bitterly defeated in the general strike of 1904.

Between 1898 and 1915, northern Italy went through a period of industrialisation, mainly in the energy (electrification), metal (Portoferraio, Piombino, Bagnoli), textile and sugar industries. There was a noticeable reduction in the old scourges of absolute poverty and illiteracy. Some people became liberal in their lifestyles, and the era was often known as the “belle époque”.

This economic boom allowed Giolitti to rule with a majority of various hues. Universal suffrage was introduced in 1912.

The means he used were negotiations, frequent enticements and the use of force by the police.

Wheeling and dealing. Giolitti was for ever making deals with pressure groups (*trasformismo*) and handing out favours, in order to retain his parliamentary majority.

Gaetano Salvemini (1873-1957), a highly educated socialist, called such behaviour “parliamentary corruption”.

Max Weber, who spoke from experience, said turn-of-the-century party leaders were pursuing their own ideal and material interests in power. He went on to say, “There is a tendency for the interests of the electorate to be taken into account only so far as their neglect would endanger electoral prospects.”⁵⁴

“For reasons which are readily understandable, the subject of party finances, though one of the most important aspects of the party system, ... is the most difficult to secure information about. ... On the one hand, as in the English system, the electoral candidate may carry the burden of campaign expenses, with the result that candidates are selected on a plutocratic basis. On the other hand, the costs may be borne by the “machine”, in which case the candidates become dependent on the party organisation. Parties as permanent organisations have always varied between these two fundamental types, in thirteenth century in Italy just as much as today.

... But as in the case of capitalistic enterprise, the power of the seller as compared with the consumer has been tremendously increased by the suggestive appeal of advertising. This is particularly true of “radical” parties regardless of whether they are on the right or left.”⁵⁵

At the same time, bureaucracy took on a life of its own. “Where such a group of professional specialists is present, no matter how strongly the attempt is made to keep them in a dependent position, the seeds of bureaucratisation are present.” (Max Weber)⁵⁶

One further driving force was effective in combating democracy. “The formal rationalisation of the economic order and the state, which was favourable to capitalistic development, could be strongly promoted by parliaments. Furthermore, it seemed relatively easy to secure influence on party organisations.” (Max Weber)⁵⁷

The concession was to a large extent an illusion, because the élite were able to control it. “The development of demagogic in the activities of the existing parties was a function of the extension of the franchise. Two main factors have tended to make monarchs and ministers everywhere favourable to universal suffrage, namely, the necessity for the support of the proletariat in foreign conflict and the hope, which has proved to be unjustified, that, as compared to the bourgeoisie, they would be a conservative influence.” (Max Weber)⁵⁸

Expansionism. From time to time, interest in expansionism was rekindled. In seeking rapprochement with France, Italy entered into a convention with France in 1900, under which it

recognised Morocco as being French, while the Italians were given a free hand in Tripoli.

Irredenta. The first congress of the *Associazione Nazionalista Italiana* was held in 1910. It stood for the repatriation of Italian lands under Austrian rule. Its expansionist policies were supported by big industry, but many intellectuals also applauded its aims. In 1923, it merged with the Fascist party.

Renewed expansion. Italy annexed the provinces of Tripoli and Cyrenaica in 1911, having captured them during the Italo-Turkish war (1911/1912). It also occupied Rhodes and the other islands in the Dodecanese. Stiff opposition to such militarism was growing among politicians on the left.

A foreign policy of aggression was supposed to divert attention from domestic troubles like the lack of reforms and unresolved gaps between the social groups.

The country as a whole suffered from new and old forms of authoritarianism. Its origins lay in absolutism, but public life was remarkably liberal.

The economic situation around 1900. The early years of the twentieth century were called the “Age of big industry” (*l'età della grande industria*).⁵⁹ However, this only applied to a few cities in the Po Valley.

The need for more money meant the search was on for capital. Those with capital resources were wooed by the state, and alliances built between the two, a process known as mercantilism.

The Upper Tiber Valley was still dominated by agriculture. In 1911, only 3.14 per cent of the population were working in the industrial sector (for Tuscany as a whole this figure was 7.16 per cent; in the Province of Arezzo it was 5.28 per cent).

Anghiari, with its 35 factories and 112 industrial workers (1911), ranked among the better-off areas in the Upper Tiber Valley. However, the total industrial energy they transformed amounted to no more than twelve horsepower!⁶⁰

Agriculture. Anghiari covered an area of 13,048 hectares in 1908, and was therefore more extensive than its neighbour Sansepolcro.⁶¹ In 1901, the population of the Anghiari area was 8,157; that of Sansepolcro was only marginally more numerous (8,976).

There used to be more people living in the country than in the town. About 35 per cent of Anghiari's population lived in the town, 43 per cent in villages and hamlets and 22 per cent in isolated homesteads.⁶²

In the countryside, a few big landowners controlled the economy. They were conservative in outlook, they presided over feudal structures, their aim was to maximise profits – but without resorting to modern technology, as that would mean investing capital.⁶³ Anghiari was dominated by the Corsi family.

In addition, there were still medium-size and small landowners, some of whom leased out their land, while others worked it themselves.

“Those who work on the land form the real rural class (*classe rurale*). Of these, 15 per cent own or lease their land, 50 per cent are métayage farmers, 35 per cent are day labourers and artisans who have often been unjustly dismissed by their *padroni*.⁶⁴”

Some people complained that agriculture was taxed heavily instead of being protected, whereas the state spent a lot of money on making fertile ground out of sandy soil in Ethiopia.⁶⁵

Tobacco. In 1881, there was not much tobacco (73 hectares in all) planted in the Upper Tiber Valley, and almost none at all in Anghiari. The state-run warehouses were built in Sansepolcro in 1886, where 88 men and 99 women were employed in 1901. All the tobacco produced was taken to these warehouses.⁶⁶ After 1900, cultivation increased, and later it became the crop that for many years made

the Tiber Valley rich.

Conflict between town and country. Country folk who lived in abject poverty developed an aversion to town dwellers. Their troubles were not addressed in municipal schemes.⁶⁷ Antonio Gramsci made a detailed and shrewd analysis of the situation.⁶⁸ The historian Tommaso Fanfani considered his analysis applicable to the Upper Tiber Valley as well.⁶⁹

Industry.⁷⁰ The first factory chimney to discharge smoke into the Upper Tiber Valley skies belonged to Giuseppe Buitoni, a pasta manufacturer (*pastificio*) in Sansepolcro, who set up business in 1827. He founded a subsidiary in Città di Castello in 1856, and one in Perugia in 1878. Artisans had become factory owners. Buitoni modernised his plants mainly in the 1880s and built a large factory in Sansepolcro in 1903. Not long after, he was employing 120 workers (91 men and 29 women). For many years, it was the only big factory in the area.

Emigration. Unemployment, particularly among agricultural workers, was severe in the winter months. Many sought a way out of their misery in emigration.⁷² Most of the emigrants departed temporarily, taking employment as seasonal workers. They left in February and March, returning in November.

We have no data regarding Anghiari, but four fifths of all men of working age in Pieve San Stefano emigrated in 1903; around 1,000 men emigrated from Città di Castello. Very many went to France, which is perhaps surprising.

Sickness. Pellagra was the illness that afflicted the poverty-stricken.⁷³ It became widespread in the 19th century, affecting women in particular. The sick suffered diarrhoea and melancholia. The cause was vitamin deficiency resulting from an unbalanced diet (often nothing but *polenta*).

Around the turn of the century it became obvious that the industrial era had engendered considerable wealth in Anghiari. Large houses were being built.

One wealthy middle-class citizen tricked the authorities into granting him the right to block the eastern side of the piazza with a huge building (no. 4/6; now Galleria Antichità Poggini). People complain about it to this day.

Most of the new buildings were adorned with more signs of prestige than those of the 16th century. To some degree, architects harked back to the Renaissance, but with the intention of “improving” on it. They also included contemporary elements, building in the “Umbertine” style (King Umberto reigned from 1878-1900). Such buildings were meant to be a reflection of power, but within society such power was built on sand.

Two groups of buildings were erected on Piazza Baldaccio: numbers 38/39/40/41 on the west side and 7/10 on the east. New houses were built at 13/14, 15/16/17 and 18 E. de Amicis Square.

Villa di Miravalle. Locals have it that a British aristocrat known to them as “Lord Weren” moved to Italy after he fell in love with the woman who owned Castello di Sorci. He bought a plot of land in a beautiful setting on the west side of Anghiari, that, at the time, commanded a fine view into the far distance. He drew up the plans himself, and the house was built in 1883. It was meant as a love nest, but the story ended in tragedy, as the signorina refused his hand in marriage.

The elegant house was very different from those in the town. Outsiders were kept at a distance by means of a gate, wall, fence and vegetation. There were seven indoor servants.

The house was bought in 1957 by Livio Busatti, the head of the Busatti textile business. However, he sold it on in 1958 to Galliano Calli, an antique dealer, who had plied many different trades beforehand. He was the father of Mara and Ascanio Calli. The Calli family, who do not live in the

house, use it to display antiques.⁷⁴

The new part of the town. After 1900, the northern part of the town began to expand along the new by-pass (Strada provinciale della Libbia; Via Nova). The new properties were large Tuscan-style apartment buildings.

Higher up the hill, properties were built by wealthy families looking for a country villa near the town.⁷⁵ The owners acquired extensive plots of land with nature in abundance and romantic views over the Old Town and countryside. Their houses were built according to the latest fashion.

Borgo di Monteloro. The centuries-old Borgo di Monteloro is situated to the north of what is now the theatre square. Access used to be via the present-day Via della Bozia and Via del Teatro. From time to time, there has been a bar in the northern row of houses. The area around the theatre was once private property and was surrounded by a high wall. From the point of view of aesthetics, the theatre façade belongs to the gardens of the Villa Corsi.

The scene changes as a new access road is built (1914). A road (the Viale) from the new bypass (Via Nova) to the Old Town was built between 1900 and 1914.

After 1945, it was re-named after Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), who had been a great thinker during the early days of the communist movement in Italy and was martyred under Mussolini.

It was obviously built on the French model. Trees – a double row of plane trees – form the architecture. Those who were out for an evening *passeggiata* moved on from the series of squares to a leafy promenade with stone benches, just outside the town.

Adalgia Conti remembered the time before 1913 when she used to go to the *strada nuova* with her mother of a Sunday. “Then I used to walk along country roads with my friend Marietta; towards evening, I walked round the square two or three times and then went home to get supper for my mother-in-law.”⁷⁶

The changes involved the destruction of the garden (1777-1791) north of Palazzo Conti and the construction of a square in front of the theatre. A road was built to run past the theatre up to the long street and the Mercatale.

This had consequences for the covered market (1882/1889), which had been falling into decline. It was in any case undergoing a process of restructuring, as trade retreated from public areas into shops. When traffic started to pass through the middle of it, it declined even more rapidly.

The Meridiana Hotel and its square (1964). For many years, a water-powered grain mill was to be found on the spot where Hotel Meridiana now stands. It was later replaced by a saw mill (*segheria*). When that closed down, the municipal authorities used the building as a warehouse.

In about 1964, the existing buildings were demolished to make way for Hotel Meridiana, which was built for a family that had run a bar on the piazza for 23 years. The architect came from Florence. The Meridiana owes its name to the old mill's sundial (*meridiana*). For decades, people have been resentful of the fact that the tall building blocks the view from the theatre terrace.

Town planners sin again. In 2004, those responsible for the conservation of monuments turned a blind eye when the municipal authorities approved the raising of the agricultural bank (*Cassa rurale*) by some storeys. Half the theatre disappeared from sight when viewed from afar.

The theatre (1777-1790). Before the theatre was taken over by the municipality in 1985, the 22 families that owned it met once a year in the north wing for business and pleasure, and to draw lots for theatre tickets.

For many years, the administrator's family lived in tiny rooms in an extension on the northern side.

The area is reconstructed. In 1900, the municipality took over Palazzo Corsi, the chapel, the garden and an outbuilding.

In 1914, a street known to the locals as the “*granvia*” was built to connect Via Nova to the Mercatale. This new street ruined the once magnificent garden.

The entrance was reconstructed in connection with the building of the street and theatre square, and a small café planned. This idea occurred to the planners at a fairly early stage.⁷⁷

During the Fascist years (from 1922), the architect Remo Magrini designed a raised terrace for the front of the theatre, with steps leading up to it on the left and right.

Opera in the theatre. The theatre was used for Italians' favourite music theatre productions. The greatest operas were also performed there.

A love of public and spectacular story telling was the basis for opera. The medium used was singing, which is heightened speech. The orchestra accompany the singers, filling the space with sound, commenting, often contradicting, sometimes emphasising the singers' words with a wide range of instruments, which resemble the many and various people in a crowd on the piazza, talking in turn, speaking all at once, or in unison.

Before the era of the cinema, opera was the most advanced means of telling complex tales, especially stories that traced the development of feelings. Years later, Alexander Kluge was to call opera “the power station of emotions”.

The music school. The *Banda musicale*, the local amateur orchestra, was responsible for operatic productions. It was based in the music school (*scuola di musica*), founded in 1865, which also produced some excellent singers.

The director, known as *maestro*, had to be an extremely gifted musician and teacher. The first such *maestro* was Lorenzo Conti. In his opinion, it was easy to cultivate the natural musical talents of his fellow citizens and put on concerts of a decent standard for everyone.⁷⁸ Maestro Assunto Conti of Anghiari, who died in 1907, was in charge of the orchestra from 1898 and also conducted operas. He was succeeded by *maestro di musica* Ugo Bottachiari, who was a composer as well. He only stayed briefly, as he was picked as head of music in the city of Como. In 1910, a professional trombone player named Maestro Vito Carlotti of San Marino was appointed. In his day, the orchestra consisted of 60 players. The local orchestral musicians were joined by a large choir of enthusiastic singers. In 1913, Maestro Carlotti put on *La Traviata*. He was very popular and was known for his many love affairs.⁷⁹ Carlotti moved to Sansepolcro in 1932.

Performances. Many singers came from the local music school, others – some of them famous – were brought in from outside, from big theatres such as the one in Florence. Many operas are written in such a way that they only need a few soloists, which means they can be performed outside big cities.

There was plenty of activity at the turn of the century. “*Nelli*”, an *opera buffa* by Icilio Monti, was performed in 1891, the year in which it was composed; in 1893, they put on “*L'elisir d'amore*” by Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848); this was followed in 1902 by Donizetti's *dramma tragico* “*Lucia di Lammermoor*” (1835) and by “*Il trovatore*” by Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901). In 1910, they performed Donizetti's comic opera “*Don Pasquale*” (1843) and Verdi's melodrama “*La traviata*” (1853) with the soprano Pereira and the tenor Masini.

In 1914, they put on “*Rigoletto*” (1815) by Giuseppe Verdi; in 1920 it was the turn of the melodrama “*Cavalleria Rusticana*” (1890) by Pietro Mascagni (1863-1945) and the drama “*I pagliacci*” (1892) by Ruggero Leoncavallo (1858-1919).

Other operas that were performed included “The Barber of Seville” (1816), an *opera buffa* by Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868), and “La Somnambula” (1831), a melodrama by Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1885).

At the end of the 19th century, most travelling opera companies put on four to five performances per week.

Opera was popular in the truest sense of the word – it attracted the attention of the entire population. Everyone joined in, and no-one was excluded. The wealthy merely had better seats.

Cinema carried on this tradition.

Piazza Mameli. It is hard to imagine there used to be five *osteria* (pubs) here.

In 1990, an antiques dealer called Giuseppe Mazzi (born in 1910) told the following tale: “Before 1950, Piazza Mameli used to be a square for horses and carriages. The stables used to occupy the whole of the eastern side. Two blacksmiths had their smithies in the first and second houses. There were more stables on the other side and at the bottom corner.

A large *osteria* serving wine and food was situated in the middle. It also sold bread baked on the premises.

There was a pottery kiln on the piazza and a pottery market. Some of the coach drivers bought pottery in Anghiari and sold it on outside the town.

It was a crazy place, known as Piazza Cazzotti (*cazzotti* are fisticuffs). Many workers were jealous of each other; children were running around; it was noisy in the evenings, because the coach drivers were drinking. Nowadays the square is silent.”

The market. The people of Anghiari say they are “canny, crafty and individualistic. We congregate on the piazza. The people of Sansepolcro have a collectivist spirit; they congregate on the street.” Other sayings are: “a man from Anghiari will even sell you smoke”, and “the people of Anghiari are so sly they will get Garibaldi on his monument to sell their chickens for them”.

A public urinal was set up in 1897.

Crafts. Town and country were once full of craftsmen: basket weavers, dyers, tailors and seamstresses, cobblers, bakers, knife grinders.

Since the 1970s, there have only been artisans like furniture restorers.

Sickness. Many died of tuberculosis, which was a treacherous disease. Seasonal workers in the Maremma (where fever was rife) or in the rice fields of the Po Valley⁸⁰ often came back with malaria⁸¹. However, they could also catch it on the banks of the Tiber or Sovara. The 1949 film “Bitter Rice”, produced by Dino De Laurentiis and starring Silvana Magnano, traced the destinies of such people.

Fernand Braudel said, “Water had to be made safe before the flood plains could be conquered. Malaria had to be defeated, and flowing water introduced to irrigate the land. Mankind has put in a lot of effort in this long tale. When we drain the swamps, when we turn a flood plain into ploughed land and get plenty of food from it, swamp fever starts to disappear. A Tuscan saying has it that a full cooking pot is the best way to combat malaria.”⁸²

Autobiography. Adalgia Conti was born in 1887 and grew up in Anghiari. Her cold and unfeeling husband put her in an asylum (*manicomio*) because she suffered from persecution mania and had suicidal tendencies. During her stay there, she described her life in the 26 years before she entered the asylum. Her description took the form of letters to her doctor: “*Gentilissimo Sig. Dottore, Questà è la mia vita.*” They appeared in print in 1978.⁸³ Her autobiography is an important source of information about everyday life in Anghiari. The poor woman lived in the asylum for 74 years. She was 91 years

old in 1978.

The book's publisher added a reconstruction of her years in the asylum and a long interview with Antonio Ferrinni, the former mayor.

The Anghiariana. Tuscany's greatest whore was from Anghiari, the legendary “*Anghiariana*”.

Evangelista Martini was an elegant woman from the highly regarded Martini family. She used her beauty to make money.

She went to Rome, where she was known as the “*Anghiariana*”, and amassed a certain amount of wealth in a brothel opposite the Vatican. People called it a luxury brothel (*casino di lusso*); rumour had it that some prelates were among its clients.

Another rumour suggested the Vatican paid her a large sum to shut it down.

She returned to Anghiari with her riches, bought a number of houses and gave a lot of money to the poor. In 1898, she established a hospice for the elderly (*istituto di beneficenza per anziani*). It bore the name of her family: Istituto Martini. In Anghiari, debates raged and opinions diverged, but she had enough self-confidence to ignore them.

The brothel. There was a brothel in Anghiari too, in Via della Misericordia. The locals remember it as “La Calabria”.

Notes on:

The 19th century 1800-1914 (14.)

- 1 See: Tognarini, 1994.
- 2 Pesendorfer, 1987.
- 3 See: Trotta/Casciu, 1991, 53/62.
- 4 Biagioli, 1975.
- 5 La casa “non solo è squalida e trista per la vecchiezza, e difforme per la sconvenienza delle parti, ma sembra anche un vero abituro da lupi ... sono si piccole le poche camere, che appena può restarvi un letto capace di due persone ... annerite dal fumo di un cammino, comunemente sfatto e rovinoso ...” (Giornale agrario toscano 1828, 483).
- 6 Saggio di agricultura, 1804, 27ff.
- 7 Ripetti, I. 1833 (Reprinted Rome 1969), 86/90.
- 8 Matilde Bartolomei, 1986.
- 9 Di Pietro, in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, XXI. Cherubini, 1998, No. 6, 61/78. Anghiari was the town with the greatest number of factories at the beginning of the 19th century: p. 61. Lanificio, 1801, owned by Luigi Boninsegni & Sons, employed 17 workers. Anghiari pp. 11/63. Illustration p. 65 Il mulino di Upacchi (1968), then abandoned.
- 10 Di Pietro, in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, XXI.
- 11 Source: Loris Babbini, word of mouth.
- 12 Babbini, 1989, 25.
- 13 Babbini/Benedetti, 1987, 33ff.
- 14 Giabbanelli/Fabiani, 1987, 53/55.
- 15 Di Pietro, in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, XXI/II.
- 16 Di Pietro, in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, XXII. Benci's letter 1821.
- 17 Di Pietro, in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, XXII. Benci's letter 1821.
- 18 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, Illustration p. 224.
- 19 Almagia, 1922.
- 20 Vivoli, 1992.
- 21 Pianta del Piano di S. Sepolcro e di Anghiari in Causa Mulini 1782 by the engineer Ferdinando Morozzi Vivoli, 1992, Tavola XXXXIII, scheda n. 57. In 1782, the plan was used as the basis for a court judgement, in which it was decided that the water of the Tiber would have to be divided between the two communes.

- 22 Carta delle strade ferrate italiane ripartite nelle singole provincie coll'indicazione dell'epoca in cui vennero aperte all'esercizio compilata da Cesare Ramoni, Milano, 1879.
- 23 Di Pietro, in: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973, XXII. Muscolino, 1978. Garzi/Muscolino, 1981. Marino/Pizzolato, 2002. – Magherini Graziani [1852-1924], Da Arezzo a Fossato. Guida della ferrovia. Città di Castello 2001 (reprint of Città di Castello 1890). Anghiari pp. 12/15. Map pre-1890. The book contains many advertisements from the years just before 1890.
- 24 For railwaymen's wages, see Tommaso Fanfani, 1971, 46.
- 25 Babbini/Finzi, 1979, illustration p. 3.
- 26 La Palombara, 1988, 25.
- 27 La Palombara, 1988, 26.
- 28 Floor plan with courtyard and Strada delle Monache (1764; Archivio Comunale). In: Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1972, Illustration 22. Photograph of the courtyard wall (Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1972, Illustration 24.)
- 29 Babbini, 1989, 26.
- 30 Babbini, 1989, 35. Plasterwork and graffiti frieze on the façade in 1895 (Antonio Giunti, Arezzo, 1895). A powerful earthquake occurred in 1917, and the damage was repaired in 1935/1936. The ground-floor courtroom was reconstructed, and frescoes were discovered there and in the chapel.
- 31 Giabbanelli, 2001, 136/137.
- 32 Panzetta (ed.), 1991. Exhibition catalogue on the works of Pietro Guerri, a sculptor from Montevarchi, who produced many Garibaldi monuments. Giovanni Massobrio/Lorenzo Capellini, L'Italia per Garibaldi. Milano 1982. See p. 129 for the Garibaldi monuments in Anghiari, of which there are three: on the piazza, in the council hall (the bust taken from the first monument) and in the Capella dei Caduti (architect: Remo Magrini 1913 [...]).
- 33 The incident was very carefully researched on the basis of the court files, and recorded in Giabbanelli/Fabiani, 1987. Giabbanelli, 2001. Giabbanelli, 1997.
- 34 Giabbanelli/Fabiani, 1987, illustrations on pp. 15 and 17.
- 35 Agostino Depretis was a member of parliament from 1848, representing the left from 1860. Cavour sent him to Sicily, where he was told to keep the guerilla Garibaldi in check. While there, he tried to mediate between the poor and the farming and industrialist middle classes. He carried out important reforms, abolishing the mill tax step by step, and extending franchise to those who could read and write. After the electoral reform, he went over to the right. In 1885, he lent support to those who were eager to wage war in Africa. After the Italians were defeated at the battle of Dogali in present-day Eritrea (1887), he was forced to resign.
- 36 Documentation in Babbini, 1989, 137/163. In 1920, relatives of the murdered Ghignoni erected a headstone over his grave with the inscription: Alla venerata memoria del maestro Giuseppe Ghignoni fervente mazziniano sferzatore di figuri reazionari di cui fu vittima il 19 marzo 1879 (Giabbanelli, 2001, 137).
- 37 Babbini, 1989, 164/168.
- 38 No evidence of any dispute in Montevarchi is found in Panzetta, 1991.
- 39 Fausto Vagnetti's sketch of Francesco Tuti's first Garibaldi monument in Anghiari is in the sala comunale in Anghiari (Panzetta, 1991, illustration p. 28). Vagnetti, 2004.
- 40 Marcello Bossini provides a contemporary description of the inauguration ceremony in Panzetta, 1991, 77/78. A photograph of the ceremony on the square is to be found in Panzetta, 1991, illustration on p. 30.
- 41 Panzetta, 1991, illustration on p. 29 (the maquette – or Italian bozzetto – is placed alongside the monument for purposes of comparison).
- 42 One legend has it that the direction he is pointing in is due to the fact that the statue was to have been placed differently in Montevarchi. This would suggest the fight for liberation in Upper Italy was directed against the Austrians.
- 43 Babbini, 1989, 163.
- 44 Quoted by Benjamin, V. 2, 1982, 1044.
- 45 Benjamin, 1982.
- 46 The mayor of Milan had the square widened in front of the cathedral. Proposals for its design were handed in by 176 architects. A well-travelled 33-year-old architect (who worked entirely from memory) by the name of Giuseppe Mengoni, (born in Fontanelice near Ravenna in 1829, died in Milan in 1877) won an honourable mention for his innovative plan for a covered passage between the cathedral and La Scala. In 1863, he was successful in winning the second round. The project was hugely controversial and aroused fierce resistance. Many buildings were demolished. The state treasury felt the strain but Mengoni obtained financial backing from England. The gallery was mainly built between 1865 and 1867. In 1869, he designed

- the Mercato Centrale in Florence. The Milan Galleria was enlarged in the following years, but in 1874 the roof was damaged by hailstones. The still controversial Galleria continued to attract visitors. In 1877, the architect fell to his death from 30-metre-high scaffolding (Donati/Giannella, 1997).
- 47 See Geist, 1969 for these and similar galleries.
- 48 In 1914, a road was built to pass through the gallery. – The gallery was restored in 1971, but the process had to be repeated in 1993 on account of damage from car exhaust fumes. (Stefania Bolletti was in charge of planning.)
- 49 Exhaust fumes resulted in the commune having to pay for restoration. The 150 million lire for the 1992/1993 restoration work (planned by municipal architect Stefania Bolletti) were funded by Cassa Rurale ed Artigiana.
- 50 La Palombara , 1988, 31.
- 51 Basso, 1958. Arfè, 1965. Riosa, 1969.
- 52 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 70/72.
- 53 Batini, 1975, 311/333ff.
- 54 Weber, 1922, 168.
- 55 Weber, 1922, 169.
- 56 Weber, 1922, 170.
- 57 Weber, 1922, 170.
- 58 Weber, 1922, 170.
- 59 Romeo, 1963. Villari, 1992. Castronovo, 1995. Tommaso Fanfani, 1971, 7/70. Anghiari pp. 40ff.
- 60 Cherubini, 2000, 45/48. Lists the small enterprises.
- 61 Mazzini, 1884. Mambrini, 1901. Mori, 1955, 2/4. Radi, 1962. Tommaso Fanfani, 1997, no. 3, 97/110.
- 62 Fanfani, 1971, 14/15.
- 63 Fanfani, 1971, 20.
- 64 Fanfani, 1971, 20. For working conditions see: Fanfani, 1971, 21ff.
- 65 Fanfani, 1971, 39.
- 66 Fanfani, 1971, 39.
- 67 Fanfani, 1971, 39.
- 68 Antonio Gramsci, *Il Risorgimento*. Torino 1949, 96.
- 69 Fanfani, 1971, 39.
- 70 Luzzatto, 1963. Luzzatto, 1968. Castronovo, 1995. Cherubini, 2000, no. II, 39/60. – Cherubini, 2002, no. 17, 125/146 and 2002, no. 18, 131/154.
- 71 Fanfani, 1971, 43/44. For wages c. 1900, see Fanfani, 1971, 44/45. See also Procacci, 1970.
- 72 Fanfani, 1971, 48/51. Cherubini, 2000, 10, 7/32. Working conditions pp. 14/29.
- 73 Fanfani, 1971, 35ff. Agostini, 1904.
- 74 Calli. 1992. Calli, 1995. Brizzi, 2003. Villa belonging to the Busatti and Sassolini families. The family history goes back to Giuseppe Busatti, who progressed from craftsman to factory owner. Livio Busatti married into the wealthy Sassolini family from Castelfranco.
- 75 Michael Peterek, in Einsele/Günter/Peterek, Stevcic, 1995, illustration p. 35.
- 76 Conti, 1978, 36.
- 77 Guerrieri, 1989.
- 78 Vichi, 2002, 63.
- 79 Quoted in: Moroni, 2001, 33.
- 80 Dini, (2003), 31/38.
- 81 An Italian parliamentary report from 1900 stated there were 11 million malaria sufferers in the country, of whom 15,000 died every year. The etymology of the word is “mala” (bad) and “aria” (air). In 1897, the British doctor Sir Ronald Ross, working in India, first proved that the disease was transmitted by the Anopheles mosquito. The Italian Professor of Anatomy, Giovanni Battista Grassi was also able to demonstrate that malaria could only be transmitted by the mosquito, and to observe the disease being contracted. Victims who died from malaria probably include Alexander the Great, Alaric I, Mohammed and five German emperors in Italy. Quinine, from the bark of the cinchona tree, was first discovered to be effective in the treatment of malaria in Peru. The word quinine derives from “quina-quina”, the Quechua (Inca) word meaning “bark of bark”.
- 82 Braudel, 1994/1979, 1, 91.
- 83 Conti, 1978.

The first half of the 20th century

Turmoil and the early industrial era

Ambivalence. The industrial era was a time of structural change. Mankind was on the move to a previously unheard-of degree. This led to huge conflicts, both on a wider stage and at the local level.

Industrialisation meant increased productivity and wealth, but initially the strong were the only beneficiaries. Vast hordes of the weak, mainly farm hands and artisans, fell into decline. Industrialisation had terrible consequences, but we mostly ignore them when reviewing the past. The poor of all kinds struggled to organise survival in the various degrees of their misery.

Neutrality or war? The allied powers – France, Britain and Russia – accepted Italy's colonial expansion and its territorial demands against Austria.

In 1914, Giolitti was replaced by his opponent Antonio Salandra (1853-1931), a conservative politician.

The Italian government had formed the Triple Alliance with the Central Powers Germany and Austria-Hungary. In addition, it signed a secret pact with France in 1902.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, Italy failed to side with the Triple Alliance but remained neutral instead.

The nationalist right urged the country to take advantage of the opportunity for expansion offered by the war. Their stance was hotly debated in Italy. Salandra tried negotiating tactics to recover “irredenta” territories from Austria.

His efforts met with stubborn refusal on the part of Austria. As a result, Salandra and his pro-war party of interventionists declared war on Germany and Austria, against the will of the majority and of parliament, which ranged from liberals in the Giolitti camp to the socialists and a large number of Catholics.

Salandra resigned when the military situation became difficult.

The price of entering the war was terrible. Human life was held in low esteem in all the warring nations. Huge numbers of soldiers fell in eleven battles on the Isonzo. By 1918, the country was mourning its 600,000 war dead.

Post-war period. Francesco Saverio Nitti (1886-1953) was the unsuccessful prime minister in power in 1919. Giovanni Giolitti returned to power for a brief spell in 1920/1921. Reforms were few and far between. Majorities in parliament were shifting. Giolitti resigned under pressure from the Fascists.

In 1919, the Catholic priest Don Luigi Sturzo (1871-1959) founded the Italian People's Party.

In 1921, the socialists split during their party congress in Leghorn, and the communist party was formed.

Within this chaotic society, there were no civil means for conflict resolution, only words and actual power. Ideologists had free rein, as the political élite failed to establish a balance of power between the various movements. It was thus that the country got involved in the First World War, and the boiling

cauldron produced the dictatorship of the leader Benito Mussolini, an erstwhile socialist, in 1922. It ended in the greatest disaster of the century, the Second World War.

At what price? No-one has yet calculated the price society had to pay as a result of a century's lack of interest in problem solving. Instead, politicians largely strove to achieve their crude interests and to polarise.

Everyone wanted to live, but their helpless inability to achieve a consensus mutated into aggression. The dregs of human conduct were being mobilised. Long before war broke out, a secret everyday war was being waged.

Anarchists, socialists and communists. “Anghiari is typically a town of artisans, and artisans tend towards anarchy. This explains why there were 250 anarchists in Anghiari in 1920.”

“On the other hand Sansepolcro is a town of small traders. They joined Turati's socialists. There were not many anarchists; rather, the population was *petit bourgeois*.”

There were about 80 socialists in Anghiari in addition to the 250 or so anarchists. Shortly afterwards, there were 25 communists.

The Socialists met at their house, 21 Via Taglieschi, where they were joined by anarchists and communists.

Fascism

Fascists got the upper hand in Italy at a very early stage – four years after the end of the First World War, eleven years before they came to power in Germany and fourteen years earlier than in Spain.

A history of the beginnings of Fascism. In Sicily, associations were founded calling themselves *fasci rivoluzionari*, that took as their symbol the bundle of rods carried by the lictors (police) in ancient Rome. The movement spread.

Benito Mussolini was the symbolic head of Fascism from 1919 onwards.

He was originally a socialist. Mussolini¹ was born in the village of Dovia di Predappio, near Forlì in Romagna, in 1883. In 1900, he joined the socialist party. He was a teacher in a middle school in 1901, but in 1902 he fled to Switzerland, in order to avoid doing military service. He was tried in absentia and condemned to a year's imprisonment. He worked for the Swiss socialist weekly *L'Avvenire dei Lavoratori* (the Workers' Future). In 1904, an amnesty enabled him to return, and he did his military service from 1905 to 1906. In 1908, he became secretary of the *Camera del Lavoro* in Trento, then part of Austria. The Austrian government expelled him after six months. Mussolini participated in demonstrations against the Italo-Turkish war², earning himself five months in prison and a reputation as a “martyr”. In 1912, he became editor-in-chief of the socialist party newspaper *Avanti!* (Forward!).

War. In 1914, he was initially in favour of neutrality, but later changed his mind. His party expelled him for his support of Italy's entering the war. His experience on the battlefield was crucial. Fascinated by German militarism, he determined to transform his “cowardly, non-military” fellow countrymen, while failing to consider the price they would have to pay. His thinking took a radical turn again after he was seriously wounded in battle in 1917.

Militancy in civilian life. In 1919, on Piazza San Sepolcro in Milan, Mussolini founded the Italian Fascist movement, the *Fasci Italiani di Combattimento*. A few days later, he and some of his supporters laid siege to the office of the socialist newspaper *Avanti!* and laid it waste.

In 1919, the writer and nationalist Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863-1938), leading a corps of volunteers,

occupied the city of Fiume, now Rijeka in Croatia, an area that had a majority Italian population. He proclaimed the area to be an Italian “Regency”, but was expelled in 1920 on the order of Prime Minister Giolitti.

Mussolini entered parliament as part of a grouping of 35 right-wing liberals and fascists in 1921. He reshaped his movement, calling it the Partito Nazionale Fascista.

Promises. Mussolini claimed to be able to solve the social problems that the liberals and the new communists had failed to overcome. He no longer stood up for the individual's fundamental rights, but pushed instead for national egoism, ritualising it as something holy.

His rhetoric was formulaic in style, combining and smoothing out all kinds of contradictions in the post-war turmoil. He declared himself to be a resolver of conflicts. The utopia he designed was completely unreal; it had not been subjected to any kind of historical analysis. He believed the Roman Empire – or his idea of it – should be re-born, and Italy should play the supreme rôle in the world.

The 1922 “March on Rome”. Paramilitary mobs followed up Mussolini's magnificent rhetoric by perpetrating violence throughout Italy. They were acting in the tradition of the old mercenaries.

In 1922, the trade unions declared a general strike to protest against “Fascist punitive action”. On 28 October 1922, the Fascists marched on Rome; they were bluffing, but to everyone's surprise, they were successful. The king was weak, and he refused to allow the prime minister to declare a state of emergency and fight back. He then gave in and appointed Mussolini, who for tactical reasons had not taken part in the march (he did not think it would succeed), as his prime minister.

The opportunists in bureaucracy and the armed forces defected to Mussolini. On the other side, the various parties of the left united against their common foe.

In 1923, the government passed a new electoral law granting a two-thirds majority in parliament to whichever party won one quarter of the votes. An election took place in 1924 against a backdrop of violence, and the Fascists won 64 per cent of the votes.

Many people – including Giolitti, who had voted in favour of the new law – still believed Mussolini could be integrated.

However, at this point Mussolini had his strongest critic, the socialist deputy Giacomo Matteotti (1885-1924), murdered. The opposition parties walked out of parliament in protest, but the king expressed his confidence in Mussolini. Giolitti resigned from the government.

Dictator from 1925. Mussolini portrayed reactions to the murder as a serious crisis. The speech he gave in parliament as the “saviour” of Italy ushered in the era of his dictatorship. He cemented his own absolute might by depriving parliament of its powers. He said he was responsible to the king alone, with whom he had a weekly audience. In his weakness, the king was ready to do whatever “the strong man” wanted.

In 1926, he introduced extraordinary judicial measures, including re-introduction of the death penalty. The communist leader Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), one of the greatest thinkers of the 19th century³, was condemned to life-long imprisonment.

In 1929, Mussolini pacified the catholic leadership by signing the Lateran Accords, and by making religious education compulsory in schools.

In 1931, all university teachers had to swear allegiance to the regime.

Fascism extended its own *raison d'être* by expanding the empire and waging war almost continuously from 1929 onwards in Libya, Ethiopia, Spain and Albania. In 1940 Mussolini allied himself with Hitler.

His odd relationship with Hitler. In 1933, Mussolini sent his congratulations to Hitler; the two men met in 1934. However, when the Austrian chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss was assassinated by Nazis, Mussolini, by then no friend of Germany, triggered an anti-German press campaign.

In 1935, he signed the Italo-French agreements, which gave him a free hand in the Ethiopian war.

Colonialism. Fourteen years after the “Fascist Revolution”, in 1936, Mussolini solemnly declared the annexation of the undeveloped country of Ethiopia despite protests from Great Britain. He thus claimed the status of a major power for Italy, which was now the centre of an “empire” ruled over by an emperor (the former king). The League of Nations imposed economic sanctions on Italy.

The Berlin-Rome axis. In 1936, Hitler and Mussolini welcomed Franco's coup d'état in Spain. This was the beginning of the Rome-Berlin axis. In 1937, Mussolini signed the Anti-Comintern Pact, and Italy withdrew from the League of Nations.

In 1938, Mussolini published the Manifesto of Race and enacted a series of racist laws. His regime did not in fact build any extermination camps, but it played a part in the deportation of nearly 7,000 Jews – almost 6,000 of whom were murdered – when German troops occupied parts of Italy in 1943.

In 1939, Mussolini collaborated with the Franco regime in Spain, and also occupied Albania. Discussions with Hitler were set in motion. In Venice, Goebbels declared: “Germany and Italy are marching in parallel, along clear pathways. We walk with the same firm tread ...”.

The Second World War. When Hitler's Germany started the Second World War in September 1939, Mussolini did not enter the fray at first, but stayed neutral. He then began negotiations with Hitler with an eye to obtaining comprehensive financial aid for armaments. Hitler's achievements within a brief six-week period in the Battle of France (1940) encouraged Mussolini to want a share in the spoils. He declared war on Britain and France in June 1940, fought against the French, but signed an armistice with France some days later.

However, Hitler's plans for the invasion of the Soviet Union (Operation Barbarossa) went awry as a result of Mussolini's marching into Greece and initiating his Balkans campaign. Italian troops' lack of success forced Hitler to assume command of the war in the Balkans. In 1941, Mussolini and Hitler began to wage war in Yugoslavia.

Mussolini sent troops to fight alongside the Germans in the Soviet Union and declared war on the United States. In 1942, German and Italian troops occupied Tunisia.

The fall of Mussolini. In 1943, industrial workers went on strike in Italy. Allied aircraft were bombing Italian cities throughout the war. The Allies landed in Sicily during the night of 9th/10th July. The island was conquered on 24th July.

A significant rôle was played by the Sicilian Mafia and its offshoot the American Mafia, who collaborated during the war and its aftermath, and shaped the circumstances on the island for years to come.

The Grand Council of Fascism met at Mussolini's official residence in Rome on 24th July 1943. After a meeting lasting ten hours, a vote was taken on an order of the day proposed by the Fascist politician Dino Grandi, under which Mussolini was to return to the king the powers he had usurped when he made himself supreme military commander, and to restore some democratic rights to parliament. The surprise result of the vote – the first true ballot – was 19 in favour of the motion, seven against and one abstention.

Background. In the hopes of negotiating an armistice with the Allies, Dino Grandi and other moderate Fascists wished to replace the ruined Mussolini with one of their own kind.

Mussolini was unmoved. Next day, he went for an audience with King Victor Emmanuel III, feeling sure that he would obtain another expression of confidence from the opportunistic king.

However, in the light of looming military defeat, the General Staff and other generals urged the incompetent and indecisive king to act for the first time since 1922.

The king listened to Mussolini, then informed him tersely that he was dismissed and under arrest. He then appointed the rather inept and erratic Marshal Pietro Badoglio (1871-1956) as prime minister. The leaders of the Fascist party attempted to secure their political survival, but the party had to disband.

Badoglio signed an armistice with the western Allies.

Mussolini was taken to Ponza, then imprisoned in a hotel in the Gran Sasso, from where he was rescued in a spectacular commando operation by German SS paratroopers under Major Otto Skorzeny.

On 3rd September, two British divisions landed in Calabria and pursued the retreating German army on its northward journey.

The military government and the monarchy concluded an armistice agreement with the Allies on 8th September. The United States Fifth Army landed at Salerno on 9th September.

The short-lived Republic of Salò (1943-1944). From his refuge in Germany, Mussolini broadcast news that a newly-formed *Repubblica Sociale Italiana* had been set up in unoccupied Italy. However, Mussolini himself no longer had any power to act; he was being used as Hitler's stooge. The headquarters of the new government were set up in Salò, a small town on Lake Garda. The German SS then unleashed a reign of terror hitherto unknown in Italy.

In 1944, Mussolini – then in Verona – condemned moderate fascist “traitors” to death by firing squad. Among them was Dino Grandi, who was condemned in absentia.

Hitler, filled with hatred for the “chronic cowardice of the [Italian] traitors”, also retaliated. German troops occupied Rome on 10th September. Italian soldiers were taken as prisoners of war in their homeland, in south-eastern France, Yugoslavia, Albania and Greece.⁴ Hitler declared the Italians to be sub-human (*Untermenschen*), like the peoples of eastern Europe, and the Jews, Sinti and Roma.

Badoglio's government fled to Bari, which was in the hands of the Allies. The Allies went on to take Rome. King Victor Emmanuel, who had lost all credibility, and in the hope of saving the monarchy, abdicated in favour of his son Umberto II.

The Allies landed in Normandy in June 1944.

On 18th April 1945, Mussolini fled from Lake Garda to Milan, where he tried to negotiate a transfer of power with the resistance. He fled to the Valtellina on 27th April. One day later, the *Resistenza*, having captured him, condemned him and Clara Petacci to death. They were hanged the same day in Giulino di Mezzegra.

Fascism in Anghiari. Frau Bianca Cerboni (1889-1987), who lived at 6 Via del Castello, had her own experience of the Fascist era. “I was born into poverty ... I was an anarchist ... the *carabinieri* hunted us down ... we had to eat mice in the First World War ... all my husband did was work for the party ... there were many supporters of the socialist [Filippo] Turati [1857-1932] and the Catholic Don [Luigi] Sturzo [1871-1959] among the peasants ... we emigrated to France ... I knew [Giorgio] Amendola [1907-1980] and [Alessandro] Pertini [1896-1990] well. [Pertini was president of Italy from 1968-1972.] ... How we fought! ... In France, 100,000 people demonstrated against Fascism following the murder of Matteotti ... I lived through it all ... I was fighting on the square ... The priests didn't want us to understand what the communists were saying, so they rang the church bells ... I worked in a

factory during our exile in France ... We worked for the trade unions ... I was fired ... It was difficult in France too."

Antonio Ferrini, who was a young man at the time, having been born in 1903, was initially secretary of the socialist youth organisation (*Circolo Giovanile Socialista Amadeo Cattanese*); in 1921, he founded the local communist party.

He was mayor of Anghiari for many years (1946-1956) in the post-war period. As an old man, he would sit day after day in the café on the Mercatale, right up to his death in 1988. He remembered the *squadre* (squads) the Fascists formed in 1921, "who entered the villages and towns and terrorised the population, especially the socialists.

They also terrorised the *Camera del Lavoro* (a trade unionist centre), the Association of Métayage Farmers (Lega Mezzadrile dei Contadini) and the trade unions of coachmen, ceramics firers and shoemakers. At that time, there were 120 trade union members in the cobblers' workshops in Anghiari. Politics was a topic of discussion in the shops.

The Fascists – armed – drove around the square and streets on the backs of lorries, firing in all directions. They shot two young men – Stefanello Giorni, a farmer, and Ernesto Brucianarchi, a mason – in front of the station. Mayor Franco Talozzi later named the street after the two men killed: Via Martiri Antifascisti.

In the turbulent years of intimidation, many were fearful and kept their mouths shut (*omertà*). In a demonstration of power, the Fascists declared their intention to free Rome from democracy and parliamentary rule.

They – a lorry-load of them from Anghiari too – then set off for their "March on Rome".

When the Fascists seized power in 1922, they went to the town hall and deposed the mayor, replacing him with a *podestà*, a truly all-powerful man. They immediately started arresting socialists, anarchists, liberals and republicans; they seized about twenty people in their homes. They then locked them up in the police station [*caserna dei carabinieri*] on the piazza [house number 25]; later they were transferred to Sansepolcro.

Several times, I and a comrade (*compagno*) had to hide. We stayed for a month with a shoemaker's family in the mountains behind Badia Tedalda, in a village called Ponte sul Presale. Then I went to Milan.

In 1923, I – like very many others – had to emigrate to France. Life among émigrés followed a similar pattern: those who were already working there asked me to work as a guest worker in a quarry. I went to Nice, where I found work as a shoemaker, my previous trade in Anghiari.

I then thought Fascism was at an end, as my parents wrote to tell me there were jobs to be had in Anghiari again. However, the Fascists immediately arrested me on my arrival.

While I was under interrogation, I re-iterated my views.

The judge asked me "Why don't you do as others do, and renounce your ideas?"

I replied, "You have taken from me all I have, especially my work, so communism is all that's left to me."

"But that's illegal."

The judge, following an ancient tradition, banished me.

This was a time when many were joining the Fascist party because they wanted a job and peace and quiet. But being true Italians, they didn't think much of it. When they were with their families, they cursed and railed against it. But they held their tongues in public.

The Fascists mainly drew their supporters from the property-owning middle classes. The Fascist party in Anghiari had its headquarters in Palazzo Corsi [107 Corso Matteotti, then Via Roma].”

Ferrini worked at Bologna main station as a painter and decorator for six months in 1935. The Fascists re-arrested him in 1940 and banished him to southern Italy.

Infrastructure: water pipes. Normal life went on, even under Fascism. New industrial processes were yielding new forms of infrastructure.

Underneath the large square in Anghiari, there was a “water temple” (“tempio dell’acqua”) in the arcades on Piazza della Fontana. For centuries, it had been providing most of the town with water. People had fetched it in pails. Between 1923 and 1925, however, they constructed an extensive network of underground pipelines to criss-cross the town. A waterworks and pumping system for delivering large quantities of water were built on the ridge of the hill to the north of Anghiari. The town was so proud of this engineering achievement that they put up a number of cast-iron plaques bearing the date 1925, which was when houses were first provided with running water. This suggested people felt it to be an improvement to their lives.

Many cast-iron fountains were set up in public places. In this, the town was following the example of larger cities.

Villa. In 1929, the architect Remo Magrini built himself a villa on the side of a hill, to the east of the theatre. This “fairy-tale castle” is visible from afar, from many parts of the valley. Magrini received many major commissions, and often worked for the owners of the Buitoni factory in Sansepolcro. After his death in 1956, Dr. Pietro Plini, a physician who was Anghiari’s “medico” for decades, bought the villa.

Memorial (7 Piazza del Teatro). In 1919, the municipality acquired the Cappella Corsi (1777/1778), which belonged to the magnificent building complex that Benedetto Corsi had erected (1777/1794); it was dedicated to St. Thomas of Villanova, the family’s patron saint.

The Fascists exploited the memory of the 600,000 World War I dead, promoting the idea of heroic sacrifice to a super-ego. In 1925, the chapel was reconstructed in accordance with a plan drawn up by the architect Remo Magrini, and turned into a cult site bearing the names of all Anghiari’s war dead (Tempio Votivo dei Caduti Guerra 1915-1918). Replicas of bombs were placed on the façade and tower.

An extension is built in front of the theatre (1934). Remo Magrini was also the architect who planned an extension to be built in front of the theatre. Inside, it was to house the foyer, and the outside was to be a terrace. Parties could be held in the foyer after performances. For many years, the only access to the rooms was via an entrance inside the theatre (later a bar was installed).

Cinema was a continuation of theatre and opera, particularly the latter.⁵ Films became more common after the 1920s. It was therefore only logical that the theatre should also be used as a cinema.⁶

The Italians’ love of cinema is rooted in their love of opera. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Giuseppe Tornatore’s film “Cinema Paradiso”, which was shot in Sicily.

Screenings took place on Saturdays and Sundays. Nearly all the films shown were popular “C” films. Many educated people criticised this, saying the theatre was being “debased”. If anyone wished to see highbrow films, they could sometimes find them in Teatro Dante in Sansepolcro.

The townsfolk were still traumatised by the war, but the cinema offered them distraction. The top box office films were musicals from Hollywood and Cinecittà near Rome, which replaced comic operas and operettas.

An access road to the town hall (1932). A road was built behind the town hall in 1932, to connect Via di Circonvallazione with the town hall square (Piazza del Popolo, Piazza del Comune). This required earth moving and backfilling works in one place, creating a break in the town wall, demolishing a number of houses, including a building to the south of the big tower (*torrione*)⁷, in which a carter (*barocciaio*) had kept his horses and carts. Part of the town hall was also demolished.⁸ The street was named – for ideological reasons – Via dell'Impero, but was re-named Via XXV Luglio after 1945. Nowadays, you can follow the original course of the town wall by the markings on the ground.

A house (number 15), with its front door on Via XXV Luglio, was built over Via di Circonvallazione. This experimental “modern” building spans the width of the town wall.

The hospital moves (1938). The Misericordia hospital moved to the former Franciscan monastery of Santa Croce. The owners “in perpetuity” were to be the re-established confraternity of Santa Maria del Borghetto.

Forms of consciousness “*all'italiana*”. These comments are from Antonio Ferrini, a communist: “The German Nazis carried out physical extermination, torture and mass murder, but the Italian Fascists did not. Matteotti was murdered, it's true, but very few others shared his fate.

When it was clear the system could not last much longer, many Fascists, policemen and guards tried to get on the right side of the political prisoners, partisans and opposition activists.

The partisans seized a German officer. The Germans put up posters saying they would have their revenge and burn a village to the ground if the officer were not set free by a certain date. The resistance committee commissioned me to negotiate with the partisans. A Russian officer said the German officer should be exchanged for some other action, but I and the resistance committee insisted the officer should be exchanged for the village. We got our way.”

Ferrini, banished at the time, learnt of Mussolini's fall from a guard who was a member of the *carabinieri*. The *carabiniere* was amazed when Ferrini answered “I've known that for a long time ... I've known it for 20 years”. To which the *carabiniere* replied, “Twenty years ago I was a communist too.”

Renicci concentration camp. People often say there were no concentration camps in Italy, as did the former president Francesco Cossiga during a visit to Germany in 1990. In fact there were a number of such camps.

One of them was Renicci, in the Anghiari area. It stood on the road in La Motina, on the Tiber side, in front of Mount Montedoglio and on the River Rimaggio. The architects were G. Berni & Figli, who had previously designed a building for the Buitoni factory. It consisted of some wooden huts and a number of tents.⁹

On 8th February 1943, the parish priest of Micciano and chaplain of Renicci camp, Don Giuliano Giuliani, wrote the following entry in his diary: “Another bit of news, but rather a sad one. The government has set up a concentration camp in my parish. Some 4,500 Croats and other Slavs have been interned there. Our troops number 500 soldiers ... One or two die every day.”

This concentration camp housed about 9,000 prisoners, mainly Slovenes and Croats¹⁰ but also anarchists¹¹. In 2004, Valerio Dell'Omarino, an architect from Anghiari, designed a grove of remembrance.

Untermenschen. For many years, hardly anything was said about Hitler's treatment of the Italians after the fall of Mussolini. Erich Kuby tackled the subject in 1982.¹² In 1992, Gerhard Schreiber, a

military historian from Freiburg, returned to the topic and produced impressive work based on carefully recorded material in the German Federal Archives.

Even less was known about German treatment of the civilian population during those years. The Italians were accorded a status similar to that of the Eastern Europeans – they were counted as “sub-human” (“Untermenschen” in German). Goebbels' propaganda reinforced the idea that Italians had been treacherous on two occasions. Men were picked up at random and deported to German concentration camps. The transit camp was the concentration camp of Fossoli, between Modena and Mantua.

Linea gotica (1944). The Gothic Line was the defensive line drawn across Italy by German troops in the Tiber Valley and the mountains; it was built to halt the Allies' advance.¹³

The resistance movement (Resistenza). In every war, each side tries to impose rules for fighting on the other, or considers its own strategic rules to be “moral”. However, fighters who have a disadvantage at the outset have always used different strategies against a superior enemy. Such strategies are used in guerilla warfare, where fighting is done by small groups.

In 1799, small bands of peasants in the south of Italy under Cardinal Ruffo fought a war against the French.

The techniques used by bands of partisans (*bande di partigiani*) ruined the conduct of Napoleon's wars, especially in Spain.

In 1831, having experienced the riots of 1821, a colonel from Piedmont suggested employing small bands of fighters.¹⁴ In 1833, in expectation of a general uprising in Italy against Austria, Mazzini, too, urged small bands of fighters (“guerra per bande”) to form. The peasants, however, actively disliked their leaders.

In the Second World War, the *Resistenza*¹⁵ used bands of fighters to attack the enemy. The partisans had the support of the countryside, which was very important. Gaetano Salvemini said in 1953, “If the peasants had not provided active support, there would have been no *Resistenza*”.¹⁶

The partisans contributed to the liberation of the country.¹⁷

Antonio Ferrini, who was able to return from banishment, became the leader of a group of partisans whose aim was to disrupt the German troops.

Many groupings took part in the *Resistenza*. Although the communists formed the majority, many Catholics also took part.¹⁸ They worked well together in the resistance movement.

In Anghiari too, a local committee for national liberation (*Comitato Comunale di Liberazione Nazionale*) was formed. The following members represented the various groups: Frido Foni and Wilmo Giorni for Partito d'Azione; Antonio Ferrini and Rino Mondani for Partito Comunista; Ezio Bigi and Alfredo Giunti for Democrazia Cristiana; Tuzio Tuti and Ercole Specosi for Partito Socialista Italiano. The Partito Liberale Italiano was not represented.¹⁹

A total of 54 people died in Anghiari as a result of their activities as partisans, in reprisal measures, in artillery fire or through bombs.²⁰

On 30th July 1944, Anghiari was liberated by British and American troops.

Memorial stone. A memorial stone on the *strada provinciale*, just before Via Gramsci, recalls “peace in August 1944” (PAX agosto 1944).²¹

Museum. In neighbouring Sansepolcro, the Museo della Resistenza (opposite the abbey church), was founded by Odilio Goretti to remind future generations of the terrible war and the vengeance wreaked by Hitler and his armies. The National Association of Partisans (Associazione Nazionale

Partigiani d'Italia, ANPI) is devoted to the memory of the anti-Fascist struggle.²²

Notes on:

The first half of the 20th century (15.)

- 1 Mussolini, 1951.
- 2 The Giolitti government sent Italian troops to occupy Tripoli and Cyrenaica.
- 3 For Gramsci, see: Fiore, 1979.
- 4 In south-eastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean, 430,000 Italian troops were disarmed and duped into thinking they would be sent home. Half a million troops stationed in Italy were similarly deceived. Out of a total of 803,000 temporarily interned soldiers, only 78,000 left the vicinity of Rome and returned home. One hundred thousand managed to escape, 20,000 died at sea or as the result of war crimes, and up to 190,000 were press-ganged into joining the German army.
- 5 Mischer, 1992.
- 6 A similar situation to Teatro Dante (with 500 seats, including 230 in dress and upper circles) in neighbouring Sansepolcro, which ceased to function as a theatre in 1935, and became a full-time cinema.
- 7 The path leading from the tower used to be called "i passeggi" (the passages).
- 8 Babbini, 1989, 36.
- 9 Tognarini, 1987, Illustration 61 (plan) and Illustration 62 (photograph).
- 10 Sacchetti, 1990, 225/261. Contains several biographies. Giuseppe Bartolomei, I sentieri della guerra, 1994. Illustration of Renicci on p. 185. Giuseppe Bartolomei, s.a., photograph of Renicci barracks on p. 8. – Giuseppe Bartolomei, Renicci illustrated on pp. 18 and 185. – Enzo 1994. Gradassi/Raspanti, 1998. Diary. Photographs of priest, the camp, the floor plan, Anghiari at the end of the war. Bibliography. Several contributing authors. Capogreco, 1998. Capogreco, 2004.
- 11 Santarelli, 1973.
- 12 Kuby, 1987.
- 13 Giuseppe Bartolomei, I sentieri della guerra, 1994. Giuseppe Bartolomei, s.l.
- 14 Anonimo, 1830.
- 15 Resistenza, 1964. Tognarini, 1990. The cover picture shows the length of the stradone, topped by an allied cannon.
- 16 Curina, 1957, 8. Resistance in the Arezzo area.
- 17 See Tognarini, 1987. Vené, 1989. Bukovac, 1983. Spinoza, 1989. Deakin, 1966. Bocca, 1966. Finzi, 1998.
- 18 Tramontin, 1983.
- 19 Curina, 1957, 416.
- 20 Curina, 1957, 534ff. Contains a detailed list of the individual cases.
- 21 For photographs of the Allied entry into Anghiari (Army Film and Photographic Unit in the War Office, now in the Imperial War Museum, London) see Tognarini, 1987, Illustrations 124 (long and "white" roads), 125 (Piazza Baldaccio), 126 (at the crossroads long road/Via Mazzini) 148/149 (Santa Croce and "white" road), 199.
- 22 Antonella Bolzoni's statements on the war are recorded in Moroni, 2001, 39ff.

16. The second half of the 20th Century

Industrialisation and socio-cultural change after 1955

The post-war years. On 12th June 1946, the Italians decided in a plebiscite that their country should

become a republic (the votes cast were 12,717,000 in favour, and 10,719,000 against).¹

The Paris Peace Treaties were signed on 10th February 1947. Italy lost Dalmatia and most of the Julian March; 300,000 refugees fled to Italy; 1.3 million prisoners of war came home.

The Italian Constitution was enacted on 22nd December 1947. Proposals from the “old men from pre-Fascist times” – the anti-Fascists Francesco Saverio Nitti (1868-1953), Benedetto Croce (1866-1952), Don Luigi Sturzo (1871-1959) and Pietro Nenni (1891-1980) – were not accepted.

The Cold War began, and the world separated into two blocs.² The United States became the world's hegemon, wielding strong political influence over the government of Italy.

Left-overs from the War. Pasquale Meoni remembers: “One morning we were playing truant from school and were walking alongside the wall from Porta Sant'Angelo to the church. Halfway between the two, there was a large hole in the hill. We wanted to look inside. My cousin said, “I'm going up.” I saw him playing with an iron ball. It was a hand grenade. I was afraid and yelled, “Put it down!” But then I climbed up too, and saw there were 20 of them inside.”

After the War, the resistance fighter Antonio Ferrini re-established the Communist Party in Anghiari. He was made *commissario politico* for the whole of the Upper Tiber Valley.

He ruled as mayor of Anghiari from 1946 to 1956.³

In 1945, Palmiro Togliatti (1893-1964), a communist, was appointed minister of justice. He applied the arguments moderate Fascists used when referring to themselves. His watchword was amnesty, not revenge. He wanted to re-educate the Fascists.

A house for the PCI. The old PCI headquarters (21 Via Taglieschi) were re-opened. The branch bore the name: *Sezione del Partito Comunista Egidio Gennari* (later it was re-named *Sezione Enrico Cavallucchi*). It was a house “for the people”, and the party used it for its celebrations. There used to be one large upstairs room, but it was later split into three, providing separate space for meetings, secretarial work and the archives.

Delay. Tradespeople in the towns of Central Italy are extremely hard working. They should have formed the backbone of an early industrialisation process, but this did not happen.

The argument that Italy lacked raw materials was an excuse, as it had long been possible to meet any needs with imports. What actually happened was that people's thinking followed rigid patterns as the result of a passive State on the one hand and clerical structures on the other.

Against a background of sclerotic social structures, capital that might have been used for investment was tied to real estate. The State failed to give aid to industries.

Individuals were therefore left to their own devices, and because they were artisans rather than industrial workers, most of them failed to look for the synergies of the industrial era, but stayed on in their old professions.

Workers on the move. Guest workers were not a new phenomenon in Central Italy. Men and women had been long doing seasonal work, harvesting olives in the Maremma or rice in the Po Valley (as depicted in the 1948 film “Bitter Rice”, written and directed by Giuseppe De Santis).

In the 1930s, many went to France, often for political reasons, to escape Fascism. For a long time – right into the 1950s – Italy was exporting an extraordinary number of workers, both to North and South America, especially Argentina and Uruguay, and to the northern European industrial nations. Soon after 1950, the Italians were the first guest workers to arrive in Germany, which was enjoying its “economic miracle”.

Most of the Italian workers went back after five or ten years, which was when Italy needed large

numbers of workers, as it was now undergoing its own process of industrialisation and having its own kind of “economic miracle”.

The movement of workers, many of whom had only had four years of schooling, had a profound influence on their education. They began to take a broader view, experienced a different culture and learnt a second language. However, this had hardly any long-lasting effects.

Out of the country and into the town. The hamlets and villages used to be home to large populations – families were big, although space was limited. Children were a cheap source of labour; in later years they cared for their elderly parents. In the 19th century, very many such families eked out a miserable existence.

Around 1950, Italian industrialisation was the driving force behind the large-scale move away from the countryside and into towns which had a growing number of factories. Between 1952 and 1962, 16 million Italians moved from the country to the town, above all from the south to the north.

The last such wave of departure took place in 1967/1968. Very few, mainly old people, remained in the villages.

Since the 1980s, many families have been using their abandoned family homes in the country as weekend or holiday homes. People found it easy to tear up their roots, but they retained a strong sentimental affection for their places of origin.

The fields that were no longer cultivated were left to Sardinian shepherds and their flocks, outsiders that were, of course, regarded with suspicion.

Exodus from the village of Upacchi. The only way to reach this village in the hills west of Anghiari used to be by mule trail, the normal transport route in centuries gone by.

Even at the beginning of the 20th century, it was able to be self-sufficient. Its subsistence economy functioned fairly well; it was a small, independent entity with its own mayor. It even boasted its own court of law, prison and lawyer. The small hamlet of Poggiolo, uphill from Upacchi, comprised 30 houses, all joined together in the usual manner. Human relationships were equally close – most of the inhabitants were inter-related. There were stalls for animals on the ground floor of the farmhouses. An outside staircase led to the living quarters.

The main source of income for the peasants was wine and olives, but they also kept sheep and made cheese (*pecorino*) from their milk. Charcoal burners produced charcoal and sold it in the towns.

In 1947, there were 14 hearths (*focolari*) still in use in the village. Only four of the villagers owned their property, all the rest were tenants.

Upacchi was always a long way from Anghiari. When the townsfolk wanted to tease each other, they would say “Go to Upacchi!” (“*Vai ad Upacchi!*”).

They tell the tale of the first grocer to make his way up there with a trailer. The villagers were amazed, as hitherto the village had only ever been reached by mule.

Things that had been normal for centuries were increasingly felt to be burdensome and backward. There was no road, only the mule trail. Transport was difficult; health care inadequate for the sick who wanted modern forms of treatment. Other places were already making progress. The children had to go a long way to school – it was three kilometres to the school in Elci.

People started to move away slowly, one family after the other.

Around 1960, the town of Anghiari set up a project to build a road to Upacchi, but it was quickly cancelled on the grounds that it was not worth spending so much money on a village with a shrinking population.

Goffredo Rossi was the last to leave the hill village, taking his family with him. In 1982, his wife spoke these words of wisdom: "We are doing well, we have all we want, but we miss the jolly days up in Upacchi. We have television now, but everyone lives their own lives. We used to take turns to visit each other's houses for entertainment. We celebrated carnival, production of the grape must, the slaughtering of a pig. We all danced, the men got drunk, we were the best of friends. It's bizarre, but Upacchi is now on mains electricity, although nobody lives there."⁴

In the 1990s, Upacchi was in fact re-built and brought to life again by families who were variously referred to as drop-outs, ecology freaks or cranks.

Industrialisation. After a long delay, northern and Central Italy underwent the fastest industrialisation process in the history of mankind. It lasted one generation, from 1955 to 1975.

It brought drastic social change.

Social change is visible in people's biographies. These are the words of Luigi, who once ran Bar Garibaldi on the main square (he later became a greengrocer): "I'm the son of peasant farmers from the nearby village of Citerna. I had five years of schooling, then I was apprenticed to a cobbler when I was ten. Shoemaking died out, so when I was 15 I went to work in the shirt-making factory, and at 20 years of age I turned to the weaver's trade. I married at 23, had three sons, and took over the bar when I was 30."

His wife Graziella tells her story: "I was an orphan, brought up by my grandparents in a farmhouse down there in the valley. When I was 14, I went to the shirt-making factory as a seamstress. I married when I was 17, and our first child was born when I was 18. We often work a 16-hour day in the bar, finishing at one o'clock in the morning. We take it in turns to eat our meals. We live in the house next door."

Rural exodus. The downside of industrialisation is the decline of agro-pastoral society. This is a disaster that ends in rural exodus.

Within a single generation, from 1951 to 1971, the percentage of those engaged in agriculture fell from 70 to 31 per cent. Within the same period, the number of industrial workers quadrupled, from 12 to 47 per cent.

Anghiari had a population of 7,028 in 1961; in 1980 it had 8,529. This shows that the Anghiari area is not merely agricultural in structure. It also participated in the industrial upswing and was able to increase its population.

Factories were built on the valley floor, along the *stradone*, on the way to San Leo and on the ridge of the hill. For quite a time, people said there were enough jobs in Anghiari. This was a period of industrialisation with more or less full employment.

The makers of Ingram shirts in Sansepolcro set up one of their factories at the foot of the chain of hills, to the north of the old station.

The Soldini shoe factory. The shoe makers Soldini managed the transformation from craft to industrial production.

In 1925, twenty shoemakers' workshops (*botteghe*) were still in operation. In 1926, a number of citizens of Anghiari set up the Calzaturificio G. Ulivi factory. It was based in Via Matteotti, to the north of Santa Maria Maddalena church, in the house of Cristoforo Ulivi, one of the co-owners.

The shoe factory then moved to the converted ground floor of a large house further up the hill, on the town wall (15 Via delle Mura di Sopra). The business grew very successfully until the 1929 crash. In 1931, the factory closed.

The Soldini brothers started industrial production in Capolona, in the province of Arezzo. In 1956, Gino Ceppodomo Founded the Calzaturificio Gino Ceppodomo e figlio. The two companies merged in the early 1960s to form CISA (Calzaturificio Italiano Soldini Arezzo) with headquarters in Anghiari. In the booming 1960s, they built a large factory on the historic site of the Battle of Anghiari.

The end came when the factory got into difficulties in the 1970s and finally went up in flames.

The old crafts are not much in evidence. The antiques trade was an alternative for artisans in the 1980s and 1990s. They concentrated mainly on furniture restoration, for which Anghiari became famous.

Giorni, the blacksmith at the foot of the hill, opened a metalworking shop. He was the last blacksmith in Anghiari. His sons both live in cities, the elder one became an engineer, the younger one is a Doctor of Economics. Old Giorni lamented, “I’m all alone, like a dog”.

The remains of a peasant mentality. Farming still has a major rôle to play in the mindset of most of the townsfolk. Nello Panchi said in 2003, “Take a look at the peasants – they come to the market every Wednesday, as they have been doing for centuries. The peasants are a reflection of our area (*I contadini sono lo specchio della zona*)”. The elderly men keep up the old market-day tradition, standing in groups in front of the arcades on the main square.

This mentality is in evidence in their high regard for local produce.

Such pride culminates in the small Molino Ravagni olive oil shop, opposite the piazza, next to the covered market.

Changes in attitudes. There has been an enormous shift in attitudes to life. A farming culture was largely destroyed in the 1960s, even among the farmers, who were forced to adjust their lives. The change in family life often took place within a single generation, without the family members being aware of it.

The expansion of a way of life brought about, and determined, by industrialisation went hand in hand with an influx of consumer goods, which the young mostly found irresistible. People became wealthier in the 1960s and were able to afford such products.

Decline. People placed less and less value on their historic heritage in the 1960s.⁵ Many were dazzled by new buildings (though they could not stand the sight of them thirty years later), by doors and windows of plastic, and fast and easy-to-handle cars. Cars had an amazing capacity to become status symbols and modern icons, and they shattered the old town. Many traditional objects were consigned to the dustbin.

Bits of the past were removed deliberately. The Testi family squandered the excellent Palazzo Testi library they inherited. It contained many manuscripts, including some of Lorenzo Taglieschi's. During the course of eleven years, an antiques dealer in Florence sold the library off in lots.⁶ Some books were saved and bought back by Don Nilo Conti and Giuseppe Mazzi, two men with a rare sense of heritage, but they lacked the funds to buy the whole library.

The welfare state. From the point of view of world history, something altogether admirable happened during the same period. The infrastructure needed by an industrial nation for its establishment of a welfare state was put in place in the course of one generation, in response to pressure from social activists. This was the start of unemployment insurance (*casa d'integrazione*), a health service, day nurseries, schools, libraries and a pension scheme.

The welfare state and neo-liberalism. The welfare state and industry are two sides of the same coin. A welfare system serves to pacify wage-earners, but some wealthy members of society have

remained critical. Neo-liberal ideologists have been preying on the people since the 1980s. They not only want power, they want above all to enjoy the booty that is the fruits of power.

Simple houses undergo change

Lina Bozi. She was born in 1923, and in 1987 she was living in an old house on Via della Misericordia. Her husband's name was Senesi, but, like many Italian women before her, she retained her own name.

There used to be just one room on each floor of her house – one downstairs and one upstairs room. A whole family lived in each of the rooms, parents with their children and often other relatives as well. An open staircase led from one room to the other.

The living room was out of doors, in the street.

No-one had any privacy in the house; privacy did not arrive until the second half of the 20th century.

In the house next door, each of the three floors was occupied by a different family. The upper floors were reached by open staircases. The upstairs families had to pass through the rooms of those downstairs.

An elderly neighbour remembers the time when a family with three children lived on the ground floor, a widower lived on the first floor and a widow on the second.

Lina Bozi is full of praise for the way the families lived at such close quarters. “There was mutual understanding (*accordo*); there's not much of that around nowadays.” Laughing, she rejects the idea that people got in each other's way. “No! There was much more agreement between them, more interaction. They helped each other out.”

Individualisation. Lina Bozi went on to say such things had now disappeared. “Everyone now has his or her own house. Times are now very different; they changed twenty, or maybe twenty-five, years ago [during the 1965/1970 economic boom]. For me, at any rate. I'm now 70 years old [1993].”

She was born in the Casentino, in Subiano in the province of Arezzo. When she was seven, she went to Caprese. In 1943, she came to Anghiari. She bought the house in 1950. Her husband died in 1990. She has a daughter and a grandchild.

“The rooms are now divided up – do you want to see them?”

There is a small living room (*salottino*) with a television set, sewing machine, dresser, bookcase and coat rack, a dividing wall with a door, a not-so-small kitchen, a window offering a magnificent panorama of the Tiber Valley, and two upstairs bedrooms. “We moved the wooden staircase to the back of the kitchen; it used to be behind the front door.”

Mrs Bozi no longer uses the fireplace. “It was somehow useless. Now it smokes.”

A small door in the kitchen leads to the toilet and shower room, which are under the stairs.

The newly positioned stairs also helped to divide the room. The staircase was faced and the room remained closed.

The view from the window. Mrs. Bozi described the view from the window at great length. “It's even better upstairs”. This differentiation was an indication of how important the view was to her.

Her own ideas on architecture. “I wanted to make several alterations to the house and went to [Valerio] Dell'Omarino, the architect who had his studio next door. He came and looked at the house, and said, “Oh Lina, you've done everything that can be done. Leave it alone! You can't improve on it. I'm an architect, but there's nothing I can design.”

A neighbour said it was unusual for an architect to give such advice. Normally he would be looking for business, and would change things that didn't need changing."

In what way is life today different from in the old days? Lina Bozi said, "I got married and got my poor family through the worst. We were doing badly until about [1965]."

The elderly woman kept referring to the poverty she experienced in order to make comparisons. She was convinced people had it too good nowadays. "We can eat and drink what we want. They say some people live in abject poverty, but I can't see it. They can have all the clothes they want.

Young people don't know how good their life is. They say things are bad, but they only say that because they're having it too good."

And the reverse of that? "People were much closer. Now, everybody thinks of himself. The solidarity we used to have is missing. The result is disagreements and quarrels. We used to quarrel in the past too, but there was also more love. We were there when others needed us. We were all in it together.

When someone was ill – Madonna! – they all turned up. They gave a helping hand. And how they helped! It's quite different now. You have to leave your house and go to hospital."

We have advances in medicine, but fewer helping hands.

How has this come about? Mrs. Bozi's generation are speechless. They cannot explain it to themselves or to the younger generation. "I don't know how it happened. I can't say." Her gesture is one of helplessness. After pausing for thought she says, "It'll be the way of the world. That's progress."

She enjoys the benefits of present-day life. "I feel well, though I miss my husband very, very much. I have my daughter and grand-daughter here." Somewhat resignedly, she adds sheepishly, "I don't have great expectations of life. I do my housework. I go to the cemetery every day. That's my life."

Flashback to life as a métayage farmer. Lina Bozi continued: "My husband and I didn't have a profession. Nothing. I went to school for three years, as all children did in those days, my husband too. He was a farmer. Like me. We were tenant farmers; we had a small farm beyond the town wall, just before you get to the cemetery. The house is still there.

We worked the soil. We were métayage farmers. We had to give half our produce to the *padrone*. Life consisted of hard work – we worked for bread and wine (*pane e vino*). And for a bit of warmth.

No-one lacks anything now. It's almost too much.

We used to be satisfied with what we had. We worked hard. Oh, we did! We left for the fields at 5 o'clock in the morning and stayed till noon or half past 12. Then we had lunch. We went on with our work in the fields from 3 o'clock to 9 in the evening. Every day. Saturdays too. And Sundays. In winter, we had a bit less to do. We couldn't do so much when it was raining. Our cattle and pigs lived with us. And all the chickens and rabbits! That was our work. The animals were stabled under the kitchen, on the ground floor (*fondo basso*).

The system of métayage (*mezzadria*) was abolished in response to pressure exerted by the communists and trade unionists, and after battles fought within society. The Bozi family were then given the status of *cassieri*, thus they were employed by the landowner and paid a monthly wage.

They buy a house. "Receiving a monthly wage gave us a bit of leeway. We were able to buy this house on the hill. At 600,000 lire, the price was reasonable. Nevertheless, that was a lot more money than it is nowadays. It was a lot, because our income was low. And the building was in a poor state. We had to struggle to raise the money and carry out repairs. But we only had the one daughter."

The family. "After leaving school, our daughter – people call her "La Maddalena" – started work as

an accounting clerk in the Health Department [USL]. Now [1993] she is Deputy Mayor. At 45 years of age.” Maddalena Senesi was Mayor in the 1990s.

Prosperity. “And now we have to say we're fine. Until ... until ... ? For as long as God wills. Do you know what I pray every day? “Dear God, I'm prepared. But do it quickly! – Do it quickly!”

“I've been retired for many years now. I retired when I was 55. My husband too. He retired before I did. I now get my pension and my late husband's as well. That's a good thing! You struggle along (*si tira avanti*).”

Daily routine. Mrs. Bozi says she gets up at 8 o'clock every morning, and laughs. It amuses her to think she could never get up that late in the old days. She goes to bed at 10pm. During the day she's cleaning, washing and shopping.

She does her crochet work when she sits in front of the house. “I'm making a curtain for Maddalena's room.” It looks like lace.

Her part of the town. Her street is called Via della Misericordia (Hospital Street). “But at one time (*anticamente*), people called it “Brothel Street” (Via del Bordello). But that wasn't the official name. Many still call it that, but I don't approve. The people who live here are all decent folk.

If you go on a bit further, the street (*poggiolino*, or slope) widens. It's also called “*tra le mura di sotto*” (between the lower walls). The lower street is called Via delle Mura di Sotto, and the upper one Via delle Mura di Sopra.”

The neighbourhood. “I have a lot of contact with my neighbours. We often get together. We get on well (*siamo d'accordo*) here. We talk a lot. We go out a bit in the evenings (*la sera si esce*) and walk up and down between the walls (*si va tra le mura*).

Lina Bozi knows everybody here.

“There's no enmity between neighbours.”

But that is wishful thinking. When she is reminded of two feuding families on the Poggiolino, she says with regret, “That's been going on for a long time. Something silly happened. We don't talk about it. I can't even remember what happened afterwards.”

Are there any young neighbours? “I have a 21-year-old grand-daughter. She's always here, and sleeps here too. The other grand-daughter has lunch with us. My daughter always eats here as well. They have a house higher up, near the hospital. That's where they sleep. There isn't enough room for them all here.

Many young people have had houses built outside. But there are also many young people in the historic centre of the town. My daughter is very, very happy to live here.”

Travel. “I've never been one for travelling. I get car and coach sick. I have to take pills. No, I'm a housewife.”

The world. What does she think of the world as it is portrayed on television? “Ugly (*brutto*). I only watch the news, nothing else. It's not nice.”

Storage space. Mrs. Bozi owns a storeroom (*fondo*) on the other side of the street, on the ground floor of a large house.

A neighbour. A woman who lives nearby remembers: “Three families used to live in the one house. There was one big room on each floor. They all shared one toilet.”

The house was altered after its sale in 1953. It was divided into separate rooms and a toilet added. She had two rooms beside her living-room. A large bathroom was built overlooking the street.

A different family lived upstairs in similar rooms. They had an entrance from the street.

“I lived in Rome for 20 years, then I moved here. I've done a bit of everything. I was a housewife and I worked in the Buitoni factory.

Around 1935, we used to cycle to Buitoni's. Later, Buitoni sent a [company-owned] covered coach (*carozza chiusa*) to fetch the workers.”

Signor Buitoni “used to walk through the factory nearly every day and have a look round. He didn't speak, but he was a good man (*buono*).”

The toilet. For centuries, people used chamber pots with wooden lids.

Around 1900, a toilet in a wooden cubicle was built into one of the houses. The waste flowed into a sewage pit, emptied once a year, beneath the street.

Exit for the dead. There are two doors in the house, one for the living and one for the dead. The exit for the dead is now walled up; it used to be opened only when a dead body was to be carried out. Masons would wall it up again immediately afterwards. This custom was also widespread in Umbria, especially in Assisi. The exit for the dead can be seen particularly clearly in the next-door house.

Suburbanisation

The need for more living accommodation. People of all social classes have had more money to spend since the 1950s, and have wanted more spacious living accommodation. Pre-1940, each person had an average of eight to nine square metres at his or her disposal. In the 1970s, people were able to afford 20 to 30 square metres. This fact brought about a major change in housing needs.

Suburbanisation. Most people have been unable to realise their dreams in the historic town centre, but have moved into the surrounding area.

As a result, the Old Town emptied in the 1960s and 1970s, as the townsfolk moved out. Conservation became a problem.

A house in a leafy suburb sounded to many families like a good idea, but they were unaware of the drawbacks. They were thinking only of themselves; all of them wanted a house with a large garden outside the town.

When many people act in this way, a considerable amount of space is required. The result here was suburbanisation – and the countryside was suburbanised too.

For both political and economic reasons, suburbanisation is tempting; land owners who want to get rich are tempted to sell their farmland as building plots. They put pressure on the town council and municipal administration, either openly or in the form of a bribe. New building land is often inappropriate from the point of view of town and country planning – that is to say, it is in the wrong place.

Liberal attitudes to construction. A liberal approach to building is very different from the traditional one. On the whole, it only has individuals in its sights, and often fails to establish even the loosest connections between them.

Liberal-minded contractors typically work according to laissez-faire principles. This renders them helpless in the face of some aspects of land exploitation, and the insatiable appetite of motor traffic.

The result is that they no longer recognise a town as such.

However, a suburbanised space is not country either – although some people say it is. The area beyond the historic centre of Anghiari is hard to define, it has failed to develop its own characteristic structure.

This type of minimalistic town planning lacked any guiding principle or supervision. In Anghiari, the ridge is peppered with haphazard housing. Around Campo di Fiera, the sprawling area known as Montebello spoils the landscape, which is particularly sensitive at that point.⁷

The sprawling new settlements at the foot of the hill and along all the roads spoil the landscape in a similar way. Liberal-minded contractors and house builders have simply done as they pleased, so there is hardly any connection between the new built-up areas and the fringes of the Old Town, which developed as the result of years of experience, and are valuable in their own way.

In 1979, the municipality expropriated a piece of land on the northern saddle of the hill – this was an error on the part of the town planners – and got a co-operative housing association to build terraced houses on it. The houses were subsidised and offered for sale to individual families.

“I’ve been living in Anghiari for 20 years [since 1960]. What did the 8,000 do when they had got rid of the “Pharaoh”? Every man built his own house, put up his own wrought-iron gate, got himself a dog and bought a car. What sort of ideas were those? Don’t make me laugh! How many more thousands of years are they going to need? When I was working as a page in a hotel, I realised ignorance is at the root of all the evil in this world. Many of the young people of my age went off to college. They turned out blind and stupid, although they were qualified schoolmasters and engineers.”

Infrastructure. The municipality had to put major and costly infrastructure in place to serve the new built-up areas: roads, supply lines for electricity and gas, water pipelines, sewage ducts.

In the 1980s, the Tuscan regional government did its level best to control the situation by making the opening up of land for development dependent on figures for the actual population rather than projections. People wanting to build in Outer Zone C1 now had to pay for road building measures themselves.

The impact on traffic and Anghiari itself. Suburbanites were now some distance from the Old Town and its shops. They no longer trusted their own two feet, but chose to go more comfortably by car. This became a habit, a reflex action like with Pavlov’s dogs.

Constant structural change. It was commonly believed the industrial age was advancing all the time. On the ideological front, liberals believed in progress, and the left-wing parties and trade unions looked for a utopian paradise. In actual fact, however, the process of industrialisation meant constant structural change.

A certain stability, overlooked by economists, was present at the local and regional level, but the advent of the global economy and new means of transport meant the macrocosm would always have an impact on the local and regional microcosm. This had been happening for more than two thousand years, but now the amount of trade was on the increase.

One example of structural change was the Soldini shoe factory, which once stood proudly on the *stradone*, on the spot where the Battle of Anghiari was fought (a town-planner’s error). It shut down in the 1970s, as did other factories. Buitoni cut back production in the neighbouring town of Sansepolcro. The system of mills fell into decay, as we can see from what happened to Mulino di Catorcio.

Infrastructure. As industrialisation progressed, revenues from taxation increased. As tradition demanded, the bureaucrats were the first to benefit. Italians found it hard to adjust to the industrial era due to their mindset and the unwieldy apparatus and equipment inherited from the past. Hardly anyone understood that a modern state has to be built in a structured way on decent infrastructure. Only under such conditions can a sophisticated industrial society function properly.

During the “years of plenty” (around 1905 and 1960/1980), many municipal infrastructure projects

were realised all over the land, as a result of high tax revenues.

Nevertheless, they were often unable to reach central European standards, as can be seen from their schools, further educational facilities, libraries, youth work, social work and theatres.

Anghiari was lucky in that it had one of the most able mayors in Central Italy, the exceptional Franco Talozzi, during the late phase of industrial upswing in the 1970s.

Supra-regional infrastructure. Two high-voltage power lines were installed across the area controlled by the municipality. One of them started at the hydro-electric plant (*centrale idroelettrica*) in La Penna (in the commune of Laterina) and finished up in Umbria. The other stretched from Larderolfo (southern Tuscany), taking in Anghiari, then turning eastward to Montefeltro.

A large pipeline carrying natural gas from Siberia has been built. In centuries gone by, people would not have thought such infrastructure possible.

Busatti – a factory producing historic textiles

Weaving as a cottage industry. For many years, farming families did their own weaving at home on simple looms, thus meeting some of their own textile needs (subsistence economy). They cultivated hemp for this purpose. The looms usually stood in the cow shed, where it was warm.

Weaving was typically a woman's job. It was not necessarily hard work, but it had to be done on top of her duties in the house, kitchen (often cooking for 20 persons) and garden, and tending the farm animals. Weaving shortened her night's sleep.

Many ordinary women were well educated, despite being illiterate. While doing their work, they often listened to stories and poems recited by older men. This was how women learnt parts of Dante's Divine Comedy off by heart.

In the second half of the 19th century, earnings from farming sank, so weaving became a source of income that enabled families to survive.

Putting-out. Giuseppi Busatti set up in business in 1842. He first bought cotton from abroad around the year 1850 and put out raw materials (linen, wool, hemp and cotton) for farming families to process. He then collected the finished products and traded them, mostly in the towns.

Manufacturing. Busatti founded his factory in the same year as the covered market was built on the piazza (1889). He installed his machines in Palazzo Morganti, built in the mid-16th century, a handsome town house that stands on present-day Via Mazzini (house numbers 10/18). You can still see what were once cattle stalls on the valley side.

When a little prosperity came their way, some farmers gave up weaving. Busatti bought their looms and moved production to his house. He mostly employed women from the town. Other farming families were supplied with technically more sophisticated looms that were beyond the means of the weavers themselves.

He set up shops to trade from in various towns and villages in the Tiber Valley.

It was at this time that Busatti began to weave certain traditional designs. His blue-and-white striped ones became famous.

Busatti supplied many farmers with cloth after harvest time and before the winter set in. They did not have to pay until they had sold their crops.

The factory. After the First World War, it was no longer possible to satisfy demand for hand-woven materials, so Busatti bought motor-driven looms that ran on the electricity newly introduced in

Anghiari.

He produced cloth made of linen, wool, hemp and cotton. Different machines were required by the textile industry as it moved towards finer and thinner materials. Busatti, however, kept his traditional looms running in the cellar, and his slower moving shuttles continued to weave coarse, rustic cloth.

The finished products were lengths of cloth, curtains, bed linen, tablecloths, napkins and towels. Busatti kept to natural products that require old-style looms.

The crisis. On the whole, buyers in the 1950s and 1960s thought Busatti made rough, peasant-style, old-fashioned materials. The trend was for printed and imported cloth. It seemed Busatti's products were finished.

The company was in crisis, but the daughter of the family had other ideas. She held the current situation to be a passing fad, and predicted the fashion would pass. She was right.

Busatti textiles, with their traditional designs and production methods, came to be bracketed together with the up-and-coming antiques trade in Anghiari.

By now, most textile manufacturers who had produced similar materials had either given up or changed direction. The only comparable factories in northern Italy were near Cuneo and Biella. This provided Busatti with an excellent market niche. The company seized the opportunity, and demand rose. They were now the only factory in Italy working with hemp. Customers came from all over the country. Busatti began to export.

As the firm did not wish to compromise on quality, it refused to go into uncontrolled expansion. It comprised five family members and 15 employees.

Busatti selected the shops it would supply and opened stores in Sansepolcro, Città di Castello, Umbertide, Fiordilino (Rome), Grosseto, Montichiello (near Montepulciano), Arezzo, Bologna, and as far away as Munich and Düsseldorf. Family members worked in all of them. The textiles came from Anghiari, but each store was an economic entity.

The shop in Anghiari looks like one of the famous *botteghe* in 15th century Florence. Long wooden counters are ranged in front of shelves filled with bolts of materials from floor to ceiling.

Shop windows were added in 1995, turning the Renaissance-era Via Mazzini into a small textile museum.

Busatti's business also profits from the fact that the family know their customers, deal with them in person and satisfy their particular wants. Customers can even have products woven to their own design.

The company's birthplace was a Renaissance house, the site of the first *bottega*. The production area is in the basement and at the back of the house. The basement also houses the raw materials: cotton (some from Egypt and America), and hemp from Eastern Europe. A larger production area at the back of the house is being planned in stages.⁸

The banks

Banks. Cassa Rurale ed Artigiana Società Cooperativa was founded in 1905, with the aim of improving the economic situation and living conditions. It granted loans to artisans and traders. In the 1950s, it expanded its headquarters by buying a magnificent 16th century *palazzo* on Via Mazzini and converting it.

Its statute states that it has to fund non-profit local projects out of its own none-too-lean profits. One

such project was the Mostra del Bestiame (a cattle show) on Campo alla Fiera. The bank supports the Mostra Mercato dell'Artigianato di Anghiari, a showcase for artisans. In 1992/1993, it supplied the funds for the restoration of Galleria Magi.

Banco Popolare dell'Etruria e del Lazio stands on the main market square, occupying an old house with arcades in one of the foremost locations. It was founded in 1882, at the beginning of the industrial era. Its original name was Banca Mutua Popolare Aretina, and it was an association of banks with 52,000 members in the co-operative. It opened five branches in the province, including the Anghiari and Sansepolcro branches, almost immediately. Its original aim was to help small owners, but then – like other banks – it gradually transformed itself into a lender for those who already had a certain amount of capital.⁹

Monte dei Paschi di Siena, a Sienese bank with its roots in the Middle Ages, established itself on the opposite side of the *stradone*.

Around 2000, the agricultural bank, Cassa Rurale, bought the one wing of Albergo Meridiana that was lower in height than the rest of the hotel. They sought planning permission to raise their part of the building, but this was refused on several occasions, as it would have spoilt people's view of the theatre. However, in 2003, the municipal parliament gave permission for this irreparable architectural transgression. The Office for the Preservation of Buildings, normally unyielding, failed to intervene.

What happened? Valerio Dell'Omarino, an architect, commented, "The Cassa is a bank. In our society, banks get special treatment."

He went on to point out that that spirit of Berlusconi was present in this architectural blunder. The only yardstick was success; the why and the wherefore were irrelevant. Questions of good conduct did not arise. The building was a symbol of the type of politics that had an impact on personal behaviour.

Sleaze. Mario Danzi's explanation for the municipal parliament's action was as follows: "When unethical behaviour is the norm, the opposition barely have a chance, because the actors are all in it together. They're all doing business with one another." Laughing, he remarked, "The municipal parliament are like the proverbial Robbers of Pisa. They curse each other by day, and rob together by night."

He added, "It's immoral to privatise public space. Berlusconi has ruined ethical conduct."

The decorative arts; antiques; restoration

Decorative arts. Prosperity in Tuscan cities enabled the decorative arts sector to flourish over centuries.

Tuscan decorative arts may have had their roots in Etruscan culture and flourished down the ages, sometimes more, sometimes less, but this speculation has yet to be examined properly. Decorative arts formed the broad foundation for all the artistic activities that Tuscany became famous for.

In the 16th century, the Medici, frowned upon in Europe for being upstarts, used the artisans' potential – the most comprehensive in Europe – to set the stage for their rule. This involved putting on magnificent acts of state – weddings – that stirred up great excitement in the royal courts of Europe.

Anghiari is a strange case. Historically, it was never particularly famous for decorative arts, with the exception of the work done by its gunsmiths. Nevertheless, it became important in the 1970s, thanks to the structure of its crafts sector during the years of industrialisation.

These crafts were employed to halt the decay of earthly goods. The craftsmen's skills were applied

to restore and conserve.

One famous restorer was Giuseppe del Sere (1915-1999), also known as Gnaso.¹⁰ He had a small workshop in a house on the town wall, with a wonderful view of the Tiber Valley. Gnaso refused to work with machines, using only his hands and traditional tools. The finish he put to furniture was done “*all’antica*”, in the old way. His skills were reputed to be miraculous.

In this context, diverse groups – the craftsmen, the Istituto d’Arte (Art School) and the antiques trade – gave each other ideas.

The antiques trade was therefore backed up by restoration work. Restorers often sold the objects they had restored too.

The antiques trade. In the 1930s, and later during the first economic upswing in the 1950s, new financial resources enabled people to buy and sell antiques. Parallel to a consumerism that sought what was brand new, the hunt was also on for “*cose vecchie*” (old things). Some of the treasure seekers were experts, others were traders and occasional buyers who learnt to improvise; the lowest of the low were fraudsters who were clever at making imitations.

In the 1950s, Arezzo and Florence were important centres for the antiques trade.

The years 1970 to 1990 were the main period during which people combed their private homes, basements, lofts, businesses, churches, sacristies and religious houses for treasures. Frequently, greed and a desire to get rich quick destroyed the historic heritage or removed an object from its proper context. Many traders made no attempt at documentation.

It was not until after 2000 that Gianni Giannini in nearby Pennabilli thought up “Antique doc”, on the same lines as a seal of quality for wines. It documented the origins of an object.

Anghiari developed into one of the most important centres for the antiques trade in the whole of Italy.

Some of the major traders, like Mara and Ascano Calli in Villa Miravale, keep their business out of the public eye; they are known only to their discerning clients.

The “public living room”. Many small stores shut up shop around the year 2000. In their place, “living rooms” have been put on public display in the Old Town. Tourists are able to stand wide-eyed in front of shop windows, in the evenings too, and admire the magnificent interiors tastefully laid out with valuable pieces of furniture.¹²

Giuseppi Mazzi (1910-2000), known as Beppe,¹³ learnt the blacksmith’s trade, but later turned cabinet maker. He was the first furniture restorer in Anghiari. A modest, gentlemanly character, he worked on Piazza Mameli. He was an expert on firearms and metalwork, both of which have a long tradition in Anghiari on account of the copper mines in the nearby Monti Rognosi.

He left many items from his collection to Museo Taglieschi. It is thanks to him that a number of things have been preserved in the town. Mazzi was the initiator of the exhibition “Mostra delle armi da fuoco anghiariesi e dell’Appenino tosco-emiliano 1968” in Palazzo Taglieschi.¹⁴

Luthier and antiques expert, Milton Poggini (1911-1970)¹⁵. His career marks the beginning of the “Town of Antiquarians”. He worked for many years as an instrument maker, producing violins and lutes. He also created sculptures in wood and clay. One of his violins was awarded a gold medal at the 1935 Paris International Arts Exhibition. His violins have a distinctive sound due to his own specially developed oil-based finish.

In 1950, he acquired the entire Giuseppe Testi family property – the Testi were an old Anghiari family – including a collection of antique carpets and furniture, and other *objets d’art*.

Poggini then opened an antique shop on Piazza del Mercatale. The large white house, in a prominent position, is filled from top to bottom with antiques. His daughter took over the business after his untimely death. She is an institution on the piazza, where she sits outside the house, day in, day out.

Piero Calli has one of his shops on Via Garibaldi.

Antiques dealers are highly regarded in Anghiari. Piero Calli (born in 1944) comes from an old Anghiari family. Mostly unshaven, he is modest in his behaviour and never puts on airs, despite being a public figure. Calli is the uncrowned king of Anghiari, as he has been running the local Anghiari Society, the crafts exhibition at the beginning of May and cultural events for decades.

Collaboration. Many of the traders work together. Every July there is an important trade fair, Mostra del Antiquariato, founded and run by Gianni Giannini, in nearby Pennabilli (40 kilometres away, on the road to Rimini).

Istituto d'Arte. The antiques trade and restoration experts have encouraged several infrastructure facilities.

With its origins in the Istituto Statale d'Arte of Sansepolcro, the Istituto Statale d'Arte of Anghiari was founded in 1960/1961.¹⁶ It is based in the centre of the Old Town on Piazza Mameli, in the former Palazzo Magi (57/59 Via Garibaldi). It was founded by the politician Giuseppe Bartolomei and Professor Giuseppi Nomi, a ministerial civil servant.

The actual impetus came from Germany, from the Bauhaus movement (1919/1933) and Werkkunst schools.

There are now many such institutes of art in Italy. They concentrate on sectors that their region is well known for. Anghiari has one of the two schools that specialise in furniture restoration, the other being in Saluzzo (Piedmont). Sansepolcro's speciality is goldwork, Perugia's is ceramics, Arezzo's is fashion and Volterra's alabaster work.

Analysis is central to the Anghiari curriculum. The students examine how furniture used to be made and learn to approach even minor objects with respect. Great importance is attached to this throughout the course. It was Professor Enrico Papini who developed the idea of a respectful attitude.

The entry requirement is a school-leaving certificate from a middle school. It is a kind of technical college – with an ambitious curriculum – for future artist-artisans.

The Institute of Art is not a stepping-stone to university; rather, it aims to send its graduates into the world of work as competent professionals.

The extensive building complex also houses a middle school, where the pupils study the following subjects throughout the three years they spend there: Italian literature, history and geography, a foreign language, mathematics, physics and chemistry, technical skills, drawing from nature, sculpture, music and physical education.

The art school offers a three-year course comprising the following subjects: Italian literature, history of art and applied art, mathematics and information technology, physics, natural sciences, chemistry and geography, drawing from nature, sculpture, technology, wood restoration, woodwork, lacquer work and physical education.

The Institute of Art teaches its students historic techniques practised in the old *botteghe*, above all restoration of antiques, and furniture restoration in particular.

Knowledge is required of many subjects, including: placing a work in its historical context, analysing its current condition, materials (types of wood, the grain of the wood, nuances of colour), structure, environmental impact (temperature, humidity and the like), construction, tools,

workmanship, work processes, functions, details. Students learn to work independently.

A two-year course follows on from the three-year course, and covers the following subjects: literature, history of visual arts, mathematics and physics, chemistry and workshop technology, economics and sociology, visual design, theoretical and applied geometry, project planning and physical education. After the final examination, successful candidates are entitled to call themselves “*Maestro d'Arte*”.

Former students who have made a name for themselves include “*Maestro*” Santino del Sere.

Istituto per il Restauro. Giuseppe Nomi and Giuseppe Bartolomei not only founded a school, but also the Istituto per il Restauro del Mobile Antico (Institute for the Restoration of Antique Furniture) at 57 Via Garibaldi. It caters exclusively for students learning the art of woodwork and wood restoration, and trains them to be restorers. The school shares the specialisation of the Institute attached to it.

The young people work their way through five laboratories: cabinet making as an art, a wood-carving workshop, inlay work, lacquering and gilding, and restoration.

Orders for the restoration of important objects have been placed with the Institute. Many of the objects on display in Museo Taglieschi in Anghiari were restored there. Other works include the 16th century door of the Abbey church in Sansepolcro, the 16th century choir stalls in the parish church of Tavernelle (work carried out in 1986/1987) and inner and outer doors from the 17th and 18th centuries in Piero della Francesca's house in Sansepolcro.¹⁸

Museo Taglieschi. It was in this context that the museum in the Taglieschi House was opened in 1976.¹⁹ In its own way, it is a very interesting museum, not being dedicated to great works of art, but to rooms and objects created by artist-artisans in the region.

Exhibition of crafts. In 1976, Anghiari created its own exhibition, a showcase for small craftsmen, particularly for artist-artisans. The exhibition, known as the Mostra Mercato dell'Artigianato dell'Alta Val Tiberina, is held every year around 1st May. It was founded by the influential local Anghiari association “Pro Loco” (under the leadership of Francesco Testerini), the municipality (with Franco Talozzi as mayor) and the Association of Artisans (Associazione Artigiani) in the Tiber Valley. In 1979, they were joined by other municipalities in the Anghiari area and the Cassa Rurale ed Artigiana di Anghiari. Its president is the antiquary Piero Calli.

The Exhibition of Crafts is one of the most important events in the Anghiari calendar. Local craft firms and others from further afield sell their quality products over a period of ten days. The former ground-floor shops come to life again, and are used as they had been in the Middle Ages.

Oil from the mill. The work of skilled artisans and the old methods of hand crafting produce are things we should treasure. It should be our collective ambition to promote them.

One example of such things is the historic Ravagni oil mill (Antico Frantoio), which stands on the provincial road from Anghiari to Caprese Michelangelo, and was established in 1421. Its origins lie in the parish of Micciano. The small business has been in the hands of the same family since the 18th century. Extra-virgin olive oil is produced using traditional methods only: the olives are ground between two millstones of granite and pressed without the use of heat. The oil is decanted naturally, and no filters are used. The resulting oil is greenish in colour with a golden sheen. Shortly after pressing, it tastes pleasantly bitter, whereas the mature oil is harmonious in taste. In former times, the millstones were turned by a blindfolded donkey.

New shops in the Old Town. The Exhibition of Crafts provided the impetus for using empty ground-floor rooms in the Old Town. Since the 1990s, ever more traders and artists have moved into

these rooms, whose rents were still affordable. Carlo Rossi, an artist who studied at the Academy of Art in Urbino, earns his daily bread selling textiles in one such shop, for example. He then spends his meaningful leisure hours in an open studio.

Antiques market. Since 2004, several times a year, the Università dell'Autobiografia has organised a market for antiques on the main market square and in the covered market. What a happy occasion it is! The market square is cleared of cars and assumes its centuries-old appearance. The market's motto is a quote from the founder of the University of Autobiography, Professor Duccio Demetrio: “*Anche le cose si raccontano*” (“Things also have a story to tell”).

Changes in the life of the town

Stories and reminiscences recounted by the people of Anghiari indicate the extent to which society and ideas changed within a short space of time, mainly between the 1950s and the 1970s.

Integration of children.²⁰ “Children used to join in all the family work. This changed in the 1970s. From this time on, children have been insufficiently challenged, if at all. They are guided only by a desire to please themselves, a principle that is seldom called into question. The result is that once they start work, they lack any training, including training in conflict resolution. The new behavioural norm is the chaos of puberty.”

Doing the laundry. “Monday used to be washing day. Mother got her daughters to help her. There was a large wash-house next to San Stefano church, and a smaller one near Fornace. The washing was hung out to dry against the walls of the houses. Mother fixed a washing line from the front wall to the side wall to dry the large sheets.

Everyone had a bath on Saturdays. There was a large bathtub in the kitchen. Shampoo didn't yet exist.

We got our first washing machine in 1965. Electrical washing machines and tumble driers then became widespread.”

Nowhere on earth are the bathrooms as luxurious, even in old houses, as in Central Italy.

Heating fuels. “Until 1965, the fireplace was the source of heat for the whole house.”

“In my youth, I spent Saturdays gathering twigs in the forest and carried the bundles home on my shoulders. That stopped in the 1950s, when we bought coal.”

Oil-fired central heating became common in the 1960s.

“Charcoal burners (*carbonari*) still worked in the forests right into the 1950s.”

In the 1980s, the whole town was linked to the gas mains supply, and houses were provided with gas (*metano*) central heating. The gas came via a pipe line from Siberia.

House conversions. “In 1965, the ceilings of a certain house were removed. Previously, the kitchen had had a much lower ceiling that sloped. They raised the walls and built a new roof on top. The tenant in the house behind could no longer view the panorama, but he had been on holiday when the builders started work. He complained afterwards, but the house owner was a bigger fish.”

The forest. “People used to go mushroom picking and not damage the forest. Nowadays, hordes of mushroom pickers, hundreds of them, turn up in their cars and ruin the forest.”

Games. Pasqualino Meoni remembers: “We used to play in the Old Town when I was little. We didn't have much, mostly just a ball made of rubber or rags. Every quarter had its own gang. We fought battles with wooden swords. We enjoyed ourselves, although we had more or less nothing. We didn't

play wild games, but they could be cruel. We would catch an insect and put it in a tin. Then we tied a thread to one of its legs and made it fly.”

The devil's chestnut tree. Nello Panchi says: “A chestnut tree was split right down the middle after being struck by lightning. The resulting two trees are still there; you can see them on the road to Carmine church.

Children were often told, “If you're naughty, I'll send you to the devil's chestnut tree”. We were always frightened as children. None of us would dare to walk that way at night.”

The Tiber. Pasqualino Meoni told the following tale: “Three of us used to take our bikes and cycle in the direction of Caprese. We went swimming in the Tiber, then cycled home in the evening. Sometimes we would walk across the fields to the river, which took us an hour and a half.

On one occasion, we were on our bikes. It was very hot, and we were sweating profusely. My 21-year-old cousin jumped into the water without warning and failed to re-surface. I was in a state of shock and stood there motionless from one o'clock to six in the evening. A fireman dived in and found him. His swimming trunks had got caught on a piece of wire mesh attached to a large stone. When they pulled the lad out, he was all puffy and swollen.”

The bread oven. Pasqualino Meoni again: “There was an ancient bread oven (*forno*) in Via Taglieschi, where the families in the quarter baked their bread, as there was no baker's shop in town. They baked according to a timetable. Mother often rose at 4am to go to the oven. A sign was made on each loaf so its owner could identify it.”

Baked apples. “When I was eleven or twelve, food was scarce. Several of us went out into the country and gathered apples and pears. We baked them in the public oven, then laid them on a large baking tray and carted them through Anghiari on a wheelbarrow, crying: “Baked apples and pears! Come buy, come buy!” (*Mele cotte! Pere cotte!*) Women would open their windows and call out, “Give me one!” “Give me two!” An apple cost 20 lire, a pear 30 lire.”

Learning. In peasant society, people were schooled without the written word. This remained so until after 1950.

“You put cobwebs on wounds, so the blood coagulates.” – “People knew this and passed the word on. Don't stand under walnut trees, it's bad for you. It's true – nothing grows under them. The trees ward off fleas, mosquitoes and vermin.”

“Nowadays, who knows all that the peasants used to know?”

The primary school was on Via Garibaldi (where the Istituto Statale d'Arte now stands) until 1960. It used to have five classes only. Each year had its own room, teacher and 40 pupils.

A dare-devil game on the steep street. “We were about eleven or twelve years old and knew it was dangerous, which was why we weren't allowed to take any younger ones with us. Our toboggan was a simple wooden ladder.

The grown-ups said nothing; sometimes, like my step-father Nello, they joined in. We were the second generation, Nello belonged to the first. They still do the run, but mostly with proper toboggans.

One boy sat on each of the rungs of the ladder. My brother Vittorio sat at the back, wielding the two pieces of wood that were the brakes, and steering too. The boy at the front had to yell out, “Left!” or “Right!”. I wasn't daft, I always sat in the middle.

We pushed off from the top, starting at the arcades of the old hospital, and rushing down into the valley, till we reached the *Madonnina* at the Battle of Anghiari monument. We managed it about four times out of ten. On the other occasions, our toboggan tipped over before we got there.

I was always afraid, as I had had a very serious accident when riding a bicycle with two other boys on the road to Tavernelle. The bicycle collapsed, I fell to the ground face downwards, knocking my head against a tree.

Toboggans pick up speed when passing the arcades on the Mercatale. There is a stone we often crashed into at the corner of the building.

Once my brother yelled out, “I can’t put on the brake!” because one of the sticks he used as a brake was broken. The toboggan turned over, and we flew through the air in all directions.

Quite a few of us ended up in hospital after that madcap run.

Once we crashed into the local policeman as he was crossing the road. That was touch and go! He wanted to press charges against us.

When we arrived at the bottom, we would pick the ladder up, shoulder it and climb the steep street again.”

Love. “Mothers used to keep an eagle eye on their daughters and the men they were speaking to. Their fathers often gave a sly wink, remembering the time they were the piazza heartthrobs. The young ones gained their liberty by taking advantage of the space left by their elders’ contradictions.”

“When I was 18 (in the 1950s) I worked as a builder. I had a hod of cement on my shoulder, and as I climbed down I met a girl who had come to Anghiari to learn to sew. I really liked her! Oh! How I liked her! I looked at her, and we both went crazy. It was carnival time, and we went dancing. Then we married, and we’re still together. Thank God!

... I was called up. After six months, I had my first leave, but my fiancée knew nothing about it. I got off the bus and, wrapped in my military greatcoat, I met her and said, “Hello!” She asked, “What do you want, sir?” – Then she recognised me and we embraced.”²¹

“When people here talk about women”, Angelo said, “their eyes light up. Not only the men’s eyes, but the women’s too.”

The man he was talking to raised his arms and said, “We live in an area where many authors wrote stories, like the great Boccaccio. The stories were there, always there, everywhere, in the midst of people’s lives. If you yourself hadn’t been through what happened in the stories, at least you could dream.”

Annibale del Sere added, “And just think! Not one of Boccaccio’s many tales ends with the husband murdering his wife’s lover. That’s quite something!”

Amore di Pichicchio. The story goes: a man went out with a lass for 40 years, but left her in the forty first. He gave his friends the following explanation: “She’s a mystery to me.”

Solving a case. In the 1920s, Giuseppe Santi, a builder who had grown up in Galbino, a hamlet near Anghiari, got a job as a policeman on the Tuscan Isola del Giglio (Lily Island).

The population there was sparse. For six years, Giuseppe had the quietest job imaginable. Crime was simply non-existent. There was nothing for a policeman to do.

With the exception of one particular case: from her bedroom window, an angry wife once poured hot water over her husband, who was standing on the street below. Giuseppe Santi’s game was afoot. He was able to take down the details of the case, as he had learnt to read and write.

The villagers, on the other hand, could neither read nor write. For several days, they squabbled over the facts, and raised their objections. Protests were made, and misunderstandings arose.

In the end, the policeman drew up his final report and wrote, “The evidence is the water the wife poured over her husband’s head. Unfortunately the evidence has disappeared, as the water is no longer

hot.”

The future. Having just eaten his fill, a communist once remarked, “Imagine ten people sitting around the same table. They’re all given the same opportunities. Ten years hence, and you’ll find one has nothing left, one has become a rogue, the third has half of what he had, the fourth ten times the original amount ...”.

Levels of language. People’s language is down-to-earth. They also use many similes such as “You play like ...”. Such language has deep-rooted antecedents in literature.

Swearing. “All over Italy”, said Giorni the blacksmith from the bottom of the hill, “Tuscan is the benchmark for swearing. Tuscans are famous for it. A friend of mine met a doctor in a Swiss hospital who couldn’t speak a word of Italian, but he could swear in Tuscan.”

A jester. Pasqualino Meoni remembered, “A man nicknamed Fagiolo hung sausages from a stick and got children to jump up and catch them in their mouths. It was his Sunday treat.”

Comedians. “Here’s an example. Imagine 30 people going for a picnic in the country. There were always some funny guys among them doing a Roberto Benigni act. Beppino, for instance. You should hear him in the bar – as if he were on stage! “Good heavens! Father’s fallen in the well!” In fact he had hidden in the hedge after throwing a log in.”

A Fellini. “There’s a chap in Anghiari who’s not quite all there. He has a thousand ideas in his head, so people call him “Idea”. He was once very poor, but then a relative left him a modest fortune. He used it to buy an Ape (a three-wheeler commercial vehicle), installing a radio and a huge loudspeaker.

Marco “Matto” went mad when Simonetta’s younger sister left him, although he still loved her.

When he was drunk he made a nuisance of himself with Simonetta herself. Simonetta’s husband Roberto threatened to hit him if he didn’t stop it. In actual fact, Marco had mistaken Simonetta for her sister.

Marco was an excellent trumpet player. He worked for the municipality as a painter and decorator. One day he painted the school in San Leo bright red, after which they locked him away in an asylum.

When the Basaglia movement got the asylums to open up, he was set free.

He then started collecting waste paper, and didn’t do too badly.

Twice a week he stood in front of his house and played the *Bandiera Rossa* on his trumpet.

From time to time, he got the socialist anthem confused with the Fascist *Facetta Nera*.

Sin. Vittoria, a friendly old woman with dark hair, is putting wood on the fire. Old Pippo, broad-shouldered and white-haired, is seated in an armchair holding forth about the priests who had been oppressing Tuscany since the time of re-feudalisation, about *padroni* who had always bled the peasants to death, about the pope in the Vatican and about taxes that had been filling the coffers of far-away lords for centuries.

His anger has been brewing for centuries. “We feel trapped. Anything we do or feel has the makings of a sin”.

After remaining silent for a while, he adds, “That’s why I don’t go to church. I might sully the holy place”.

The choir “had about one hundred singers. Entire families sang in it. The conductor was Don Vittorio Bartolomei. It used to be one of the most famous choirs in Italy. It sang in the Vatican. We became world famous for singing Gregorian chant. They rated us higher than New York or the choir of the Sistine Chapel. We had choir practice in the *Propositura* two or three evenings a week. I sang *tenore primo* in about 1959. I had a very high voice.”

“Where is there a god?” This was the question asked of Vincenzo, a church-goer, by Vittorio, an old anarchist. But he had an answer to his own question: “All right. Everywhere there is a god who lays down all the rules. For example, the one about eating pork.” (*“Dappertutto e un dio che regola le cose. Per esempio il mangiare del maiale.”*) – Vincenzo was triumphant, “There you are! You are a Catholic after all!” Franco, a well educated man, shook his head. “My dear Vincenzo, this region is older than your Catholic faith. If you think about it, it's obvious that Vittorio's explanation concerns the gods of Antiquity.”

Modernism in the church. “A parish priest in nearby Monterchi shut down two churches. He did it by climbing up on the roof and throwing down a few tiles. He cried out, “Danger! The church might collapse!” and set up a notice at ground-floor level. He then founded a tennis club for young people.”

“As early as 1000, perhaps even earlier, people in Tuscan towns reined in the power of the clergy. In a free society, there's no room for a priest who lays down the law.

It may have been the same in Etruscan times. Priests may have been tame in pre-Roman days.

Anyway, we have no radical priests in Tuscany. They say Mass, and keep fairly quiet.”

Anti-clericalism. An old stonemason in Anghiari, a thoroughly anti-clerical anarchist, was working by the side of the road. A procession passed by, praying for rain for the crops. An acquaintance asked him as he went by, “How are you?” “Fine”, said the stonemason fiercely, “because it's not raining.”

La chiesa delle bombe. Having just been awarded the Prize for Culture in 1989, the poet and scriptwriter Tonino Guerra left the theatre and walked on to the terrace. Looking down on the square, he said “Ah, la chiesa delle bombe!” (Ah, the church of the bombs.)

His companions from Anghiari were surprised. “Where?” they asked.

Of course they all knew the chapel, but had never noticed the “bombs” staring heavenwards, one placed at each corner of the tower. The chapel was built between 1777 and 1794, but later, as in Fascist times, it celebrated military triumphs rather than the memory of the poor people who had their lives ruined by war.

The magic of film making reached Anghiari.

The film “La ragazza di Bube” (1964) depicted the war in Italy, shortly before the liberation. Set in the Apennines, it portrayed events that really happened, and is a psychological portrait of the *Resistenza*.

The film makers went into the schools to look for extras. The headmaster of the primary school, Giuliano Medici, was given a supporting rôle. At first he was chosen to play an intellectual among the partisans. Then, during filming in Siena, he swapped parts and played an officer who collaborated with the Germans.

Luigi Comencini, the film's director, worked in a very aloof manner, but Claudia Cardinale, the star, was highly regarded for her humanity, simplicity and directness.

The dream. It was lunchtime. Outside the café on the piazza, Walter del Sere was saying that the brothers Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, two noted Tuscan film directors, were thinking of giving him a part in their next film. Someone had mentioned his name to them, because Walter had given a dazzling performance as Baldaccio in an ironic musical comedy.

Walter looked up at the sky and said, “It's been my dream to play in a Taviani film. I wouldn't care if I were just a waiter walking on with a tray on my outstretched arm, saying, “Please help yourselves”.

Distance. Tecla Meoni remembered her late mother-in-law, whose life consisted of nothing but work, saying, “Why do people go to the moon?”

A biography of Bruno Rossi

Bruno Rossi is of medium height, has a wiry frame, mobile features and expressive eyes.

“I come from ancient stock rooted in the soil of Anghiari,” he said. The family had lived since time immemorial in a small house “in the country”, in the mountains near the village of Verrazzano. His grandmother was born in 1885. His father and mother grew up there.

His father eked out a living as a woodcutter (*tagliaboschi*) and farm worker. In the 1950s he managed to buy a tractor. His mother helped out on the farms, returning from her work with a few eggs and some bread.

Bruno, born in 1945, had two younger sisters, and some time later, a younger brother. From 1951 to 1956, he walked to the primary school in Valle di Toppole. He and all his schoolmates “had five years of schooling – the *quinta elementare*”.

The old parish priest of Toppole told his parents they should send their bright boy to the seminary in Sansepolcro. He could already picture young Bruno as a great priest.

“I only stayed in the seminary for three months. Life there seemed a long way from home.”

Bruno prepared for entry to Leonardo da Vinci Middle School in Anghiari, and passed the entrance examination. Every day he cycled to school – one-and-a-half hours in each direction.

He was born too soon. “It’s a shame there was no art school in those days, because I’m good at drawing. I might have become a drawing master.”

Bruno only completed two years of the middle school. “I wanted to work, just work. I didn’t have any special ideas, so I became a mason’s apprentice. The master craftsman was a splendid chap, one of the most highly respected in town. He made me want to be a builder. He was particularly good at restoring old houses. That’s still my favourite part of the job.”

Bruno Rossi worked in the small business until 1974, when the master craftsman took him on as a partner (*socio*). Three of them ran the firm until 1984.

Since then, Bruno Rossi has been a self-employed businessman. “But I say I’m a craftsman, a builder.”

From time to time, he hires two or three others to help out. “I don’t want any employees. A man might not turn up for some minor reason. Or I might have picked the wrong man. The extra cost isn’t worth it.” His system works. Each man works at his own expense. Bruno Rossi is responsible for the job, and the other man is a subcontractor.

“If someone wants to work, he’ll find plenty to do.” His order book is full for the next two years.

“I’ve gained a lot through my work. It’s often hard, but satisfying.” His work is meaningful in the context of Anghiari. “I know Anghiari as it used to be. I know its values and all its people.”

Bruno Rossi is a modest man. His knowledge, based on years of experience, enables him to select appropriate methods and solutions. He does not deceive himself or others into seeking short-term “innovation”, enabling the historic town to survive during a time of structural change.

“People trust me. They give me their front door keys.”

“In factories, everything runs more smoothly and comfortably. You have limited scope; you’re given your instructions; you just copy. But when you’re self-employed, your head and your hands do it all. You have to stay wide awake all the time.”

Bruno Rossi and his family left the countryside and moved to the outskirts of the town. In 1984, he

built his own house (“a lovely house!”) in Campo alla Fiera. The area of the garage is all of 60 square metres, whereas that of the living room is 50. He is saving for his old age. His pension will largely be income from the rents from the other two flats in the house.

Having inherited his parents' house up in the mountains near Verrazzano, a property he cherished because his roots were there, he set about restoring it. He often spent weekends there. However, in 2004, he proudly announced that he had sold it to a Canadian who had offered him a huge sum of money for it.

“My wife comes from the neighbouring village of Toppole, where her father was a farmer. When he could no longer earn a living from farming, he became a mason. There were four children in the family. After primary school, my wife went to Florence and was in service between 1960 and 1970 in some rich people's houses. Then we got married. Since that time she has been a housewife.” Of course she is more than that. As her husband has a small business, she is his secretary, receptionist and manager.

Furthermore, she is entered in the register of the chamber of commerce as a farmer. (*“coltivatrice diretta”*). The house and the land are hers. “I bought them”, says Bruno, “but transferred ownership to her just to be sure – you never know!” The fairly large property comprises 18 hectares, some of it woodland.

She works for two or three hours on Saturdays and Sundays at the pizzeria in Toppole.

Bruno Rossi was born into poverty, but is doing excellently. “It helps that I enjoy my work. I don't complain. I have an interesting job and a lovely family. I don't ask for much. I'm now 50 (in 1995) and could retire to country life in Verrazzano. But life without work? That's not for me.”

“We used to be very poor; now life is quite different.

The coming generation? They have it all.

But they've hardly any ambition.

I want to work, do lots of work, with my hands.”

Festivities

Festivities galore. There have always been festivities of all kinds. Even in the post-war years, people spoke of 180 feast days.

In the days of Antiquity, the many gods all had their feasts. People enjoyed celebrating, and were happy to indulge themselves too, celebrating the particular day, the present situation, life lived to the full. Even slaves had their own feast day on 15th August, which is still celebrated as the *ferragosto (feriae Augusti)*.

The many Christian saints replaced the gods of old, and Christians celebrated their name days. The Christian calendar dedicates every day of the year to at least one saint.

The many feasts do not mean 180 days of holiday. In Italy, the idea that work stops on feast days – which is widespread north of the Alps – is an unfamiliar concept, even nowadays. It is more the case that work permeates festivals in Central Italy.

Some festivals are only celebrated by a certain group of people.

A number of special festivals are highlights in the lives of individuals and society.

Weddings. Weddings are the most important festivals in people's lives. They are celebrated without regard to the families' pockets. No-one mentions the word “debt” afterwards. Sometimes, thousands of euros are spent on photographers, who record the event for posterity in the form of portraits of the

couple posing as angels.

The photographs and videos follow the cultural norms of classical Central Italian portrait painting. Although the photographers are not aware of this, they are drawing on years of experience in design.

It would seem Italians alone can appreciate the long scenes of feasting celebrated in many of Federico Fellini's films, which Northern Europeans find excessive. They demonstrate the stereotypes and the subtle psychology of feasts, an interplay between ritual and human laxity.

Eating and drinking. People's fundamental enjoyment of food and drink would seem to stem from Etruscan days. In a farming community, it is also an expression of pride in their produce; in Tuscan cities, it is the result of close ties between town and country.

"This region suffered poverty for two or three centuries", said Nello Panci, a grandfather, "but we lived for the many feast days that gave us a break from everyday life. We could eat till we went off bang." ("*Un mangiare a crepa pelle.*")

A two-way challenge. "Anghiari's clubs and activities fell into two groups: one was Christian and conservative, the other communist and community-based. Each organised its own festivities. Competition provided a challenge. That's why there was so much going on." Since the 1990s, the differences have been smoothed over to a considerable degree, but the basic tendencies are still there.

The parish fair on 3rd May "... is a local tradition. People come to the town from the countryside. They used to come with their extended families ... It's a major happening ... They eat in town ... There are occasional fights ... They make love ... The birthrate rises nine months after the fair."

Everyone comes to this and to other festivities – Christians and communists, believers and unbelievers. The feast has lost its original meaning, but it is an established event.

At half past five, the fair opens with a tango; next comes a slow waltz. Later, there is a raffle. It ends with a huge firework display watched by thousands on the piazza. You could think there was a war on.

Carnival. In the autumn, the farmers slaughter some of their animals and hang the meat, some of which is cured and smoked. The word "carnival" may derive from the Latin *carnem levare*, which means to take away or remove meat. The term might therefore indicate this was the time when the cured meat could be used. Those who celebrated carnival were allowed to behave in an abnormal or crazy way. "*Semel in anno licet insanire.*" – "*Una volta all'anno è lecito diventare folli.*" – You can go mad once a year. Only once?

Masked balls were held in the theatre in the 18th century. Parties went from house to house. Great singers sang.²²

What happens nowadays on carnival Sundays in February? "Each district of the town has its own float, making about twelve or thirteen in all. Competition spurs the float builders on. Who has the best float? They used to be pulled by oxen, later they were horse-drawn, now they are pulled by tractors. The procession starts at the top of the hill at Campo alla Fiera, then the floats move in line down the *stradone*, to the main square. They come the most important part: eating and drinking. Three or four bands play; groups dance."

San Martino. Martinmas, on 11th November, was also the day on which seasonal farm workers were released from service and given money for a coat and a pair of shoes. They bought their clothes from the market traders on the piazza. At the same time, they offered to work the following season.

St. Martin's Day is still celebrated in the covered market (Galleria Magi). It is also known as the *festa dei bringoli*. *Bringoli* are a form of poor man's pasta, consisting of nothing but flour and water

(*solo farina ed acqua*). Hot chestnuts are also eaten, as the chestnut harvest falls at this time. The covered market reverberates with the sound of choral singing.

Summoned by bells – unpunctuality. Pasquale Meoni remembers *la scamananta* (bell ringing). “It’s a club that organises this strange custom. It lasts one month and takes place twice a week every five years. Men and women between the ages of 18 and 60 take part.

Historically, it was intended to encourage farmers and craftsmen to work in a more disciplined fashion.²³ What happens is that if any club members aren’t on the square when the bell rings at 6 o’clock in the morning, the young people will drag them out of their beds in their nightclothes without further ado. Punishment is administered mercilessly (*senza pietà*), even if laggards are only a minute late.

The lads put the delinquents on a cart and empty chamber pots containing onions on their heads, with the result that their eyes start to water. They also pour evil smelling sauces over them and play tricks (*dispetti*) on them, covering their arms with flour. A bowl containing stinking fillet of herring is hung from a pole and repeatedly held under the poor delinquent’s nose.”

Unità festivals. When they returned to Italy from exile in 1944, the communists brought with them the traditions of the parties organised in the 1930s by the French communist newspaper L’Humanité. These were based on the popular festivals of French Revolutionary times.

After 1965, the Unità festival in Italy, financed by the surplus made by the party newspaper of the same name, became a focal point in the cultural political scene. There was a revival of the popular and political culture that had been destroyed both during the Fascist era and as a result of the structural changes that took place in the 1950s. In the 1970s, the Unità cultural programme was one of the best in the country; it had a huge following.

The comrades in the kitchens mostly provided excellent food at their festivals. In Anghiari, Franco Talozzi, the mayor, was for many years the *chef de cuisine*. When the team made their appearance, it was not unknown for a Fascist – laughing and having made himself useful – to be among them.

In 1978, over 8,500 such festivals were held in Italy, in addition to regional and national ones (like the one in Florence in 1975 and Tirrenia in 1982).

In the 1980s, the Unità festival went into decline as a cultural event and became an excuse for people to gorge themselves and get drunk.

The era of Mayor Franco Talozzi (1976-1992)

A productive constellation. The post-war years were a long period of radical structural change in Anghiari. Individuals were the first to be affected. It was not until the 1970s that architecture and town planning came to change.

Whereas in many places the *zeitgeist* was taken up with trivia, Anghiari was lucky – it enjoyed ten years of firm leadership by a man who deliberately steered the town through a period of structural change, who kept his eye on future prospects and set standards for quality.

Anghiari’s finest hour in the 20th century was a happy coincidence. The mood, euphoric and optimistic, was one of departure, whose origins could be traced back to 1968. At the same time, people were going on a voyage of discovery and delving into their history, recognising its strength-giving potential. Thirdly, an exceptional man came on the scene, one who was able to absorb all of this, handle it, express it in an intelligent manner and, through combined knowledge and action, use his skills to create something of lasting worth.

Franco Talozzi (born in 1937) was an exceptional mayor of Anghiari, the man who left an indelible mark on the town. His work has had a lasting effect, as it basically cannot be undone, even by his weak successors, who have done their bit to change things.

Starting point. When Franco Talozzi²⁴ became mayor in 1976, the town was in a sorry state: there were no mains water supplies in the countryside, five street lamps dangled over the long street, roads were bad, the Old Town was crumbling, history and heritage did not count for much. Art historians directed their gaze at monuments in great cities. Hardly a single tourist chanced upon Anghiari.

Franco Talozzi, nicknamed “Big Brain”, has a CV that would fill a book. He was born into a poor peasant family in Chiusi (Valdichiana). His father worked as a gamekeeper for a large landowner. He himself left school after completing the form known as the *terza media*. He went on to do odd jobs, as was usual at that time. At the age of 16, he went to work as a waiter in the spa town of Chianciano, but was then chosen from among competing candidates to take up a modest job in the tax office (*Dazio*, later known as *Imposte consumo*); he went on to become chief clerk in the Radicofani tax office in 1959 and in that of Buonconvento (near Siena) in 1964. In 1969 he was appointed director of the Anghiari tax administration, and from 1973 he held the same post in Sansepolcro. He and his wife have two daughters, and the family lived at the foot of the hill on the road to San Leo.

Talozzi joined the Communist Party in 1957, becoming the party's honorary local secretary in Anghiari in 1972.

In 1973, Regione Toscana appointed him President of Istituto Martini, an old people's home. The home was in very poor shape at that time, as its administrators had antiquated ideas. Talozzi reformed it thoroughly. His reforms restored human dignity to the elderly, who were now served wine every day, and ate their meals off china instead of tin plates.

In 1975, Talozzi was elected to the Town Parliament and, in an honorary capacity, he assumed the town planning portfolio. He became honorary mayor in 1976.

He, his wife Anna Albergo and their daughter Cinzia opened a small pastry shop (*pasticceria*) in 1981. He worked out recipes for their hand-crafted pastries as, besides being a typical Tuscan gourmet, he also subjects his food and drink to scientific and philosophical analysis.

As a young man, he passionately taught himself history, literature, music and art, old and new alike. Italians, unlike their neighbours north of the Alps, traditionally link history, the present and the future.

Talozzi is an interpreter of Dante, whose poetry he can recite at length by heart. He uncovered an unexpected key to Dante's work: “Dante was a revolutionary because he revealed facts.”

Of himself he says: “I came from nowhere and had nothing, which is why I am hungry for culture.”

He is critical of many in Anghiari “ ... who are only interested in their town. We have to open up. Everything contributes to culture. There are no limits to it, everything is a challenge.”

Talozzi, the cultural philosopher, says “All evil comes from ignorance, from not knowing the problems that face us. Culture is therefore enlightenment and knowledge of our own valuable and age-old traditions, which must not be allowed to disappear.”

The Mayor's good deeds. The first craft exhibition and fair for the Upper Tiber Valley (*Mostra Mercato dell'Artigianato dell'Alta Val Tiberina*) was held in 1977, attracting visitors from all over the region.

Talozzi was in no way anti-industry, but he kept industrial development out of the sensitive area of the Old Town. Furthermore, he turned his back on competition and was prepared to see certain industries establish themselves in Sansepolcro, which can easily be reached from Anghiari, rather than

in Anghiari itself.

He was cautious in his plans for building projects on the valley floor. Above all, the area at the foot of the hill, where the Battle of Anghiari was fought in 1440, remained more or less untouched.

In 1979/1980, the gas network (*metanizzazione*) was installed. At first, no-one wanted gas central heating, but Talozzi was able to persuade the townsfolk of the environmental benefits deriving from fewer pollutants. The historic Old Town was the first to benefit.

Street lighting (*illuminazione pubblica*) was introduced in 1980/1981. It was excellently designed, and dispensed with the usual high masts and their harsh over-bright lamps. Instead, small patches of lighting enhanced the scene. The results mostly surpass other illuminated towns, and create one that is also amazingly beautiful at night.

In order to conserve the structure of the Old Town, whose historic narrow roadways were not constructed with motorised vehicles in mind, two large car parks (*parcheggi*) were built to the east and the west of it in the years 1985 and 1986. Nevertheless, many inconsiderate people take the easy way out and “drive right up to the shop counter or their own beds”.

In 1979, Campo alla Fiera (*Giardini Pubblici*) on the ridge of the hill was designed for use as a fairground.

The village streets in the surrounding countryside were surfaced with asphalt (*asfaltatura delle strade di campagna*).

One by one, the villages were linked to the mains water supply (*acquedotti nelle frazioni*).

In 1977, the old cemetery was gradually enlarged to twice its original size (*nuovo cimitero*).

Franco Talozzi managed to incorporate the schools into the historic Old Town between 1981 and 1983 (*riordinamento di tutte le scuole nel centro storico, non fare nuove, ma inserire nelle vecchie strutture*).

In 1983/84, the municipality paid 220 million lire for the rambling complex of decaying buildings that made up Palazzo Testi (in the western part of Via Taglieschi), with the aim of turning it into a boarding house for pupils at the art school. They have yet to succeed in this project – the boarding house was still being built in 2005.

With support from the Regional Government in Florence, the municipality acquired the theatre (*Teatro dei Ricomposti*) in 1984. The Municipal Technical Office (*Ufficio Tecnico Comunale*) was responsible for restoration work carried out between 1985 and 1988, and for the façade, which was restored in 1990.²⁵

In 1980/81, the Library and Municipal Archives moved to the previously acquired Palazzo Corsi on the long straight street.²⁶ Up to that time, the archives had been stored in a variety of locations, and were virtually impossible to oversee. Loris Babbini, by profession a municipal clerk at the Residents' Registration Office, and by choice a passionate amateur historian, had frequently rebelled and complained to the mayors about this lamentable state of affairs. Their reply had always been, “There's no money”.

Talozzi was the first mayor to take notice. He took up Babbini's suggestion and put it into practice. “Loris was very hard working. He gave me a lot of good advice where the history of Anghiari was concerned.” Babbini was thus one of the campaigners for the conservation of the Old Town.

In 1985/86, Talozzi ordered the opening up of the arcades in front of the Franciscan church.

In 1984, the local association “Pro Loco” (founded in 1957) was given an office on Via Matteotti, where tourists could also obtain information.

Several of the squares are now used for summer events: the Mercatale for music, Piazza Mameli for theatrical performances and music, Piazza del Popolo for dancing, films and opera.

The conservation of the *centro storico* was an extraordinary achievement. Measured by the quality of its conservation work, Anghiari was one of the most successful towns working on their historic centres at that time.

The services that look after and clean the Old Town are also excellently organised.

Modern facilities are mostly contained in historic buildings. In addition, a small number of completely new buildings were constructed outside the Old Town. In the 1980s, they built what was for its day a model kindergarten (*asilo nido*).

The location of the Palazzetto dello Sport has been controversial.

The effects. The conservation of the Old Town and the cultural programme associated with the Prize for Culture resulted in a stream of tourists visiting Anghiari (*cultura che porta turismo*). Anghiari was also lucky in that people came to value the small historic centres of Italian towns throughout the land and were gradually turning their attention away from large-scale architecture and great works of art towards historic scenes on a smaller scale.

As the town acquired flair through its history and cultural events, a number of excellent journalists, writers and artists came to make their homes there.

Franco Talozzi turned out to be one of the most intelligent and dynamic mayors in Italy. What is more, he was active in the 1970s, when Italy was going through a period of near-stagnation. For at least a decade, he was exceptional.

Incorruptible. As a person, he was incorruptible. There was never the least suspicion of corruption or self-enrichment on his part. This in itself makes him exceptional, because at that time enrichment of oneself or one's party was normal up and down the country, through the use of illegal bribes (*tangenti*), often called "second taxes". Milan famously became known as "*Tangentopoli*". Corruption was widespread in many Italian cities, including Anghiari's neighbour Sansepolcro.

Mayor Talozzi was a careful and able administrator, he took no bribes, and was above all efficient.

His auditors were always appointed as follows: one was from his party and two were taken from the opposition, so it was clear to all that he did not accept even five lire for himself. Things were different in many of the neighbouring municipalities.

Core policies. Franco Talozzi explained his policies as follows: "It's important to satisfy everyone's material needs, but it's even more important to satisfy their spiritual and moral needs. The main thing for me is community; everyone must have access to modern infrastructure – that's real democracy."

Infrastructure is not for the few, but for all. "In the south, where Democrazia Cristiana is strong, infrastructure is missing. In Agrigento, they put up villas next to the historic monuments – but there's no infrastructure.

The town we have inherited, with all its good points, is the basis for all public infrastructure. It has been handed down to us in the places we walk, what we see and what we absorb.

Before I took office, the townsfolk had failed to discover their Anghiari – that was my most important wake-up call. They discovered their town, which is reflected in the fact that many of them have restored their houses with their history in mind. They have learnt to respect the values of their home town.

This process of understanding is what I call culture. If each of us only muddles along on his own, that will end in a free-for-all. We will rely on people's folly, not on culture."

Practical philosophy. “As mayor, I’m interested in this year’s grain price. I talk to the people and see it’s good, but the farmers aren’t earning anything. Others tell me grain is subject to a somewhat damper climate on the Sovara.

I don’t ask them about grain for opportunistic reasons, nor because it’s useful for my work, but because I’m naturally curious. The mayor is a public personage, so he mustn’t sit in isolation, he must live among the people.

The party must forge ahead and lead from the front; the municipal administration must bring people together (*mediare*). The two have different rôles to play.”

“We must be better at organising life – that’s socialism.”

“The absolute will never be the same as justice.”

“The State must have laws, but it must also be tolerant.”

“The State must no longer behave like an absolute ruler. The policemen who tortured the kidnappers of General Dozier (Deputy Chief of Staff at the headquarters of NATO’s southern European land forces in Verona) were tried and convicted. That’s the way a socially minded State should behave.”²⁷

Franco Talozzi harks back to the traditions of the Enlightenment: “School is moving more and more into the public arena and away from the church.”

His education in history has taught him that society is a process, “But in the eyes of conservatives, the world is standing still.”

Talozzi’s rejects the Italian slogan “For the good of all, and harmful to none”.

“It doesn’t work”, he says, not shying away from conflict. “Conflict gave birth to the Renaissance.”

He believes in balance, however. In his view, Berlinguer was both a conservative and a revolutionary. “We should preserve what is good, but change the rest. We have to learn to distinguish between what works and what doesn’t. Compromise is a good thing, but not if it achieves the lowest common denominator. It has to be constructive.”

Where is he? If you had been looking for the mayor around the year 1980, a passer-by might have told you, “He’s on the piazza, in the bar, talking to all and sundry”. Another might have laughed and said, “He rules from the piazza”.

After a futile visit to the bar, you might have tried his wife’s pastry shop. Not finding him there, you could have discovered him at the town hall, on a Saturday morning.

To everyone’s surprise, in 1988, Mayor Talozzi bought a house in the Old Town, next to the *Badia*, in Via del Castello Antico. It was surprising, because the house had belonged to a drunkard named Monini. “It was in a dreadful state! Wine bottles and barrels littered the floor. Monini had locked himself in the wine cellar. He lay there and couldn’t get out. His neighbours had often seen him at the window. “Look at the stars!” was his cry.

Nobody wanted the house after his death.

First, Franco Talozzi attacked the jungle beside the house. The neighbours were impressed to see the mayor with a scythe in his hand. Everyone stared.

Next, he planted flowers. The neighbours did likewise. Many others decided to buy a house in the Old Town. Mayor Talozzi said, “Misery is never a question of money. It’s a matter of brains.”

He restored the house in the Tuscan way.

The Old Town as a complex monument (1980)

For centuries, the inhabitants of Central Italy have valued history as a part of their culture, sometimes doing a lot of conservation work on their monuments, sometimes less.

Collectors. In 1614, the historian Lorenzo Taglieschi pointed to the many urns, stones and pieces of ceramics with Etruscan lettering on them that had been discovered in Anghiari²⁸, and mentioned collectors of such finds.²⁹

Sensitivity towards monuments. For many years, the Porta degli Auspici formed part of the ancient town wall. The gate was built entirely of square-cut stone (*composta di pietre quadrate*). “Its construction was evidence of the magnificence of the age of Antiquity”, wrote Taglieschi in 1614. He linked it to predicting the future through the observation of birds (auspices).

Up to 1612, the gate had connected the houses at the top of the piazza belonging to Maurizio Magi and Ottavio di Antonio Giusti. The ruling magistrates, unwilling to spend money on its conservation, gave permission for its demolition in 1612. Lorenzo Taglieschi was outraged. His criticism shows he and some of his contemporaries were sensitive to sites that bore witness to history, even if others thought only of short-term gains.

Taglieschi was all the more upset at the demolition of Porta degli Auspici as grand Duke Cosimo II visited Anghiari in that same year.

The arcades on the west side of the piazza had been walled up in the 19th century in order to make room for a shop, but in 1928 the additional masonry was removed, and the arcades restored.³⁰

The town hall was repaired in 1935/36 in the wake of an earthquake, and the courtroom on the ground floor was restored. During the building work, frescoes were discovered in the hall and chapel.³¹

In 1936/39, Don Nilo Conti, the parish priest, objected to a new ceiling that was planned for the Propositura. He said its new form (*ex novo*) was inappropriate. He was also active in restoring the Badia church and re-opened it in the middle of the war.

The 8th century church of San Stefano at the foot of the hill was re-discovered and restored in 1968.

The fortress (*cassero*) was restored in 1956, with the aim of bringing new life into the Old Town. Mayor Talozzi was the prime mover in the municipality's purchase of the *cassero* in 1978, and it was he who had it converted into Leonardo da Vinci Middle School in 1993/94.

In 1973, an inventory was carried out by architects G. Corsani and G. di Benedetto of Anghiari and the surrounding district.

The Office for the Conservation of Monuments (*soprintendenza*), with Anna Maria Maetzke at its head, has done excellent work on three projects: Sant'Agostino, Palazzo Taglieschi and Palazzo del Marzocco. Special mention should also be made of the contributions of Gian Paolo Trotta, Stefano Casciu and Carla Corsi Miraglia.³²

Once in the past, Palazzo Taglieschi had been offered to the municipality, but it had not taken up the offer. Don Nilo Conti (1908-1973), the parish priest, bought it instead. From 1935 onwards, he had been unremitting in his efforts to persuade the town to turn it into a museum. He was advised by Prof. Mario Salmi, an art historian, supported by Dr Ugo Procacci, Superintendent of Monuments in Florence, and Paolo Toschi, an anthropologist. Don Nilo Conti later left the building complex to the town in his will, on condition that it be turned into a museum. The museum finally opened its doors in 1976.

The town then started a second museum project on Piazza Mameli: the Musei Statali e Cittadini, which set in train ten years of restoration work on Palazzo Angelieri (Palazzo del Marzocco). However, even after the building was ready, it took some time before they had the money or the energy to

complete the museum.

At last, on 29th June 2000, the anniversary of the Battle of Anghiari, the “Centro di Documentazione della Battaglia di Anghiari”³³ opened on the municipality-owned premises.

The town as a monument. Franco Talozzi remembers: “Soon after taking up office, I, the communist mayor, paid a visit to Don Ascani, the Catholic parish priest and author of a book on the history of Anghiari. It was June 1976.”

Talozzi then worked out his ideas and made a list of buildings and the most important data concerning them. On 13th February 1977, he presented them to the Town Council, a body that was used to running Anghiari on a day-to-day basis, but unpractised in looking far into the future. Talozzi lectured them for an hour on the subject of “The historic Old Town – our cultural heritage”.³⁴

In short, he said, “Conservation and refurbishment are closely connected. If we understand what we are doing, it will be easier to refurbish a building, the quality will be better. Tourism and culture in general will be the beneficiaries.

We are not making the most of our assets as we should. We need a new vision.

Tourism is also a source of money for our economy.

We must see our heritage as a whole and participate in it. This will require more than just looking at things in the usual way, superficially. We are talking about an entire piece of work created by men and women.

Tourism will only take hold in our town if we restore it structurally. This is a task for town planners, and we hold the necessary tools in our hands.

In Anghiari we have a priceless heritage. The old town centre is almost completely untouched, because its inhabitants have never left it. They have also restored its structures in a sensible way, unlike what others have done to the centres of many large towns, where they have acted thoughtlessly and hastily, doing away with valuable structures and civil, cultural and human traditions

We have to act now, otherwise our heritage will degenerate too. Some things are necessary and urgent.

At the same time, we need clubs and leisure facilities. We must provide more space for our only higher educational establishment, the Istituto d'Arte, which specialises in the restoration of wood and furniture. We must focus on Palazzo Corsi, the Teatro dei Ricomposti, Fattoria Bartolomei [near San Antonio] and the *cassero* [fortress].

We have but slender means, as we live in a permanent economic crisis.”

In order to back up his view of past, present and future forming a whole, Mayor Talozzi quoted T.S. Eliot: “Time present and time past/ Are both perhaps present in time future,/ And time future contained in time past.”

The Mayor appealed to schools and clubs.

He was critical of how the archives – a municipal treasure – were stored, and praised the voluntary work done by the archivist Loris Babbini. Talozzi, a communist, reminded his listeners of Palazzo Taglieschi and of what they owed to the late Reverend Nilo Conti, without whom the Palazzo would not exist. He mentioned the opening of the museum by the historian and Minister for Culture, Giovanni Spadolini.

At this time, Anghiari had nothing to offer the tourist in the way of guide books or other publications. Talozzi wanted tourist services to start up and brochures to be printed. He proposed co-operation with *Ente Provinciale del Turismo*, the provincial tourist agency, the *Sovrintendenza*, the

Office for the Conservation of Historical Monuments in Arezzo, *Pro Loco*, the local society, and the Istituto d'Arte. Beside the municipal archives, there were also those of the Confraternità di Santa Maria del Borghetto, the Misericordia and the Ospedale.³⁵

Before his lecture, Franco Talozzi had been unsure of his listeners' reactions. What would the town councillors say? Like councillors everywhere, they tended to spend their time on trivial matters.

Silence.

Then up spoke the Christian Democrat Giuseppe Bartolomei, a member of parliament in Rome who had four times held ministerial office.³⁶ He congratulated the communist Mayor on his "admirable piece of work".

A taboo had been broken.

All parties were in agreement.

The Building Code (1980). A Building Code was issued for the Old Town.³⁷ It designated the entire area a "restoration zone" (*zone di recupero*) in accordance with section 27 of Law 457 of 1978.

An area designated as "A" is assessed as homogeneous. Owners of buildings within this area are not allowed to alter any architectural features or add any new ones. The type, structure and form of a house are strictly protected. Any inappropriate additions have to be removed.

This extraordinary conservation measure allows for the construction of sanitary and technical installations, but only those that do not impinge upon the building.

Any alterations must be carried out using prescribed materials.

Certain other materials are banned; windows and doors must not be enlarged; no new openings may be made in walls; porches, cladding and neon signs are not allowed; numerous restrictions are placed on details. All this is aimed at conserving or reconstructing the historical appearance of the town.

Furthermore, a building may not be used in a way that might detract from it aesthetically.

The Building Code expressly mentions and permits the reconstruction of the mediaeval arcades [...] on the main square. Over thirty years have passed but, sadly, nothing has been done about them.

Supervision lies with the municipality, the Sovrintendenza, who bear responsibility for public buildings, and the Environment Commission (Commissione Beni Ambientale).

The entire historic Old Town, covering an area of four hectares and inhabited by 1,500 persons, has been listed. The restrictions imposed on listed buildings are imposed without compromise, otherwise one exception would lead to another. The result is that Anghiari is (outwardly) one of the most intact small towns in Italy.

Blots on their copybook. A pub was allowed to open on Via Garibaldi. Prior to 1992, "no parking" rules were seldom enforced by the municipal police for populist reasons; since then, they have not been enforced at all.

Restoration work/conservation of public monuments. Mayor Talozzi instituted a policy of uncovering or restoring building fabric that had been painted over or fallen into disrepair through ignorance or indifference.

Extensive restoration work was carried out on Palazzo Taglieschi (Piazza Mameli), Palazzo Corsi (bought by the municipality pre-1900 and housing the municipal library and the administrative office of the Culture Prize), Palazzo del Comune (the Town Hall), houses on Piazza del Popolo (below the Town Hall), the theatre and the fortress (*cassero*), which the municipality bought in 1978 and turned into Leonardo da Vinci Middle School in 1993/94).³⁸ The arcades in front of the Franciscan church of Santa Croce, built in 1595 but closed with masonry in 1853, were restored.

The art school and the Middle School were two facilities that moved into, and made use of, old buildings.

Methane-fired central heating was installed throughout the Old Town in order to protect the buildings and the environment.

One important building was left standing empty in the Old Town for many years. This ridiculous state of affairs concerned the monastery of Sant'Agostino after its dissolution. It was floodlit at night, but not used during the day.

The Town Hall as a living museum. Mayor Talozzi ordered restoration work to be carried out on the Town Hall³⁹, turning it into a small museum. The *vicario's* room (now the mayor's office) was restored between 1984 and 1988, as were the ground-floor chapel and the prisons.

The painting of Justice (attributed to Antonio d'Anghiari and painted around 1460) in the ground-floor courtroom was uncovered and restored.⁴⁰

In the Council Chamber, the following works of art were restored: the Adoration of St. Mary Magdalene (done in the 16th century in the style of Cristoforo Allori); a wooden crucifix from the old courtroom; a marble bust of Blessed Bartolomeo Magi (novice master in the Franciscan monastery of La Verna; he was born in Anghiari and died in Empoli; his body was brought to Anghiari in 1603 amid great solemnity); a marble bust of Giuseppe Garibaldi that was formerly in the base of the first monument to be erected in Italy (1883) after his death. It was replaced by a bronze statue sculpted by Pietro Guerri of Montevarchi in 1914.

The painter Fausto Vagnetti (1876-1954), professor for drawing from nature at the Faculty of Architecture in Rome, presented the municipality with a number of his paintings now hanging on the walls of the Council Chamber and known as the “1954 Fausto Vagnetti Trust”.⁴¹

The *vicario's* room contains the greatest number of traces of past history, with objects dating back to the first *vicario's* days, shortly after 1385.

Culture in a small town: the international Culture Prizes (from 1979)

In places like Tuscany, where the whole population has enjoyed a long and rich cultural history, and genuine culture has affected everyone and all aspects of life, politicians and administrators have a tendency to sit back and rest on their laurels. For this reason, there is not much in the way of specific cultural policy, even in large Tuscan cities.

Anghiari was an exception to this rule for a number of years.

History of the foundation. Duilio Pallottelli, a journalist and photographer with the magazine “L'Europeo” and an acquaintance of Franco Talozzi, owned a house in neighbouring Monterchi. One day in 1978, on the piazza in Anghiari, he introduced the journalist and author Gian Franco Vené to Talozzi.

“We had a talk. Vené had fallen in love with the Old Town and its typical features. At the time, he was staying in Castello di Sorci. I had my first brainwave while we were chatting on the piazza, which was to organise a conference on Pablo Neruda, whom I very much admire.

That never happened, but Vené listened to my idea and suggested instituting a prize for culture. I followed his suggestion up, and in 1979 we founded the “Culture Prize of Anghiari” (*Premio Internazionale di Cultura Città di Anghiari*).”

Mayor Talozzi was the president, Gian Franco Vené was responsible for the programme.

Hardly any objections were raised in Anghiari although, as usual, some in the administration did grumble about the expense. Franco Testerini, president of Pro Loco, signed up immediately, as did Fabiano Giabbanelli and Professor Daniele Finzi.

The idea. Franco Talozzi said, “When Gian Franco Vené and I were working on the idea of a prize for culture, I was motivated by curiosity.

There are any number of prizes for literature in Italy, but this one is unique in its scope. What is special about it is that it's a prize for culture, a fact that lends structure to municipal cultural policy all year round.

We're no longer dealing with a bunch of ignorant peasants,” – this from a communist mayor – “yesterday's peasants are today's businessmen. The solicitor is the son of a woodcutter from the hills, but many of them haven't changed their mindset.

You have to find the right language, depending on your addressee. Not for opportunistic reasons, or because you like someone, but because language is more than mere communication of facts. Certain experiences colour the words we choose. And what's more, language is a special form of communication, one that I want to appreciate, engage with or acknowledge, activate and intensify.

At first, it was hard to use the word “culture”. People were embarrassed, even though they have a genuine and great culture. When they heard the word “culture”, they looked to far-away places, to Florence, or the heavens.”

A broad spectrum. The Culture Prize was in fact not one single prize, but 30 prizes divided into three categories. Prizes were awarded for ideas. “Anyone can have an idea. Everyone can appreciate an idea.”

The first category dealt with politico-historical problems, the second with journalistic photography and the third with ideas in films, television, books and many other things besides. For example, a prize was awarded to the Commission to reform the Law of Criminal Procedure in recognition of the act of parliament they drafted.

Juries. “No-one would come unless we were absolutely serious,” said Gian Franco Vené “That's why we asked our nearest university, the University of Urbino, for their support and participation. Thirteen university teachers were asked, for instance, to name the book that had benefited them and their students the most in the past year. All thirteen books received a prize.

The grand jury consisted of ten academics and ten workers. They selected the main prize winner.”

Participation. Talozzi and Vené used all their ingenuity to find members – ranging from schoolteachers to young people – to sit on one of the many commissions. “They all do something, be they mechanics or builders.”

The structures are highly complex, reflecting the Tuscans' love of drawing in large numbers of people – they would involve the whole piazza if they could – omitting nobody, whatever his world-view, whatever party he belonged to. This is a continuation of the democracy practised in the communes of the Middle Ages.

Talozzi described his governance thus: “We avoid quarrelling, quarrelling is unhelpful. Moreover, everyone has his rights. When the parish priest asked for financial help, he got it. That's how we Italian communists work. We manage our difficulties. I know very well how to get things done, but I can't act alone.”

Forced to fight his way through a thicket of complexities and a host of difficulties, the secretary responsible for the Prize, Fabiano Giabbanelli, was often at his wits' end. After a while, he gave up.

One secretary followed the other. “So what?”, said Talozzi, ever optimistic, “That's Italy for you. Our aim is not to work without friction; rather, we want the greatest number of participants.”

Budget. As the cultural secretary Gianfranco Giorni explained, the municipality did not have much money. The annual budget for culture at that time was equivalent to 200,000 euros in present-day money. Anghiari spent more on culture than other places.

The Culture Prize accounted for 180,000 euros of that budget. However, there was no actual prize money. The thirty winners were presented with valuable objects produced by local artisans: artefacts crafted in wood, fabric or wickerwork. All these crafts play an important part in Anghiari's economic life and are a source of the people's pride in their local traditions. An external commission selected the prizes, in order to avoid corruption.

The winner's apartment. The main winner was allowed to live in Anghiari for one year, first in Castello di Sorci, later in an apartment owned by the municipality. The winner was allowed to spread his stay over a period of up to ten years. This meant every year he had somewhere to retire to, and write or work. The apartment (7 Piazza Mameli) has been excellently restored and is one of the most beautiful in town.

Giorgio Manzini, the first winner, spent a month in Anghiari with his wife, year after year. He contributed to many thoughtful discussions until his early death in 1991.

Prize-giving ceremony. The prize giving was the main event in the municipal calendar. It took place on the first Sunday in May, and was followed by the Craft Exhibition, also initiated by Talozzi.

Tuscan folk culture also put in an appearance in the Council Chamber – an improvised and polemical debate in rhyme, followed by the presentation of prizes. Its origins can be traced back to the tradition of poet-peasants who, from the Middle Ages on, held (sometimes cultural) debates with their landlords.

The politico-cultural structure of Anghiari. The Culture Prize lent structure to the Anghiari cultural scene. Many of the prize winners, but also the external members of the jury and the adjudicators, came to attend lectures and discussions in the Council Chamber, which was often filled with an audience of up to 400. For the most part, the speakers were not paid a fee.

The topics of the lectures and discussions were wide ranging. Giorgio Manzini gave a thoughtful talk on terrorism, also mentioning the way it was being exploited by politicians and the secret services. Another topic was cancer prevention and its social aspects. The journalist Ruggiero Orlandi spoke on “America – an end to hope”. The writer Camilla Cederna's accusations brought down President Leone. Giulio Tarro described the problems facing Naples. Another topic was political thrillers. The Reverend David Maria Turaldo read “La mia poesia – della resistenza alla profetia”. Franco Basaglia, who abolished the mental hospitals, was another speaker. Other speakers included the heart surgeon Gaetano Azzolina and the historian Giuseppe Boffa, who wrote a critical history of the Soviet Union. Other topics covered were government policy on newspapers, cartoonists working for a major newspaper, the Mafia and the Camorra, eight centuries of St. Francis of Assisi, and the sciences of the future. The lone sailor Ambrogio Fogar described his South American odyssey. Giuseppe Bartolomei, the Christian Democrat Minister for Agriculture and a native of Anghiari, spoke on agriculture.⁴² Minister Zamberletti was another speaker, as were Mayor Carlo Tognoli of Milan (a difficult city) and Susanna Agnelli. Paolo Spriano, the historian and member of the Italian communist party, came, as did Pietro Ingrao, a communist party theoretician, who held a big conference. Giuseppe Fiori, the author of an excellent book on Antonio Gramsci, took part in a debate. Luigi Pintor, founder and editor of the

communist daily *Il Manifesto*, answered questions. The actress and television journalist Catherine Spaak spoke about her life and work.

The guest speakers came from a wide range of party backgrounds. Paolo Spriani, the historian, and Pietro Ingrao were both members of the communist party. Mayor Susanna Agnelli was also the sister of the boss of Fiat. Minister Zamberletti was a Christian Democrat. Padre David was a member of the resistance and a social democrat.

The Culture Prizes spread the fame of the small town of Anghiari.

The prize winners in the category of history and politics were: Giorgio Manzini (1979) for “*Indagini su un brigatista rosso*”;⁴³ Giuseppe Boffa (1980) for “*Storia dell'Unione Sovietica*”; Umberto Eco (1981) for “*Il nome della rosa*” (it was the first of the many prizes he was awarded for the novel); the Cuban Carlos Franqui (1982) for “*I miei anni con Fidel*”; Billa Zanuso (1983) for “*La nascita della psicoanalisi*”; Roberto Guiucci (1984) for “*I giovani e il futuro*”; Nando dalla Chiesa (1985) for “*Delitto imperfetto. Il generale, la mafia, la società italiana*”; Alvise Zorzi (1986) for “*Venezia austriaca*”; Arrigo Petacco (1987) for “*I ragazzi del '44*”; Beppe Del Colle (1988) for “*Olga e Gorbaciov. Mille anni di cristianesimo in Russia*”.

Prizes in other categories included: Cesare Brandi for his work on conservation and restoration; Pedro Meyer (1984) for his photography;⁴⁴ Federico Fouquet for his fashion work in the previous fifty years; Silvio Garattini for his scientific research, and Tonino Guerra for his poetry and writings.

A congress. Umberto Eco, the 1981 winner of the prize, used it to organise an international congress entitled “*Piero teorico dell'arte. Semilogia di Piero della Francesca*”, held in the theatre from 5th to 8th May 1983.⁴⁵

Gian Franco Vené (1935-1992) grew up in Liguria. He was meant to follow in his father's footsteps and become an engineer in a dockyard. He had other ideas, however, and became a journalist in Milan. He worked as a war reporter in Vietnam, Cambodia, Israel and Biafra, changed newspapers for the fun of it fifteen times, and then took charge of the Rome office of the political magazine Panorama as one of its editors-in-chief. He wrote several important books: “*Letteratura e capitalismo in Italia dal settecento ad oggi*” (Literature and capitalism from the 18th century to the present); “*Pirandello Fascista*” (Pirandello as a fascist); “*L'ideologia piccolo borghese*” (*Petit bourgeois* ideology); “*Cronaca e storia della marcia su Roma*” (on Mussolini's seizure of power). Two further works on the same subject are “*Pena di morte*” (a novel), and later “*La notte di Villarbasse: a sangue freddo nell'Italia del '45*” (Milan 1990) on a bloodbath and the last execution to take place in Italy.

Giorgio Strehler staged one of his plays. A children's book tells the tale of a dog who refuses to be shot after the poison scandal in Seveso and engages in guerilla warfare.

In about 1980, Vené converted a barn left to him into a study and holiday home.⁴⁶ He then used his earnings from a best seller to buy a house in the Old Town, next door to Franco Talozzi.

Vené wrote a three-volume work on the social history of Italy: “*Vita quotidiana degli Italiani 1920-1960. Mille lire al mese – Coprifuoco – Vola colomba*”).

His final manuscript was left unfinished due to his untimely death. It was intended as a counterpart to Umberto Eco's “Name of the rose” and dealt with the difficulty of investigating historical facts. The story was to be about a German professor [in fact the author of this book], who comes to Anghiari, only to encounter unusual dimensions to his quest. The title Vené chose was “*Un milione di anni*” (A million years).

Vené gave the manuscript to Talozzi to read.

A few days later he suffered a severe headache. He drove to Milan for a medical examination, where he was diagnosed as having a brain tumour. Vené retired from everyday life, like Giorgio Manzini one year before him, not wanting to suffer in the presence of others, even refusing to see his best friends. Friends are exhorted on Italian headstones to remember the departed as they had been when in their prime. Vené died and was buried in Anghiari.

Two of a kind. Having found each other, Vené and Talozzi were destined to collaborate. The former said “A culture prize like this can only function with a mayor like him.” He conceded, “The party as such didn’t contribute much.”

The attraction of Anghiari. Gian Franco Vené brought important persons with him, people he knew well from his work as a journalist.

A good number of Italian and German intellectuals were attracted to the town by its flair. “We’re only as short as a pencil – which is why we need others.”

In 1982, Mayor Talozzi invited Romano Mussolini, the dictator’s son, to Anghiari. He was a jazz pianist, which was his way of protesting against a father who could not stand jazz.

Elmer Gill, a black jazz pianist based in Canada, played in the theatre on a number of occasions. After a performance, he would relax on the piazza. He was so fond of Anghiari that he asked for his ashes to be buried in the cemetery there, a wish that was granted after his death in 2004.

The famous Roberto Benigni joined others on the piazza to sing verses in *ottava rima*.⁴⁷ The cabaret artiste Milly also appeared, putting on shows like “A woman’s history” (*Storia di una donna*) and doing anti-fascist turns. Francesco Guccini, a bard from the 1968 generation, gave a gripping performance in the theatre.

Archives. The archives contain photographic and other material related to the *premio*, but at the time of writing (2004) they were not being properly kept.

Decline and fall. The culture prizes have fallen into disuse since 1988, because the politicians involved in its administration have spent their time fighting each other over everyday issues and have failed to invest sufficient energy in cultural activities. In the 1980s, inquisitive minds wasted away.

Events

An exhibition all over town (1980). In 1980, 28 photographers and painters put on an exhibition in Anghiari, both in the Town Hall and at various sites in the town. They included Kuro (Walter Kurowski), one of the most important German caricaturists, and Alfred Schmidt, an artist who spent 25 years down the mines.⁴⁸ Lengths of fabric on which Alfred Schmidt had printed enlargements of the drawings he did underground were hung on the walls of houses all over the town – a most impressive sight.

At least three exhibitions were held every year, for example the *Premio internazionale di cultura città di Anghiari, concorso internazionale per giovani incisori*. (The 1987 exhibition of young engravers’ work.)

A magazine (1981). The journalist Saverio Tutino, who worked for *Repubblica* and *Unità* for many years and who made Anghiari his home, started a magazine under the editorship of Roberto Santi called “*Diario di Piazza Baldaccio*”.⁴⁹ Severino Tutino was an experienced man of advancing years, one of the intellectuals who had been attracted by the Culture Prize; he joined forces with wide-awake young people. Unfortunately, their enthusiasm was short-lived.

Summer Academy (1983). From 10th July to 1st August 1983, Anghiari hosted its Summer Academy. The participants, numbering about 60, mostly came from Cologne and had been involved in various citizens' action groups in that city. Some were from the Netherlands.

Paolo Mariotti of the Rural District Council (Comunità Montana) placed a house at the participants' disposal in aptly named Germagno. During the day, they worked in the Alpe della Luna, which belong to the High Apennines, and also in Anghiari and Sansepolcro.

Forestry was taught by Geom. Pavesi; Paolo Mariotti instructed them on attempts at re-forestation, Professor Vittorio Dini (University of Siena-Arezzo) on agriculture in decline: its visible traces and as recorded in the archives.

Heinrich Dreidoppel and Monika Wildt-Dreidoppel organised wall painting on Piazza del Popolo in Anghiari.

The participants experienced at first hand the popular protest against the closure of the Ospedale.

Klaus Spitzer displayed the results of the Academy in Galleria Magi on the main square.

Joint parties were held for Germans and Italians.

The participants held a reunion at Cologne Fire Station on 19th November 1983.

Building on experience. The most interesting task was that tackled by the team comprising the architect Andries van Wijngaarden (Rotterdam), Christian Schaller (Cologne), Norbert Post (Dortmund), the media expert Sonja de Leeuw (Utrecht), and the cultural scholar Roland Günter (Oberhausen). They set out to plan a new district that would meet the same criteria as the Old Town, but would take contemporary town planning into account and use modern technology.

The group developed the idea of creating space for today's individualists inside, and space for them to socialise outside. They gained insight into the social values of exterior spaces through their awareness of the town's history. It is a fact that the old quarters of the town have a much richer interior structure than the new. Forward-looking town planners should aim to reach this same standard.

The group discovered that their concept would meet present-day planning requirements, including provisions under building law, thus giving the lie to the usual excuses. They presented their results in the form of a model and plans, which were put on display under the arcades of Galleria Magi.

These exciting new ideas were also directed against those who would build an urban sprawl all over the countryside, instead of using existing potential.

Unfortunately their proposals were not followed up. No-one from Anghiari or the surrounding district, no politicians or members of the administration, showed any interest.

The hospital. In 1983, the hospital in the former Franciscan monastery was closed down.

Its advantage was that it enjoyed a central location. The sick could be tended by their relatives, who often brought them food, as in the Middle Ages. Patients could eat well in familiar surroundings. On the other hand, some of the medical equipment was no longer of a high enough standard, and a better hospital was available in Sansepolcro.

Bitter conflict. Protests took the form of sit-ins at the Town Hall. There were turbulent Council meetings attended by a wide range of people, and with many speeches from the public. The municipality promised to set up an in-patient facility for non-serious cases.

They did not keep their promise. Are politicians and civil servants immune from keeping their promises?

Field trips. Universities in Bielefeld and Hamburg made several field trips to Anghiari.

In 1993, the Department of Town Planning and Architecture at the University of Karlsruhe held a

year-long seminar on the subject of Anghiari, including a core “on-the-spot workshop”.

Twenty students researched under the guidance of Martin Einsele, Roland Günter, Michael Peterek and Darko Stevcic. They met for daily working sessions in the grand Town Hall Council Chamber. Two Italian experts were also involved: the town planner Stefania Bolletti (Comune di Anghiari) and Professor Gian Franco Di Pietro (University of Florence). A book was produced detailing the results of the seminar.⁵⁰

The method used to examine the town and analyse its morphology had been developed by Martin Einsele over many years. It combines a study of the geography of the locality with that of its buildings.

Parco Tiberina: an innovative tourist project fails

Planning began in 1987; work should have started in 1996; it could have been ready by Easter 1998. The plan was for a complex project beside a reservoir five kilometres from the Old Town, near a village in Anghiari Rural District Council called Albiano. It was intended as a tourist resort and international meeting place, a location for congresses, sport, and holidays.

The Tiber Lake as a catalyst. A dam had been built on the Tiber at this spot to the north of Anghiari to catch irrigation water for farms in the Chiana Valley near Arezzo. Water is scarce in inland Italy, with the result that its small number of lakes act as tourist magnets.

Furthermore, no municipality is allowed to tip untreated sewage into the new Tiber Lake, so the water is subject to unusually close inspection. No motor-driven vessels are allowed on the lake, which results in reduced levels of noise.

The terrain. The soil on the slopes is poor, and much of it has been washed away. The only vegetation is low bushes and, in some places, scrubland. It is therefore not used for agricultural purposes. From an ecological point of view, the land is undeveloped. There are similar vast areas of *maquis* all over the region; they are so extensive that – aesthetically – they become rather monotonous.

The valley floor at the foot of the reservoir has been of little or no importance for many years. The fields have been given over to monoculture, often maize that is heavily sprayed. As a whole, the area is uninteresting, or has been going downhill for 30 years. Finally, the dyke that was built up in stages is, to put it mildly, not exactly beautiful. Therefore, the project could only have improved the terrain.

Albiano is a hamlet on a gently sloping hill, 373 metres above sea level. To the west of it lie the Monte Rognosi, the historic “iron mountains”.

Location. As a place of this kind cannot be incorporated into the historic structure of an old town, and as it is obviously in the midst of the countryside, its spatial separation from the Old Town is an advantage. Moreover, the distance between it and the Old Town can easily be covered on foot, or by bicycle or shuttle bus.

Those who favoured the project trusted in their ability to come up with new ideas and give each other inspiration. They hoped the planned facility would cultivate the existing structures in the town and fill them with life, and that the project's programmes would be of interest to the locals.

The land. Bruno Buitoni, the owner of the property, had inherited the land from his uncle Marco. Bruno and his siblings were the last generation of their family. He had been the owner of the Buitoni pasta factory in Sansepolcro, which the family sold to Paolo Benedetti in the 1980s; he in turn sold it on to Nestlé two years later.

Project management. Bruno Buitoni joined forces with a Swiss businessman, Erwin Reichlin of

Zug, who was a specialist in this field. Reichlin developed the plans that formed the basis for the complex planning permission procedure, so-called “re-zoning”. Thus far, they were successful. The promoter then set about marketing the project, in order to attract a group of investors. This was not easy, as the economic situation had deteriorated.

Comparable projects were not altogether new in Tuscany. In the Garfagnana region, a project was set up by the Marcucci family within sight of the small town of Barga (to the north of Lucca). The Marcucci had earned a fortune from their bread factory in Chicago, then used their money to found “Il Ciocco” (named after a poem by Giovanni Pascoli⁵¹, who owned a summer house there). It is exemplary because of the way it blends into the Tuscan landscape. In the Chianti area there are some smaller tourist destinations like Gargonza and Montaione, a holiday village and golf course.

The Albiano project was intended to cover an area of two square kilometres, split up into several sections. A four-star hotel was to be built next to the historic Villa Buitoni, which stood in a small park. The hotel was to be two storeys high and to have 180 rooms, two restaurants, a multi-function conference room, and indoor and outdoor swimming pools.

The best Tuscan *ambiente* was to be found at the most beautiful spot – a plateau with views over the valley and a mediaeval tower house as its focal point. A “romantic restaurant” was to be built there, and a small four-star hotel with 32 rooms and a distinctive décor.

Large stretches of the area, nestling in the hollow of a former quarry, were to be dedicated to sporting activities: golf, tennis and equestrian sports, including show jumping, dressage, driving and polo.

Forty houses and 80 apartments were to be built at suitable locations, both as permanent residences and for holidaymakers.

A firm of architects, Studio Dipla S.p.A. (Spadolini, Guerrieri, Fagnoni) of Florence were commissioned to design the hotels, riding centre and residential buildings, and ordered to preserve the *genius loci*, build on local traditions, and create a genuinely “Tuscan” experience.

Scale of the project. The facility would have provided about 400 jobs for the locals, a figure arrived at by applying the hotel sector's usual method of calculation: a 400-bed, four-star hotel requires a staff of 400. Anghiari and the Upper Tiber Valley would also have benefited permanently from increased sales. “Parco Tiberina” would have become the third largest economic factor in the area after the Buitoni factory and the Sansepolcro municipal administration.

Key players. The ensuing heated debates came as no surprise. Storms were brewing in Anghiari due to the locals' self-sufficiency and scepticism regarding any ideas but their own.

The town planner Stefania Bolletti recalled, “Initially the people were horrified when they realised how big the project was intended to be. It was completely new to them. All previous projects had concerned a few houses, or perhaps one street. Now they were being confronted with the fact that a new town was to be built, the same size as the historic town centre. This brought about an identity crisis. Once again, they were afraid of what was new and different.”

The project went ahead for some time thanks to Erwin Reichlin, the promoter, and Mayor Franco Talozzi.

Talozzi realised how exciting the undertaking was. Reichlin, coming from one of the original three Swiss cantons (Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden in 1291), was not easily scared off and, unlike others in similar circumstances, refused to give up.

The process. Talozzi stuck with the project on its long journey through the higher echelons of

bureaucracy. Reichlin persevered, even though the press had already written it off. Both men took the concerns raised by environmentalists seriously, and amended the project three times.

A Tuscan dream. Talozzi, without whom historic Anghiari would not have been preserved in the way it has been, was convinced the “Parco” would blend in with its surroundings.

He and the promoter came to trust each other. They shared a belief in a project that was not to be any old tourist facility, but a piece of, and a gateway to, Tuscany itself.

Marketing a unique culture. The Swiss investor's marketing concept was directed at travellers who, having turned their backs on standardised mass tourism, were looking for an experience of a different kind. His aim was to open the region up to guests, and introduce them to typical Tuscan countryside. His promotional material contained textual explanations and pictures of the Buitoni villa, the Tiber Lake, water management, the *maquis*, Montedoglio, the Tiber and its floodplain, the hillside hamlets.

The project buildings and spaces were to be designed in the typical Tuscan manner, which can also be done in contemporary style, as there are excellent architects in Tuscany who are skilled at blending the traditional with the modern. All this was explained in the promotional material.

The guests were to get to know the Tuscan way of life, including local food and drink.

There was to be a network of footpaths, cycle routes and bridle paths. Maps detailing these and motorised excursions were to hang in the hotel lobby. The guests would find well-written and informative presentations along the way, for instance one describing the structure of the hillside hamlets.

How it was supposed to be. Anghiari was on the doorstep. Nearby Sansepolcro was where Piero della Francesca lived. Michelangelo's birthplace, Caprese Michelangelo, was not far away. The hotel would have supplied photocopied material on all of these. Anghiari would provide them with a typical example of life in a small Tuscan town. The guests would gain insights into the high-quality craftsmanship of weavers at Busatti, and of silversmiths, furniture makers and restorers.

The equestrian centre was to contain information boards detailing the cultural history of horse riding. Guests would have been able to follow tales of horses and their riders from ancient times, through the Middle Ages, to the present, with descriptions of routes and information on places of interest. In time, display boards would be set up along the bridle paths.

Provision had also been made for similar information on the cultural history of other types of sport (golf and water sports).

The view from the golf course of the ridge and the hillside hamlets would be beautiful.

Pictures would await the visitor, and intelligently written texts would be displayed in foyers and entrance halls. The rooms – named Giotto, Dante, Boccaccio – would be immediately recognisable; even some less well-known Tuscans like Coluccio Salutati would have a room named after them.

The guests would enjoy a Parco d'Arte and its annual sculpture symposium. Who knows? – the remains of the gravel pit might have been turned into a work of art.

Political repercussions from the Albiano project

Intrigue. Giovanni Gorizi, president of the Rural District Council, taking orders from politicians in Sansepolcro, decided to set up a central landfill site at Montedoglio – right next to the Albiano project.

This was a classic example of a plot to scotch the project. Who ever would invest funds in a high-

class tourist project next to a rubbish dump? The nonsensical plan ran into troubles of its own, however, as the Tiber might have become contaminated due to folds in the surface of the terrain that led to various springs.

Divisions. The Albiano project had political repercussions – politicians were divided.

Mayor Talozzi was a politician in the mould of Gorbachev; he even looked like him. His decisions were based on practical considerations; he acted in a pragmatic and unorthodox manner. In 1989, the Communist Party of Arezzo ordered him to drop the project.

No reason was given. Talozzi presumed the comrades in the larger city of Arezzo were motivated by envy, wanting a similar project themselves. As Talozzi believed in the project, he refused to submit to a party *diktat* delivered by incompetent persons under pressure from their peers.

The communist party interpreted his refusal as disobedience. It threw him and his allies out of the party.

Talozzi stands as an independent. He did not do as he was told, but announced that he and his supporters would stand as independent candidates in municipal elections.

They chose the lily as their party symbol, and succeeded in polling 1,000 votes, or 22 per cent. The communists suffered a spectacular loss, dropping from 56 to 30 per cent; the Christian Democrats polled 23 per cent; the socialists failed to make much impact.

This altered the distribution of seats and party alliances dramatically. Talozzi entered a coalition with DC and the socialists, meaning the communists were in opposition for the first time. The coalition re-elected Talozzi as mayor, but agreed that a mayor from the other side would take over half-way through the term of office. In 1990, Talozzi therefore resigned, as agreed, after a total of 14 years in power. This was the longest term of office in centuries.

Decline and fall. After this, it was “all change” – each of the parties looked to its own.

In the summer of 1992, the socialists withdrew from the coalition before time.

Talozzi had made enemies during the years of stagnation on account of his determination to carry out an important project.

Moreover, the socialist Roberto Santi had a score to settle with Talozzi. The younger Santi neurotically felt the need to prove himself in the presence of his older rival.

Talozzi had also done himself no favour by adopting a Hamlet-like pose; he had often been on the brink of giving up during the previous five years.

As so often, politics – with a logic of its own – descended into group dynamics, and lacked any meaningful content. Many fail to speak of Talozzi's achievements and the indelible mark they left on Anghiari, mentioning instead the serious mistake he made in the struggle for power.

Franco Talozzi's own comment was, “I'm rebelling against party ideologies. And against the idiotic assertion that I betrayed the PCI. Above all, I'm rebelling against the senseless tendency to solve a problem not by referring to its subject matter, but by seeking an easy solution from within an ideological framework.”

One more attempt. In 1993, they tried once again to align the parties of the left with the independents, and to elect Franco Talozzi as mayor. The plan failed in the face of the old communists' “no”. They refused to enter into a coalition with the Christian Democrats or with Franco Talozzi. “They will never forgive him for having helped a Christian Democrat mayor to stay in power for five months.”

Limited success and the end of the Albiano project. The regional government gave permission

for the Albiano development plan (*piano regolatore*) to go ahead, subject to a series of amendments. The communists now lied, saying they had always been in favour of it.

However, in 1994, a serious financial crisis hit the Far East and Taiwan. The financiers backing Albiano withdrew their funding. The promoter, Mr Reichlin, said the project would be put on hold, where it has remained ever since.

Talozzi goes private. True, he suffered two bitter defeats, but even his friends have failed to understand how a political heavyweight like Franco Talozzi could depart for the private sector.

First, he went to Russia, hoping to start a wholesale mushroom business. He was unsuccessful.

For a time, he and his wife ran an eating place out in the country, on the way to Toppole, to cater for forestry workers, hunters and weekend trippers. Talozzi kept a large garden, which he cultivated scientifically. He went hunting, revisiting his childhood on Lake Chiusi. He wrote “I racconti della palude”, which earned him a prize for literature.

He can do whatever he turns his hand to.

Talozzi non redux. He could have remained at the helm for years, and ruled well, because the significance of political parties declined rapidly after 1991. A large majority of the population would have continued to elect him.

They regretted his departure. Time and again, he was invited to stand as a candidate. The amended municipal constitution provides for the mayor to be elected directly by the people, he thus no longer requires the support of a majority in the municipal parliament. He could have got a lot done without reference to the parties.

But Talozzi's problems lie with himself rather than with others. Even in the later years of his mayoralty, he went into visible decline, becoming tired and listless. He is not the man to stay the course. He can set things in motion, but is not an administrator. It remains a mystery why he failed to take up any other tasks.

Furthermore, politics in Italy largely takes place at the speech-making level. When things actually got done, they failed to cause many ripples. Sometimes Talozzi himself seemed unimpressed.

Problems of local government. After his resignation, he rightly criticised the poor quality of politics and administration. “They're incapable of seeing problems in their proper context and are unwilling to solve them.” “They're narrow minded, unaware of the fact that the cultural policies they have allowed to lapse serve to enhance the image of the town, and that such policies require continuity.”

Democracy has run into trouble because people have high expectations of the sophisticated system they live in. “They want the lot, but are not prepared to do anything.”

Decision makers are unwilling to acquire specialist skills. Then they put off making decisions because they are afraid. In the end, democracy fails to work any differently from an authoritarian system. Things will only improve when we get competent decision makers. It is a question of social culture.

Franco Talozzi is critical of the way politicians behave. “Politicians often have the equivalent of no table manners.”

Frithjof Hager sums the problem up as follows: “Those at the top are incapable of doing what they do do, and those under them fail to do what they could do.”

Decline of a great idea. “The politicians themselves are the greatest impediment”, says Franco Talozzi, “When a politician talks about allowing others to have their say, he nearly always means he's

stopping his neighbour from doing the things he doesn't do himself. And what's *he* doing? Nothing. He says, "Others will stop him." The result? Total control over inaction. As all this takes place on the back of majority decisions, politicians call the process democratic.

That's a parody of a great idea!

None of them have any real ideas."

These are ancient failings, as Niccolò Machiavelli well knew. In Florence too, it was a case of dog eat dog. *Sono faziosi*, people say. They are partisan, and will not let others get on.

"Every sector must keep its communication channels open if we want to succeed", says Talozzi. He is critical of the Upper Tiber Rural District Council. "With Ottorino Goretti [head of the Council and a member of the PCI] in charge, there is a lack of communications. He never gets to his office before 12 o'clock. He does a bit of administration – I mean, he does what he has to – then he's off again. That isn't good enough. Goretti did some good, but he should have retired long ago. They all think about themselves, their own manifestos, things of minor importance. I'm afraid I can't change anything."

The blame game. In the 1970s, living standards were much higher than they should have been. People were bedazzled, so they failed to see any need for problem solving. On the contrary, they became lethargic and simply held out their hands for more.

Franco Talozzi comments: "There are still Guelphs and Ghibellines around today, "whites" and "blacks", just like in the Florence of 1300. And it's always the others that are at fault.

The workers blame the industrialists, the industrialists the workers. The workers say there are too many bureaucrats in public administration. Businessmen call the politicians thieves. And politicians ask why businessmen are evading their taxes. There is some truth in all the accusations, but none of those involved feels any responsibility for what has gone wrong."

Inaction. Piero Calli, antiques dealer and head of *Pro Loco*, thinks the situation has to change.

"Is it all Berlusconi's fault? No, it's the fault of all those who produce a lot of hot air and nothing else. And if somebody does do something, they crucify him."

A group of elderly men are discussing politics in a bar. "The socialists are thieves", says one. "The Christian Democrats are thieves," says another. "And the communists too", comments a third. Nobody contradicts them.

"But how long have we known who is stealing what? And what have the people done about it? On the one hand, they were too well behaved, while on the other, they joined in and helped themselves."

Talozzi's failings. The list of Mayor Talozzi's many achievements is a long one. However, he did fail too. One reason for failure was his populism, another was his unwillingness to make decisions during his final years in office.

The sports clubs were greedy.⁵² To assuage their greed, Talozzi sanctioned the building of indoor sports facilities on the flood plain to the east of the town, spoiling the historic view. The sports club ought never to have been built on this spot. What is more, it is badly designed. A sports ground next to the indoor facilities is also in the wrong place. There is a perfectly adequate sports field on the west side of the town. The mistakes are all too evident – the new facilities remained unfinished and unused for many years.

Talozzi was aware that motor traffic was incompatible with the structure of the Old Town. He appreciated the key rôle a traffic-free zone would play in town planning and was quick to build car parks, but he did nothing to limit the use of cars, apart from banning them from the middle of the piazza.

Other mistakes included the licensing of a pub in the heart of the Old Town, letting Sant'Agostino stand empty, and a lack of traffic control measures.

The abolition of the Culture Prize was typical of the lethargy that marked his final years in office.

The prize winner's apartment on Piazza Mameli fell into disuse after the death of the author and *Paese Sera* journalist Giorgio Manzini (1930-1991), who, together with his wife, spent his summers in it every year.

Franco Talozzi says, "I was only able to create a fraction of the Anghiari I wanted." A statement like this is evidence of the modesty that is expected of him in Central Italy, but it is a ritual gesture rather than an analysis.

Talozzi let himself be swayed by the prevalent feeling in society, a mood he was indeed able to analyse when he said, "We suffer from the twofold evils of consumerism and a false sense of freedom. Even little Elisa (his grand-daughter) has been spoilt by the vice of consumerism, by thousands of little presents and selfishness. The schools don't do anything to curb it. Freedom has turned into a form of dictatorship."

Talozzi's successors administered further years of lethargy.⁵³ They merely ran the town on a day-by-day basis.

Talozzi commented, "If this were a play, it would be a tragedy and a comedy all in one."

He went back into his garden at the top of the hill and said, "I'll see how it goes".

Those who come after a strong personality will say their predecessor was too strong, but the fact is not that one person is too strong, but that his successors are content to remain weak. The weak and unemancipated shift the blame on to the father-figure they curse.

A sharp-tongued Brecht said, "And after us comes: nothing worth talking about", but quite a lot does.

Lack of understanding. Politicians and administrators were for a long time unable to understand what Talozzi and Vené had done, which was to create a network of excellence by attracting brilliant intellectuals to the town. Their detractors were out of their depths, descending at times to acts of rudeness towards their activities and their persons.

The many tourists that visit Anghiari throughout the year are the fruit of Mayor Talozzi's work.

The late Gian Franco Vené seems to have been forgotten, as have all those who took part in the first-class cultural political forum.

Who now remembers Giorgio Manzini? For years, he spent every summer in Anghiari, living the life of a local. Even the famous name of Umberto Eco is not enough to keep his memory alive.

In 2003, Saverio Tutino was made an honorary citizen, but Franco Talozzi, who put forward his name, was not mentioned in the Town Hall ceremony.

Niccolò Machiavelli, a wise social analyst, scolded public office holders for their envy. He might also have mentioned their blindness.

Future prospects? After giving up his job as mayor, Franco Talozzi wavered between a possible comeback and giving up public office for good.

Only once did it seem his old fire would be re-kindled. He set out his political agenda, were he to seek office again:

"1. Anghiari need not grow, but its population of 6,000 should have access to all services necessary for modern life.

2. The mediaeval town centre is the defining characteristic of Anghiari. It should be equipped in

such a way as to form one single “palace”. I have set car parks up at the top and bottom ends of the town. Cars must be banned from the town centre. All businesses connected with everyday life must also leave the Old Town, except for bars, restaurants and shops selling high-end products. This will allow people to stroll around without being disturbed by motor traffic.

3. A Centre for Mediaeval Studies must be set up, where conferences on certain cultural topics can take place. This will be an economic factor for Anghiari.

4. We have an art school (the Istituto d'Arte), which specialises in conservation. I would rule that they work not only for themselves, but also for the town.

5. I would fix explanatory plaques to many of the houses.

6. Every dwelling that comes on the market may be sold to interesting personalities, even if they are outsiders, in order to create a network of intelligent persons here – it's an old idea of mine. In a nutshell: the world meets in Anghiari.

7. I would then re-instate the Culture Prize and turn Anghiari into a European centre for clever people.

8. I don't need any money for all these things.”

Changes in farming

Reversal. At first sight it would appear the industrial age passed Anghiari by. Many areas seem untouched.

However, a deep re-structuring process has taken place. The most dramatic change has been in the evaluation of hill farms in comparison with those on the floodplain. This has come about as a result of industrialised methods of transportation. Motorised means of transport head for the plain.

There is a cruel paradox here. Although engines enable vehicles to overcome steep inclines as never before, work is made easier if motorised vehicles are used as little as possible for climbing hills. This is one of the inconsistencies of industrial development. It has resulted in an exodus of most hill farmers and their settling in the plain. The trend is known as the “trauma of the flight from the countryside”.

In 1966, the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (Centri storici della Toscana) instructed Professor Edoardo Detti of the University of Florence to carry out a survey of the Upper Tiber Valley.⁵⁴

Change. Farmers used to produce what they needed for their own survival (subsistence farming). Ordinary farming folk, who were illiterate, went to a market several times a year on foot to sell their produce – a system that worked well in former times.

When this economic system no longer provided them with sufficient yields, most of them were forced to leave and seek work in businesses that had been set up near industrial infrastructure. But if they had cars, did they need to abandon their homes?

Owners of holiday homes bought from the former farmers do not need daily access to the modern infrastructure of the industrial age.

Changes in the agricultural system.⁵⁵ Industry is based on increased productivity. Agriculture tries to emulate it by using fertilisers and motors (in tractors, combine harvesters, threshing machines and so on). Farmers' investments are only worthwhile if they enlarge the area they are used in, so small producers are forced to give up, their land being bought up by the larger ones.

Furthermore, agricultural produce is being imported from the monoculture plantations of the developing world. This puts pressure on prices, as agricultural labourers in the developing world are

exploited and paid very low wages (as in Latin America), or farm work is almost entirely automated (as in North America).

The European Union forces this agricultural development from Brussels, showing no concern for the characteristic features of the countryside. As produce from overseas is being dumped on Europe, European production is almost entirely dependent on subsidies. Brussels plans the economies of Member States in the anti-communist west.

Far removed from regional differences and difficulties, the centralised agricultural bureaucracy in Brussels takes no account of what has grown and developed over centuries. Its narrow-minded functionalism has done away with things of great worth although, with a bit of intelligence, some of them could have been saved.

This is apparent in the Tiber Valley, in the disastrous so-called “re-allocation of agricultural land”. These measures were carried out between 1990 and 1995, at a time when Northern Europe was already reversing some of its own.

The Rural District Council (Comunità Montana) was lured by the bait of subsidies from Brussels.

Its plans for the future are as unintelligent as those originating in Brussels. For example, it bought up about 200 farmers' dwellings, beginning in the 1970s. Instead of selling the properties on a leasehold basis, or selling them freehold to private individuals who would restore them, the bureaucrats have let them fall into disrepair.

A process of suburbanisation from 1945 onwards has resulted in Anghiari expanding into the surrounding countryside. This is apparent on Via del Carmine, on the ridge. Light industry established itself at first, then villas were built with a view over the Tiber Valley, and thirdly three-storey blocks were built as government housing on the Sovara Valley side.

Later, many terraced houses were built on the left-hand side. The hillside on the right-hand side was left untouched, in order not to block the view over the Tiber Valley. Further on, 1960s government housing stands on the right, and two-storey terraced houses on the left, on Via Girolamo Canini.

A village fate. Ponte alla Piera stands 560m above sea level, high in the Monti Rognosi. The mediaeval bridge is the focal point of the village. The narrow bridge makes a sweeping gesture, its pointed arch spanning a steeply sloping cut with a river at the bottom. The clustered houses on either side make for an exciting scene, comparable to the mediaeval bridge in Loro Ciuffenna in the Valdarno superiore di destra.

After 1945, the economic boom led to the building of numerous villa-type houses, only for their owners to move away some years later. They return briefly in the summer.

The village used to have a population of 880, in 1998 it had a mere 130. The woman in the bar-cum-grocery shop said, “We're about to give up. People drive to the supermarket in Sansepolcro.”

A system of dykes. Dykes were built on either side of the Tiber a long time ago, so it is basically a canal. A true canal, the Fosso Rimaggio, has also been dug to carry Tiber water.⁵⁶

The River Sovara has been the source of many disasters. When it floods, it is particularly dangerous because it does not deposit mineral-rich silt on the fields, but pebbles and boulders.

In the 18th century, the Tuscan authorities tried very hard to tame the Sovara by building a system of dykes. To all intents and purposes, it too has become a canal from Bagnolo onwards. Other dykes have been built at right angles to collect and hold back water, so the whole valley has become an extensive system of dykes.

For the most part, the tops of the transverse embankments carry paths. The dyke carries the main

path and then a stretch of road that continues until just before Tavernelle.

There are many hillside hamlets on the road to Toppole and a system of dykes here too. Broad swathes of alluvial land are to be found on either side of the river, but they narrow as the ground rises. Over time, extensive systems of dykes were built along the tributaries of the Sovara (Torrente Libbia, Rio Fossatone, Fosso della Teverina, Fosso della Cestola, Rio di Tortigliano).

A lot of trouble has been taken over water management, but it is always difficult to control water in a rational way.

Hamlets are not built on the valley floor because water and marauding troops once posed a danger. Instead, they were built some distance away, on hillsides or ridges.

The small dam. A dam has been built at the crossing leading to Carmine church, but the basin is mostly empty. Its main purpose is to catch the fast-flowing storm water after heavy rain, and to prevent the valley from flooding.

In the industrial era, such facilities have mostly been built on a larger scale than necessary, and their technical designers have not had the slightest clue about making them blend into their surroundings.

The large dam. The Tiber, flowing down from Monte Fumaiolo, leaves the hills and enters its flood plain, the Upper Tiber Valley. A large embankment dam was planned at Montedoglio in the 1960s. It took about 30 years to build, but the main work was completed between 1980 and 1986, and it was ready for use in 1990. The dyke and the lake are in the parish of Santo Stefano.

Plan. The aim was to provide water for irrigating intensively cultivated farmland near Arezzo and Chiusi in the Chiana Valley. In common with a number of very large projects, this one too was planned without reference to the long term; planners did not use their imagination or consider how things might develop. By the time construction work was finished, the situation had completely changed. By 1990, irrigation techniques were more sophisticated, and the use of water was now fine-tuned. Improved control technology and increased efficiency in agriculture have resulted in the need for only one tenth of the originally estimated amount of water.

Difficulties cropped up right from the beginning. The Tiber does not carry much water. Doesn't the Tiber Valley need its own water? This question was not answered because the Tuscan authorities were unconcerned about a problem that lay on the other side of their border with Umbria.

The water from the reservoir is transported to the Chiana Valley in large pipes that pass through tunnels in the mountains. The fields to be irrigated were enlarged to 200m x 300m, to provide a wider headland for large American tractors. A 1960s mindset was still common. At the same time in Germany, people had learnt from their mistakes and replanted ecologically important hedges, making fields smaller again.

Farmers. In 1970, a farmer in the Anghiari area farmed an average of 15 hectares of land.⁵⁷ In 1984, he farmed 19 hectares, as he took on land others had given up. Some farms are 40 hectares in size; the largest is 105 hectares.⁵⁸

Part-time farmers. There are many farmers with day-time jobs. Walter del Sere said in 1990: "It's not only the old people who work in the fields, their sons do too – when they get home from their offices or factories. They are the *nouveaux riches*. Just think what they save on food every month! – I would guess about 400,000 lire (250 euros in 2004). Then there's the tobacco-growing business."

Terrace farming. Since the 1960s, the agricultural policy laid down in Brussels has been ruining the once famous and widespread cultivation on terraces. The authorities called it uneconomical, and refused to pay the farmers the subsidies they gave to others. This ancient tradition has died out with the

old people that farmed in this way, and large swathes of the countryside have changed their appearance, becoming overgrown and wooded. In Anghiari, the decline of terracing is particularly apparent when you consider the view from the Giardini del Vicario café. If you look south to the Montebello promontory, you will detect traces of a rich culture of terracing.

You can still find some terracing “when the old folk cultivate it, but you can work out how much longer they will be around. When they go, a cosmos of values will disappear” (Fabio Marraghini).

Life on the plain. What made life on the valley floor possible? How did it happen? First, the wild waters were tamed by dyke building. Second, the territorial state underwent a civilising process and moved its armies to other locations. Third, industrialisation attracted workers to where the factories were.

In the Tiber Valley, the old system of paths and roads was reversed. The route half-way up the hillside fell into disuse, and the connecting paths no longer served any purpose. Development took place mainly in the valley, which was a move in the opposite direction.

The local population changed their orientation and their perception of the place where they lived. Things took on a completely new meaning.

History sank into oblivion, its traces hidden. But walkers can re-discover them.

The potential is there. The “Parco Tiberina” project, for instance, would have brought footpaths and bridle paths to life again. Visitors would have had experienced some of the old ways.

Future prospects. Town planners may be able to save some of the old structures and incorporate them into the new.

Redistribution of fields in the Tiber Valley. In 1990, the Comunità Montana (a joint rural district council with seven member districts) put forward a project to alter the entire character of the Tiber Valley. They asked the European Community, which gives vast sums of money for such purposes, to support them in altering and re-structuring the network of roads and paths. Many paths, and roads too, were to disappear, and small arable fields merged to form larger ones.

Stefania Bolletti, the town planner, was against the proposal, and she started a campaign to get the politicians on her side. Many of the townsfolk in Anghiari supported her.

The most vociferous opponent of the proposal was Gianfranco Giorni, a teacher at the Sansepolcro Art School and former mayor of Anghiari, who lives in the threatened area, in the hamlet of Viaio.

An ancient structure. Why such stiff resistance?

Stefania Bolletti examined the historic structure of fields and paths and discovered that whereas the old structures had been destroyed in the Valdichiana (as a result of the draining of marshes during the Medici era) and in the area between Florence and Arezzo in the Valdarno (due to industrialisation), the Upper Tiber Valley was unique in having preserved them unchanged since ancient times. “We can see the network of Roman roads and the way the Romans cultivated the waysides, planting hedgerows and poplars. This was how the ancient Romans achieved an ecological balance.”

It conjures up landscapes painted by Piero della Francesca (1410/1420-1492).

Unfortunately the joint Rural District Council, betraying a crudely acquisitive mindset, mostly got its way. “All that money from Brussels would otherwise have to be re-paid”, they argued. Is it right to pocket money for destructive nonsense?

However, Ms Bolletti did win a partial victory. She managed to preserve the area to the right and left of the long road up to the River Tiber. This area was spared, as it plays a key rôle in shaping the Anghiari landscape. She received influential backing for her arguments from the Office for the

Preservation of Monuments in Arezzo.

Ms Bolletti felt the redistribution measures were an anachronism. They were based on other ideas, had been thought up in a different age, and no longer met present-day requirements.

Walter del Sere said of the defeat, “Machines have created a desert to the north of the road to Viaio. Everything went by the board: the old ditches, the rows of poplars, vines and trees. The only clue to the ancient pattern of fields is to be found in the terrain itself.”

Restoration. Many farm houses have been superbly restored.

Frequently, however, neither residents nor restorers appreciate the finer subtleties of what to plant where. The most striking incongruity is the planting of a cypress hedge to border a property. The *nouveaux riches* who do this fail to realise the cypress tree is an ancient sign of dignity and rank.

Houses on agricultural land. Many farmers would like to have “new farmhouses”. They model them on town houses, which are out of place in country locations.

The local town planning authority is confronted with the problem of persuading house owners to modify their naïvely conceived plans in an intelligent way. In the 1990s, Stefania Bolletti, the town planner, counselled many prospective house builders, also rejecting numerous projects that required modification.

Lonely hills. Hardly any farmers still live in the mountains, but before the 1980s there used to be hill farmers all over the place. More sites were abandoned in the 20th century than in previous centuries.

Upacchi demonstrates this. The hills are lonely. The landed gentry no longer benefit from highland property.

Second homes are a result of mobility and the internationalisation of society. They allow their owners to fulfil their longing for other places.

The idea is often as fantastic as the Flemish paintings commissioned in the 15th and 16th centuries by wealthy patrons, depicting dream landscapes and high mountains, with plenty of details for the eye to explore.

Such longings may be idiotic, or they can provide a sense of purpose.

Integration is a complex matter. Most of the temporary immigrants are accepted by the locals as fellow human beings, as Italy has been used to accommodating outsiders for centuries. However, doors close when it comes to such outsiders seeking jobs or exercising a public function, and an underlying chauvinism comes to the fore. Intellectuals are simply ignored, even by their Italian best friends.

Associations. In 1995, an association called “Etruria meets Europe” was formed. Its headquarters were set up in nearby Lama, near Città di Castello. Giordano Castagnoli was its chairman; its honorary president was Roland Günter. The aim of the association was to bring together the many people from other countries who had bought houses in the area, to put them in touch with each other and with the local population.

The idea was born out of necessity, but its hour had not yet come. The association was wound up in 2000.

In 2004, the idea was re-born under another guise. Together with Stefanie Risse and Fabio Marraghini, Thomas Kudlazek, a solicitor and notary, formed an association for the protection of the interests of house owners in Central Italy.

Politics at all levels as entertainment

Politics as entertainment. The Italians seem to be more highly politicised than other nations. They talk incessantly about politics. Newspapers and television are full of it. But the impression is deceptive.

Politics is almost never the formative force it truly should be. You can see this at all levels.

People on the piazza discussing politics move their politicians around like pieces in a board game. They have no real meaning. Politicians merely act out politics. They are political phantoms; they have long been virtual persons.

This is not the fault of the people (apart from the fact they seem prepared to vote for any *canard*) but of the politicians. Who on earth would want to enter politics, and why? Mostly someone who has achieved nothing else. Politics has long been a private matter. If Tizio enters politics, it will be his career; he knows it will not earn him any respect.

Politics turns into fiction.

Political discussions almost always lack substance. A logical consequence of this is the entertainer and wheeler-dealer who has made it to the top of the Italian political ladder. He entertains the people, fills his pockets and makes sure that nothing changes. A stable government at last! – But why does nonsense alone provide stability?

Newspapers reveal some secrets and hide others. They only print the entertaining façade, but fail to uncover the heart of the matter. “Clinton is admired for having had a secret affair. The president tried to get his way with the intern, the intern tried to get her way with the president – and people smirk”.

The State and how people view it. The overall political situation has but little bearing on the small town.

This is been a fact of life for two millennia. Of course, a certain political framework has gradually been formed, but Germans and Italians differ in the way they view the nature of the State. Italians do not experience the State as touching their lives in a positive way – quite the opposite. For them nothing good, or almost nothing good, comes from above. This is reflected in the frequently heard expression “*governo ladro*”, the government are robbers. History has shown that, one way or another, the people were almost always preyed on by outsiders.

Topic of conversation. There is a great difference between the actual impact of the overarching State and the State as a topic for discussion on the piazza. The conversationalists are hungry for topics of conversation: the weather, food, the harvest, work, trade – and politics too.

Presumably it has always been the case that a lot of talking has gone on without much action – or without people wanting to take action. In the post-war years, political discussions were stormy and ideologies were bandied about, but this had nothing to do with facts. The parties waged war on the rhetorical front without engaging with reality.

The ineffective state. The Medici usurped the state in the 15th century, and ultimately from 1512; on the whole, they failed to administer it well. Their main achievement was a policy of non-expansion. The more enlightened House of Habsburg-Lorraine (Austria) were more daring in putting forward reforms to benefit the country in general, but they were unable to carry them through radically.

Napoleon made important promises, but his was foreign rule that exploited the population, mainly in order to finance his military ambitions.

Unification (1860-1871) failed to deliver on its promises. Fifty years of chaotic parliamentary

politics were to follow.

Fascism exploited both state and people. It used them to further its imperialistic and military-led colonialist policies, which plunged the land into disaster.

In the post-war years, old forms of governance reasserted themselves. Under the pretext of the Cold War, the new leadership excluded the majority of the population. This ruling class held on to power for an exceptionally long period – over 40 years.⁵⁹ The games of musical chairs played by the various cabinets had nothing to do with changes in policies.

Giulio Andreotti, who remained in power for 30 years, is a typical shadowy figure from the post-war period, a schemer and prince of darkness, cocooned in the Mafia and the domestic and foreign secret services. His political astuteness (*furbizia*) was acknowledged to be an art form, even by his enemies, and he was said to be closely connected to the Vatican hierarchy. He was sometimes compared with Molotov, as he held many leading positions in government. Others said his arts were similar to those of the *Curia*, as he was able to smooth over difficulties, while making his decisions irrevocable.

In Anghiari, all these things were the topics of endless discussions, but they did not actually affect real life. Those who opposed the far-away men of power felt safe, not least because they knew the majority of the townsfolk did not support the national élite. On the contrary, power seemed to lie in their own hands.

Murder. When Aldo Moro (1916-1978), a prime minister from the Christian Democrat party and a Catholic university professor, made a bold attempt to loosen ties with the United States and involve politicians from the left in government, he was murdered, assassinated by the Italian and US secret services working in collaboration with members of the Red Brigades (the case has been researched in detail and much evidence has come to light). The assassins were a group of about 100 men, about 50 from each side, under the leadership of the Italian secret services.

Neoliberalism. “[Prime Minister] Craxi changed people's way of thinking,” said Giorgio Manzini, the writer and Culture Prize winner, who was often in Anghiari, “making them arrogant, eager to rob their fellow men. Craxi is responsible for, and is the symbol of, a cocky neoliberalism. He opened the floodgates. Any cretin (*cretino*) could play the autocrat (*prepotente*), the megalomaniac.”

Metamorphosis. Once the Iron Curtain fell in 1989/1990, Italian communists were at the mercy of the victorious anti-communists. This was testing time for them, and they split down the middle. The so-called “Eurocommunists”, the social democratic wing that had existed for decades but had been largely rejected by the Eastern bloc communists, founded a party under a new name, the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS). The orthodox wing reacted defiantly, using the word “communist” in their newly founded party's name: Rifondazione PCI).

“Clean hands”. Christian Democrats and Socialists (by then merely a label) formed the governing élite, but around 1992 they were embroiled in scandal. In Milan and other places, a group of highly intelligent and incorruptible judges and public prosecutors (Di Pietro, Borrelli and others) revealed unplumbed depths of corruption. This was a time of political weakness, and some of the perpetrators were prepared to come clean. The scandal gave rise to a new name for Milan, “Tangentopoli”, city of bribes. The old party structures were under fire.

The lawyers' campaign came to be known as “Mani pulite” (“clean hands”). Federico Fellini called Antonio Di Pietro “the only saint in Italy”. He lived under daily threat of death, knowing how the Mafia killed their opponents one by one in southern Italy.

How did civil society react? Emotions ran high during the long discussions on the piazzas, but they produced nothing but hot air. We all know how pleasant it is to feel wiser, as long as it requires no effort on our part. “Italians are very civil,” said Franco Talozzi, “especially in Central Italy. People reacted with moderation, whereas in other countries Craxi and Andreotti would have been shot at dawn.”

People in Anghiari debated the goings-on in far-away Rome, Milan and Turin as though they were watching a film, and in fact the story reached their homes via the television.

But the same applied to the empty policies carried out by “top” politicians, who employed rhetoric and verbiage in order to ensure their media presence, cheating themselves and others into believing they were governing the country, while in reality they were achieving nothing.

The end of the former parties. The old parties went into free fall after the elections of 1992. Both Christian Democrats and Socialists were associated with bribery. The DC⁶⁰, which had gone unchallenged for decades, got about ten per cent of the vote, shrinking to a splinter group and then falling apart. In their stronghold of Milan, the Socialists' share of the vote declined from 13 per cent to two per cent within a period of two years.

Old wine in new bottles. The consequences took people's breath away. “It's funny, but all the parties changed their names, but nothing else”, said Franco Talozzi. “It's as if I, Franco, suddenly decided to change my name to Mario. They all wanted to give the impression they were making a clean break, but in no way did the people themselves change.”

The crisis provoked by the old guard did not last long. In the midst of a general feeling of indignation, a new and unexpected political mixture was brewing, whose source had lain dormant and out of sight: this was a politics that pandered to a more radical and naked self-interest.

The symbol of this movement was Berlusconi⁶¹. Berlusconi, of all people, had been a major beneficiary of the corruption that led to the deep crisis in the parties. He speculated with property, his companies derived their capital from unknown sources (many suspect the Mafia), and he was the author of many shady business deals. He is the illegal owner of television channels and was a member of the P2 secret Masonic Lodge that encouraged its members to take control of the media. P2 was found to be in contravention of the Italian constitution.

Berlusconi's media group Fininvest, which swallowed up all the companies it could, was set up by the socialist Bettino Craxi⁶², the last prime minister of the old regime and Berlusconi's “godfather”. In return for bribes, Craxi got parliament to pass accommodating decrees and laws that would legitimise Berlusconi's activities.⁶³

Power comes via the media, and the media are big business. In 1983, Craxi's political career ended in ignominy, and he received a lengthy jail sentence.⁶⁴ He fled abroad to Tunisia, but his protégé Berlusconi quickly rose to power.

This shows how it is always the same few people that are active at the highest level of power.

Fan club. Was Berlusconi's party different in structure? It seemed to be, but in fact it was a continuation of what had been created long ago: electioneering parties, their identity an illusion completely removed from reality.

As the owner of AC Milan, Berlusconi organised his so-called party like a nationwide football fan club. The organising itself was done in 1993 by Marcello Dell'Utri, the boss of the advertising agency Publitalia and third in the chain of command at Fininvest. He too was convicted of having colluded with the Mafia over a period of 30 years, supporting their drug trading activities and laundering their

money for them. The name of the party was Forza Italia, (Come on, Italy!), as chanted by the fans of the national team.

Careerists in search of pastures new flocked to Berlusconi, since Italy was a country that had nurtured opportunism for centuries. A number of them were from the left, some of them came from the upper ranks of the newspaper “Il Manifesto”.

Rogues ancient and modern. Berlusconi is not a new phenomenon, even in post-war Italy. Historians will find he is one of an ancient tradition of villainous leaders, some of whom assumed an air of nobility, while others were utterly banal.

Bettino Craxi, the unprincipled cynic and leading careerist of the 1980s, was like one of the ancient princes of corruption described in detail by the historians of the ancient world.⁶⁵ A quieter but more effective variation on this ancient theme was played by Giulio Andreotti, seven times prime minister, who heard Mass daily, but shielded, and collaborated with, the Mafia.⁶⁶

The origins of Berlusconi's rise to power are obscure, but his conduct is reminiscent of Roman bread and circuses⁶⁷, his rhetoric is entertainment, and his politics are based on anything but the real world.

By the height of his career, he was a thoroughgoing neo-liberal. He made no attempt to hide his self-serving mentality or his business interests. He was making a fortune from his media empire.

Just as celebrities gain welcome publicity from the airing of their scandals in the media, Berlusconi was unharmed by a wave of court cases in which, among other things, he was found guilty of bribery and balance-sheet fraud. (Students of Latin are still being taught to admire ancient rogues like Caesar. No-one encourages them to take a closer look at him either.)

Berlusconi avoided prison sentences, mocking the few courageous prosecutors and incorruptible judges he came across in his trials and calling them “mad on two counts”. In his view, they differed anthropologically from the rest of humankind.

He paid no heed to the fact that democracy, unlike absolutism, is based on the separation of powers. He got his cronies to pass the laws he wanted, including laws granting him immunity from prosecution while holding public office.

Governments of the left. Berlusconi's first government fell after eight months. Coalitions with the support of the parties of the left followed in 1996, the second of these being the “Olive Tree” (“Ulivo”) coalition led by Romano Prodi. They too had to resign in October 1998, when the “re-founded” communists withdrew their support.

Massimo D'Alema (PDS), an egocentric schemer against Prodi, led the next two centre-left governments until 2000. He disappointed on all fronts, as his policies were short-term and lacking in substance. From this time on, seven parties clashed in minor skirmishes. Like their predecessors, they fought over jobs and political agendas.

In Italy, governments are far removed from the people, their everyday lives, their communes and immediate surroundings. Thus, the left failed to identify their problems or seek any solutions to them. Bureaucracy was a problem, but it remained unreformed. Education needed reforming, but nothing was done. The environment was ignored, urban development likewise. No new traffic policies saw the light of day. The justice system went on as before. Nothing new happened on the federalist front.

Those who are tempted to curse Berlusconi for returning to power must not forget the failings of the parties of the left.

Nanni Moretti, a film director and winner of the Palme d'Or in Cannes, vented his fury at the

leaders of the left during a demonstration on Piazza Navona in Rome, earning the applause of many demonstrators, including Dario Fo.

Berlusconi's second government. The weakness of the left re-opened the way for Berlusconi and his strange alliance. One of his allies, Alleanza Nazionale, had included neo-fascists among its founders. Berlusconi controlled nearly all media (95 per cent of television channels and many newspapers, with the exception of the daily Repubblica). He was almost single handedly responsible for creating the delusions under which the population laboured.

The “prince”, with the help of his media empire, ruled the country as if it were a company. He promised everything to everyone, then showed them his pockets were empty.

Together with Gianfranco Fini, who had a neo-fascist background, he cleverly scaled down the fight against the Mafia that had helped him to power. He drove those who were tracking down the Mafia from office. Others, having had their bodyguards removed, found themselves in mortal danger.

Economic, political and media power were closely meshed.

Berlusconi's politics were straightforward. The rich, especially those with ill-gotten gains, were aided and abetted. Laws were tailored to his own needs: accounts could be falsified with impunity, death duties abolished, international judicial assistance – particularly with reference to money laundering – rendered almost impossible.

He was a combination of smiling entertainer and Big Brother. Dictatorship with a smile has had a long tradition in Italy, beginning with ancient Rome and taking in the Medici, the 19th century and Mussolini. Nevertheless, one must admit there have been counter-movements, some of which were successful.

In 2003, Berlusconi sided with George W. Bush in the Iraq War, contrary to the will of the majority of Italians. His support was, of course, only on the diplomatic and symbolic fronts, as the Italian military is incapable of waging war.

Initially, the reaction of the leftist opposition was pathetic. Once again, a few grass-roots movements stood alone in their attempts to reform the country.

However, this had hardly any structural significance. On the piazza, politics is regarded as entertainment. They are all for the environment of course, but it is “the others” who should be doing something about it.

The party with neo-fascist roots was the only coalition partner with an effective organisation. Gianfranco Fini, its leader, portrayed himself as a pragmatic and objective politician, and a distinguished personage. He pulled the right strings and stabilised the wavering coalition. Observers abroad viewed the governing coalition as a disaster, but people in Italy hardly noticed this.

Success. Berlusconi succeeded in cultivating an entrepreneurial image, although he is actually a financial operator, one who restructures financial packages.

Many believe the political right managed to create chaos, then played the rôle of saviour.

The French media expert, Paul Virilio, argues Berlusconi's power lies most importantly in his ability to administer an amnesia-inducing drug in the form of television.

Television is the world many people would like to be a part of, but as this does not work, they have to content themselves with watching it from afar. They feel this world is being invented for them at every moment, which results in their forgetting the moment that has just passed.

Other commentators characterise the Italians as gamblers, claiming they discuss politics in the same way as they talk about Juve, Inter, Milano, Parma and Lazio.

In 2004, the Cavaliere fell. Annibal del Sere remarked: “We Italians applaud a politician for his gesticulating and his rhetoric, but it's not long before we spit on all that. It's the same old story – applause for the strongest man, adoration for the apparently successful one – but then we can't stand him any more.”

Marco Brogi's comment was, “Berlusconi has one more chance: he must learn to cry and plead for mercy. But he can't do that. Mussolini couldn't cry either. Priests are the only experts in that field.”

In 2006, Berlusconi lost the election by a narrow margin.

Distant region. Central Italy can only be identified with Berlusconi to a limited extent. The media tycoon's followers were mainly to be found in other regions, especially those ruled by the Christian Democrats in the southern part of the 2,000 kilometres that Italy measures from top to toe.

This government, and others like it, had little impact on Central Italian minds, private finances and structures. People are used to living without a government and have no expectations of governments.

While it is true that the media and the piazza are abuzz with political talk, and lunch is always eaten with the television on, it all remains exotic and far removed from people's daily lives. Names come and go, what is said remains as vague as ever. Make no mistake, however – the apparently popular rage and indignation witnessed by an outsider turn out to be equally ephemeral.

No-one in the commune of Anghiari has the slightest intention of abandoning the level at which their activities make a genuine difference, or influencing far-away Rome. What happens there seems irrelevant to people's lives, not worth more than a glance at the newspapers, with their gossip about royal families and industrialist dandies.

Italy cannot be judged on the basis of a present-day snapshot. Italians think and behave in ways that are rooted in ancient times. They always say, “We're in crisis” (*siamo in crisi*), but this has been a permanent condition for over two thousand years, and the piazza is used to it.

History shows that people learn to live with a state of permanent crisis.

A crisis is a constant challenge, and lively Italians respond to it either by being depressed (as if tired at bedtime) or euphoric (as if waking as fresh as dew).

Muddled thinking. However, even within their own communes, people neglect to treat politics as a force for shaping their lives; it is viewed rather as entertainment.

A great moment. One exception to this was the era of Mayor Franco Talozzi, which can be seen against a background of left-wing enlightenment from the 1970s, expectations and euphoria. It was a great but fleeting moment in the history of the town.

The land development plan: a safeguard, and its prospects for the future

Selling off the family silver. For a long time, any land in Tuscany that could be sold off was sold. Building was not subject to regulations.

The floodgates only remained more or less shut in places where many generations were firmly rooted in a locality with great potential.

Then, however, generations came along that threatened to throw all caution to the winds. They were the authors of a number of disasters. For a time it looked as though they would squander their inheritance.

Regional Law (1980). The disaster prompted the Regional Government in Florence to pass the 1980 Legge Fondamentale, under which all communes were required to provide a land development

plan (*Piano Regolatore*). Provisions regarding its implementation came into force in 1986. The Regional Government would not approve any development project if a land development plan were not in place.

Conflicts. However, the law failed to prescribe the methods for drawing up the plan, with the result that every commune devised its plan in its own way. Local government bodies often resist the more forward-looking policies of the Regional Government. They regard themselves as sacrosanct, preferring to do their wheeling and dealing with local clients. On the whole, they are not prepared to take orders from above.

Supervisory body. Regional planning tools were designed to supervise the communes. A supervisory body (whose members included Gian Franco Di Pietro and Giovanni Fanelli, two professors from the University of Florence) was set up to scrutinise any communal plans.

Resistance. The work done by the supervisors produced excellent results, but at the same time interested parties also exerted pressure, in the hopes of abolishing a body that imposed restrictions on them. The supervisors refused to allow the resources created by centuries to be squandered in the lifetimes of one or two generations.

New law. The 1980 law was repealed in February 1995, and a new regional law took its place. A structure plan (*Piano Strutturale*) replaced the *Piano Regolatore*. New plans were to be drawn up by the communes working in collaboration with the Regional Government.

However, speculators succeeded in taking responsibility for all new plans out of the hands of the supervisory body.

Requirements. Nevertheless, the Regional Government required local authorities to observe general objectives (*obiettivi generali*), principles of environmental protection (*principi di tutela ambientale*) and compatibility (*compatabilità*).

Securing of resources. The nature of the territory of Tuscany means it should be treated as a whole. Its system of hills (*sistema collinare*), if the character of its landscape is to be preserved, will not allow for random building projects. A landscape is just as much a historical asset as the stone monuments that belong in cultural history.

Nevertheless, the various areas of the territory differ greatly in character. There are the coastal areas, the river valleys with their flood plains (Valdarno, Valdichiana, Valtiberina), and the mountainous districts and forests (Chianti, Apennines).

Industrial integration. Tuscany is no different from other places, in that industries have either been integrated badly, or not at all.

Guarantees and controls. Professor Di Pietro says the aims of the planning tool are twofold: to secure existing assets, and to enable local authorities to produce designs and make changes without compromising the future. He drew up design criteria based on whether intervention in the various zones, for instance in forest areas, can be justified. He calls this “taking a relative perspective on evolution” (*vedere l’evoluzione relativamente*).

Houses exist within structures, but what kinds of structures? What types of houses are they? How can we reduce our interventions to a minimum? It should no longer be possible to do anything and everything we want to, whatever our ideological background. Our power to shape things should be based on what is there, and our wise development of it.

Development should be sustainable (*sostenibile*), it should not exhaust (*non consumare*) existing ecological or cultural resources.

Under the new procedure, a draft plan was to circulate between administrators and public authorities. The regional authorities wished the local ones to assume greater responsibility and develop a planning philosophy.

Gambling on autonomy. The new law was a gamble. The region of Tuscany was the first to broach the topic of communal autonomy, the first to grant its communes such a great measure of autonomy.

However, it was questionable whether they would be able to grasp the opportunity in any meaningful way. Politicians and administrators lacked the backbone and the necessary qualifications, and there were too many egomaniacs and speculators at work.

Professor Di Pietro had grave doubts, and refused to support the new law. He feared the higher authority's loss of its supervisory powers would cause trouble. Mayors would be able to exploit the law if they failed to commit themselves to its principle and, given the preceding years of superficial planning at the lowest level, the principle was not easy to understand.

Structural thinking. Local authorities now had to learn to think in structures that could be formed into a complex whole, and to move away from superficial, rough-and-ready categories of use, mechanical solutions, geometrical surfaces and volumes. A different way of thinking had to precede any decision making.

The University of Florence put on courses for "*tecnicci*" who now had to function as "*valutatori*" as well.

Comparisons. Where were the most enlightened communes? "In the province of Siena", said Di Pietro, "for instance in Monteriggioni."

Di Pietro's assistant of many years, Stefania Bolletti, a town planner both in Anghiari and – from 2000 – in the province of Arezzo too, said "I have to deal with 39 communes in the province of Arezzo. It's incredible how little thought goes into planning. The city of Arezzo is the worst. Sansepolcro is not much better. They are both at the bottom of the ranking."

This is how things are done in Arezzo: someone has a friend who is the friend of another friend who has a plot of land and wants to make money out of it. The administration rolls out the red carpet for him." – "And what about Anghiari?" – "In Anghiari things are reasonably good as a result of the former *bongoverno* (good governance).

On the industrial front things are grim (*buio*) and diabolical (*diabolico*); pandemonium (*un pandemonio*) reigns. The locals have no say; planning takes place without them."

Bientina (near Fucecchio) was the first commune in Tuscany to produce a Structure Plan.

Anghiari's Structure Plan was adopted under the old law, in 1996.

Professor Di Pietro's found that under the new law "the mayors no longer grant planning permission in quite such an aimless and brazen manner. They are more cautious now."

Anghiari's land development plan had to be amended and modified several times over a longer period. Professor Gian Franco Di Pietro of Florence was commissioned to produce an amended version of the previous plan (from 1974).

Survey. The Regional Law of 1980 provided for land development plans that went further than their German equivalents. The Tuscan variant is based on extensive analyses, even of building structure; it can therefore lay down detailed requirements.

In 1983, Di Pietro, together with his colleague Giovanni Fanelli, published a comprehensive survey of the Upper Tiber Valley.⁶⁸

Both men are well-known specialists in problems relating to the countryside. Di Pietro developed a

sensitive investigative method that also takes account of history and tradition.

Professor Di Pietro supervised Stefania Bolletti when she was writing her degree thesis on the structure of the hamlets in the area around Anghiari.⁶⁹ In 1988, she was appointed town planner in Anghiari on the basis of the excellence of her thesis.

The historic centre of Anghiari was initially excluded from the land development plan. The municipality could not afford it, neither was there any urgent need, as the Office for the Preservation of Historic Monuments had already prescribed strict conservation measures.

Comparative prospects. Where the Valdichiana and Valdarno suffered considerable damage, the Upper Tiber Valley was, for the most part, spared.

In time, this turned out to be a qualitative advantage, as was demonstrated by comparative studies carried out by Professor Tirzi of the University of Siena (he also served as a member of parliament for some years). He suggested characteristic areas should be turned into an extensive landscape park.

Within this park, any economic development should avoid a wastage of resources, under the motto of “sustainable economic development” (*sviluppo economico sostenibile*).

Anghiari. Stefania Bolletti explained, “Some people moved out of the country and into the town in the 1960s. The remaining farmers expanded the area they cultivated. Thus, despite migration, a strong agricultural structure remained in place. The use of the area was put to did not change.”

The regional government laid down wide-ranging and strict protection measures, in contrast to the lack of protection afforded to the densely populated flood plain.

The Upper Tiber Valley is a frontier area in the province. It is sparsely populated. There is some migration out of it, but there is no pressure to develop it.

This developmental weakness can also be a good thing. The neglected historic centre – for many years the poorest part of Anghiari – was preserved. The town was not subject to large-scale expansion.”

In the long run, it should be possible to consolidate any widely spaced built-up areas.

An interview with Professor Gian Franco Di Pietro

The scene is the Anghiari Council Chamber, and the year is 1993. The Professor for town planning at the University of Florence is answering questions put to him by students and professors from the University of Karlsruhe in Germany. The present author is in the audience.

Here are some excerpts:

Milestones in his life. “Together with Giovanni Fanelli [an expert in the history of buildings from the University of Florence], I wrote a comprehensive work on the Upper Tiber Valley. My subject at the University of Florence is urban development. I was asked to draw up the *Piano Regolatore* for Anghiari. In order to do this, I rented a house in the Old Town” [15 Via Nenci].

Ancient and modern. “I had fallen in love with modern architecture and was working as a “card-carrying” modern architect. In the 1960s, there was no talk of a crisis in modern architecture. But then, during the two years I worked in the Upper Tiber Valley, I fell in love with the architecture of the past.”

I now find the past more interesting. Viewed from a distance, it seems to me the modernists merely produced a number of disparate episodes. They destroyed a lot around the edges of the old towns, with many poor results. The more I see, the more I value the experience that lies behind the architecture of the past.”

Human geography. “Furthermore, I am interested in human geography (*geografia umana*). I was

fascinated by the work of Fernand Braudel and other French authors published in the French historical journal “*Les Annales*”.

The work they carried out in the countryside showed the *campagna* to be a vast storehouse of every kind of man-made object. The use to which the territory was put reveals its history and the experience of human beings. Here in Tuscany, historic farm-house architecture is of a high standard.”

Continuity versus invention. “We know everything happened very slowly in the past, which meant people had time to work out their decisions rationally. Certain types of buildings were carefully thought through, and improvements made over time.

What I don't like about modern architecture is the idea that you have to keep inventing something new. It doesn't get you anywhere, and it destroys a lot.”

“My life is full of contradictions, like yours too perhaps. I live in two worlds. On the one hand, modern architecture has become bankrupt; on the other, I am a contemporary – and successful – architect. Many of my designs have appeared in international publications. This is a basic inconsistency in my daily work.”

University teaching. “I can give you a brief idea of the way I work with my university students.

In their first six months, my students learn the same things as you do. They examine a small Tuscan town and its surrounding countryside. They study them from many angles: 1) history (*storia*), the typology (*tipologia*) of the houses, 3) the morphology (*morfologia*) of urban development, 4) relationships between town and country (*rapporti tra città e campagna*).

In the next six months, the students each make a plan – for the expansion of a town, or for a new piazza, or a small housing estate that successfully links up with a town centre.

The greatest problem in these plans is architecture. We don't simply want to repeat what went before, but we do want to avoid the mistakes of modern architecture. It's hard to walk this tightrope.

At the same time, my students hand in a project for the careful restoration of houses in an old town and of old farm houses. The demands in this case are classically strict. They fall under the very important heading “conservation of monuments”.

The building type is crucial, but we try not to assign a house to an abstract category. Don't forget, every house has its own specific architecture. Moreover, there are many house types in Tuscany. One type may predominate in a certain location, but another may crop up a few kilometres further on.

There are differences between the houses of the Upper Tiber Valley and those of the Casentino, for example. In the Tiber Valley, kitchens are characteristically 5m x 5m, with ceiling beams running in two directions: the main beam in one direction and smaller beams at right angles to it. In the Casentino, beams run in one direction only (*monordito*).”

Culture and construction. “I can give you an illustration of how firmly building types are fixed in the minds of the people living in them. Giovanni Fanelli and I once carried out a survey of about one hundred farm houses in the Casentino. We were in a kitchen, and I told the draughtsman to note down “six beams”. The farmer put me right, saying there were always odd numbers of beams, either five or seven. So you see, culture and construction are closely linked.”

Extensions to farm houses. “We are nearly always asked about extending farm houses. Farmers need more space to organise their work. We have to ask ourselves if it is better to plan an extension based on an old house type, or to draw up something entirely new. The architect, of course, is on his mettle; he has his professional *bravura*. We then discuss whether it is possible to “copy without

copying” – which is, of course, a contradiction in terms. Basically, we have to comprehend the structural elements of the existing building, and introduce new ones too.”

“Extensions” to Anghiari? “I don't think the centre should grow. Only the most important villages in the surrounding area should grow to a limited extent. This targeted growth is a tool in the planner's hand, one which enables him to carry out any necessary improvements.”

The principle of “incorporation”. “Let's imagine there is a prevalent house type in an expanding location. I suggest building this house type if new growth is to be incorporated into the old.

I propose the same solution for extensions to an individual farm house. I try to develop a basic type that will fit in with what is already there.”

Growth? Professor Martin Einsele submitted that one could see a difference between the Old Town and its surroundings as far as land use was concerned. “The majority of house buyers will not be looking for a house like those in the Old Town. As a result, vast areas in the surroundings of Anghiari have been built upon. This is most apparent along the road to San Leo. We can look forward to a further increase in individual spatial requirements for luxury homes and business operations. We have to consider where growth in space-hungry homes will be least disruptive.

Building has wreaked the greatest damage on the texture of the countryside. This is most apparent in the area around Sansepolcro and in the higher parts of Anghiari before you reach the Sovara Valley. In my opinion, development at the foot of the ridge is more acceptable, although it gets in the way of historical relationships there too. But of course people would rather live higher up, to enjoy the view and the fresh air.”

Di Pietro added he was against development anywhere, “but the most important thing is to preserve the roads on the ridge. These ridgeways have always been sacred from a historical point of view. The only historic building on the ridgeway was the hospital (*ospedale*) with its 16th century arcades. The town itself has been built on the side of the hill, the hamlets too.”

Einsele said, “I have come across a number of historic farmsteads, many of which are uninhabited. Wouldn't a sensitive architect be able to use what is already there and make room for growth in a landscape-friendly way?

Di Pietro replied, “It's an interesting idea. The difficulty lies in the planning details. The local architects are no good. It doesn't take them long to ruin things. With the tools at our disposal, and given our politicians and administrators, it would be very difficult to supervise them.”

Binding restrictions. Di Pietro went on to say the land development plan was not sufficiently clear-cut, which was why additional regulations were tacked on to it. “But even now it is not truly radical. The plan foresees the possibility of categorising buildings according to their types, which is a good point of departure. But it isn't enough. Certain details should also be subject to binding restrictions.”

Are old building types suited to solving modern problems? Di Pietro was sure they were eminently suited. “What is more, following a period of expansion, we can now observe a trend towards a demand for smaller dwellings.”

How do the regulations work in practice? Di Pietro pointed out that legislation in Tuscany was fairly advanced. “The 1980 law (*legge fondamentale*) requires all local authorities to provide a *piano regolatore*. Then there are the additional implementing provisions of 1986.

The local authorities feel they are sacrosanct, and often contest the decisions of the regional government. There are many things they refuse to accept.

For example, when Giovanni Fanelli and I were working in the Casentino, we handed our findings

over to the architect in charge of the project (*progettista*). He simply copied them without paying us. Of the 220 farm houses we wanted to preserve, the local authority conserved only 20.”

A member of the audience asked whether the higher authority had the power to intervene.

Di Pietro affirmed it did. “If it finds out, it has the power to act. I am on the regional government planning board, which helped in the case I have just referred to.”

Compromises and concessions. Gian Franco Di Pietro went on to describe the rôle played by politics. “When the PCI [Italian Communist Party] ruled with an unchallenged majority, its behaviour was different from when it decided to collaborate with the conservatives. It amended the 1980 law on old towns and watered it down. Whereas the whole of the Old Town used to be protected, the so-called “anonymous part”, in which there are few historic monuments, now lacked protection. There is a declaration of intent to conserve the whole but, depending on what the politicians or administrators want, some things are again feasible. I believe, however, there should be mandatory regulations for the whole.”

Cultural landscape. Martin Einsele pointed out it was not only historic town centres that were at risk, but the entire cultural landscape with its distinctive vegetation.

Gian Franco Di Pietro reminded his listeners that the landscape was to some degree part and parcel of the *piano regolatore*. “There are not yet many landscape planners (*paesaggisti*). The establishment of the profession has not yet caught up with reality. There's no professional grouping as such, although the universities of Genoa and Rome have just introduced courses. Many conservation projects (*progetti di recupero*) are carried out by geologists and conservationists of monuments.”

“**The people have no direct say**, and information filters through to them via local planners, mostly surveyors who are more stupid than the townsfolk. They are merely interested in cramming as many buildings as possible on to a plot of land.

The politicians are closer to these specialists than to the populace.

We once presented the mayor of a town in Romagna with a plan – a fortnight before election day. He was horrified at the fact that we wanted to preserve much of his town. “You'll lose us the election”, he said.

But when it came to it, he polled more votes than ever before, which goes to show that politicians don't really know their electorates.

Normal folk don't go to a politician, they go to a contractor, a surveyor or an architect, who then asserts their interests.”

Town-planning as a source of conflict. Di Pietro described Stefania Bolletti as a figure of hate in Anghiari “because she gets on their nerves” (*perche rompe le scatole*). One of our joint success stories was when we stopped them from using EU funding to reorganise the fields to the south of the road to Viaio. While we were collaborating on that, we photographed every ditch and tree.”

Data base. “Planners use the only available data, from the 1991 census (*censimento*). A census like this is one of the few centralised measures. The local authorities carry a census out, but the data have to be sent to Rome. The government banned the communes from copying data, but some did it anyway. Anghiari unfortunately didn't. The data have been evaluated, but I regret to say precise details are missing, which means they are mostly useless for town planning purposes. The average figures cover too wide a spectrum.

Staying or going? Martin Einsele criticised the agricultural policies coming out of Brussels for causing more havoc in the countryside than all the architects or people moving away.

Gian Franco Di Pietro regretted he was not in a position to influence the economic mechanism of the EC.

"At first sight, the situation in Anghiari would appear to be good. Not much land has been abandoned. However, a closer look reveals that 80 per cent of farmers are over 60 years of age. What will happen in ten years' time? We can predict the changes by looking at other parts of Tuscany. On the other hand, when we were on the farms stock-taking at weekends, we noticed that many of the farmers' children came to help. The countryside can still exert a pull."

Problem solved? Martin Einsele wondered where funding for the conservation of farm houses might come from.

Gian Franco Di Pietro pointed out that the many Germans who had bought houses in Tuscany were helping to solve the problem. "The population of Greve in Chianti is already almost 50 per cent German. It's now a bilingual area.

I'm happy there are Germans helping to solve the problem."

House prices rise. Gian Franco Di Pietro mentioned their plan to conserve the old town of Sansepolcro. "The town centre was fast becoming depopulated. At that time, terraced houses cost the equivalent of between 50,000 and 70,000 German marks. Our planning efforts stimulated demand, and people started coming back. The same houses have doubled in price.

Successful conservation policies in Anghiari have led to increased demand from tourists. We now get many visitors, not only Germans, but many Italians too.

City dwellers have also been buying flats and houses in Anghiari for some time now.

Targeted sales of empty and dilapidated houses were suggested by Roland Günter.

"There are plenty of foreigners willing to buy, but they don't know the ropes, and they are frightened off by unrealistic asking prices. Then they have trouble with the language and don't know how to fill in Italian forms or deal with public authorities. A privately run advisory service might help bridge this gap and restore trust. Potential buyers could pay for advice on realistic prices, the building of extensions, drafting of plans and care of a property once they have bought it."

Gian Franco Di Pietro was impressed by this idea. "The Greeks have gone a long way further down this road than we have. They have a conservation act. A record is made of all abandoned properties. The state restores empty properties and rents them out to outsiders for 20 years, after which they are handed back to their owners. I have discussed the idea with politicians from our region, but they have not taken it up.

Why not? The métayage farmers were never land owners, so they did not have close ties to their land. But town and village dwellers are so closely tied to their properties that they refuse to sell them, even when they are falling down."

Gian Franco Di Pietro made the following contributions to discussions:

First, he regretted the lack of contact between builders in towns and cultural experts.

"Until 1980 or thereabouts, the municipal authorities in Monterchi were at a loss to know what to do with their painting of the Madonna del Parto by Piero della Francesca."

"As far as traffic is concerned, there are not many policemen around, which means motorists lack civic education (*educazione civica*)."

"The country is to a large extent ungovernable. A strange form of anarchy prevails."

"With reference to the historic Old Town, people's habits – especially their bad ones and their unrestricted use of cars – do not tally with historical tradition.

For centuries, the piazza was the meeting place (*convento*) for farmers to discuss the weather, their work, seed-time and harvest. But then it was turned into a car park. People no longer spend time on the piazza or live out their lives there (*non si ferma più a viverla*). They drive on to it, park their cars, do their shopping and drive away again.

The parking facilities provided by the municipal authorities at the top and bottom ends of the town are empty, but the streets are full of cars. People's actions are very short-term.”

“It isn't easy to compromise.”

“We encounter a certain civilising deficit (*inciviltà*). It's all a question of culture.”

“It's important to establish a sense of balance with regard to the small hamlets in the Anghiari area. What should be preserved? What do the farmers need? They often build in an uncontrolled manner, so the municipal planning authorities have to exert reasonable control.”

“Some people naïvely believe the historic centre is no longer alive. They think it should be livened up, by which they mean it should become car-friendly in order to encourage retailers to set up shop. They want to sacrifice the structure of the town centre in order to satisfy their naïve assumptions. This is short-term thinking, and they are short-sighted.”

A society full of contradictions

Yesterday – today – tomorrow? A conversation between two women illustrates the contradictions within society, and the way poverty and prosperity have wrought changes over time.

The librarian Ilia Cerboni (known as Lilli) recalled Sundays in summer time. “Families would go on an outing to a spot on the ridge to the north of Anghiari. People walked there from all directions to spend time at Anghiari's “seaside”. The poor couldn't yet afford to go to the seaside, so for them it was a dream.”

“Lorries loaded with large water melons from Romagna used to roll up for the festival known as *festa del cocomero*. ”

“I can remember the smell of vanilla from the *cavallucci* at Christmas.”

“I remember the rich used to give soup to the poor.”

“Nowadays I have the impression everyone's always on the go, but they can't look ahead or behind them.”

“We used to live on Piazza Mameli, next-door to Palazzo Taglieschi. They could have made a film like “The name of the rose” about the large and overcrowded house. The big rooms were often divided off by means of large sheets hanging from floor to ceiling, so that two families could live in one room. The children poked their heads through the round windows, to watch what was going on in the square.

On the one hand, we were poor. My grandma gave me my first doll when I was 18. On the other hand, we were happy and singing all the time. In the evenings, everyone sat outside in the fresh air.

I remember the song contests from San Remo we used to listen to on the radio. They were lovely!

Those were the days! Although we were poor, we lived in hope.

Then things did get better, but paradoxically hope became irrelevant in the wealthy 1980s. People nowadays don't know what hope is, they just live from one day to the next. As for hope, they just hope they won't fall ill or have an accident.

Yes, they are alive, but they are afraid of losing. Political hope? Idealism? No! They only think about themselves.

People who emigrated to places like France used to send money to the party. Nowadays, that type of party no longer exists. Party leaders sit down at the same table as the powerful, all in their Armani suits, trade unionists and ministers alike, all privileged persons. Whoever they are, whatever they're like, Berlusconi entertains them all non-stop. They're only thinking of today. They'll have changed their minds by tomorrow.

When they're canvassing, politicians put on a mask. And when their jobs are secure they say, "I'm the boss – *basta!*" They're all the same, however high or lowly they might be.

We've got five banks in Anghiari. What for? Many people live off high interest rates. The factories have gone, but the rich are getting richer.

We live in an age of no morals. Values have disappeared. People don't believe in anything. Society is starting to get childish (*imbambolare*).

Perhaps the Middle Ages are coming back."

Marisa Villareggi, who works in a chemist's shop, said, "I was born into a farming family, and I'm contented.

Work used to destroy people. I've seen it happen. People live better lives now.

Of course life has its dramatic moments, like births or deaths.

But it's odd, when I was a child I lay down on the ground beneath the tobacco leaves and dreamt. Now my children don't know what to do with themselves. They need the help of television."

New citizens

Let us set out from Anghiari, cross the Sovara Valley, past Vaglialle and the old school where Saverio Tutino lives with his sculptor girl-friend, and drive up a dusty unmade road to Upacchi. This hill village is 7.5 kilometres from Anghiari and 596 metres above sea level.

In the Middle Ages, travellers on horseback or mules used to pass this way when crossing the Alpe di Poti. Pietramala, the main castle of the Tarlati family (mediaeval lords of Arezzo and Anghiari) was on the other side of the ridge.

Re-birth. The 1970s exodus from the countryside meant most houses were left empty. In the 1980s, Upacchi was a ghost village.

In 1990, a co-operative was founded that bought 200 hectares of land off 75 property owners. The latter were initially pleased to get anything at all for their fallow land, but when, to their surprise, demand was there, they quickly raised their prices.

Seventeen families – from Turin, Como and Germany – were living there by 1995. Three families who had tired of their life in Naples built houses in Poggiolo.

The co-operative laid down one fundamental requirement: Upacchi had to be a family's main place of residence.

The new villagers put in infrastructure at their own expense – a road, empty conduits for electricity cables, a water supply and water tower.

Some of the houses were demolished and re-built exactly as before. The buildings conservation office laid down strict requirements.

Upacchi was to become an ecological village with passive solar energy, photovoltaics, and wind turbines.

In 1995, the village had but one telephone. It was in the office of the co-operative, a small room

near the entrance to the village. A Bavarian joiner set up his workshop next door. One of the families baked bread and delivered it to Anghiari. One married couple were retired, but most of the members of the community were in their thirties in 1995.

One of them described communal life as not easy. It was hard to balance life in the community with private life, he said. You had to learn when to keep your mouth shut and when to stand up for yourself.

The people up in Poggiole had always been more prosperous and had more living space.

Escapism or just a change of direction? A German woman named Renate Mehl is a community member who previously lived in a suburb of Heidelberg. She used to work as a bookseller.

She was the second person to join the community. The first was Herbert Nagel, a farmer who supplemented his earnings by running an *agriturismo*. Renate was 32 when she arrived in the area, in the company of an artist who loved the southern light. The two of them used Renate's savings to buy the farm at Schietto near Toppole (a castle with a graveyard to the west of Anghiari).

She recalled, "At the time, I hadn't a clue about farming, but we had 23 hectares of land to cultivate and two children. Our relationship broke down under the strain. I was left alone with a cow, some sheep and one of the children (my ex-partner took the other one with him). I gave myself one year to see if I could manage. It was hard, but I did it."

By 2004, Renate Mehl was 52. She was able to live off her farm, her main source of income being the sale of oil. She had also converted six rooms in the historic hamlet to accommodate summer guests from Germany, Canada and the United States.

"You have to do things yourself. I have no time for political parties."

Siegfried Fehrenbach is an engineer from Furtwangen (Germany), who worked for Bosch in Stuttgart for 30 years. "For many years my political allegiance was divided between the Christian Democrats and the Greens. But one day I saw through all their machinations, especially after I quit my job at the age of 59. At this time, Bosch was encouraging employees to leave the firm. I told them I had to go, although they didn't want me to at first."

After leaving Bosch, he went to agricultural college in Hohenheim. He had always wanted to be a farmer.

Siegfried Fehrenbach stayed with Herbert Nagel for five months, then went to live as a guest with Renate Mehl. He stayed, and at the age of 72 (in 2004) he was still helping her by repairing and restoring machines, tools, buildings, the hay barn and many other things. He has wrought miracles in the field of interior design: simplicity combined with intellect, the traditional with the modern, in the very best sense of the word.

"I like the mentality of the people here", he said, "you can always talk to the craftsmen and tradesmen. They have time. If you say, "How much does it cost?" they will often make a gesture to indicate it was a pleasure to do it for you."

"There's a lot of contact between the people", said Renate Mehl, "but I'm not the sociable type. There are many more individualists here than in big cities. They're all a bit crazy."

A former physics professor from the USA who, as a communist, found life difficult there, lives nearby.

Renate Mehl does not intend to give up her German cultural background and become an Italian. She speaks German at home, but she does not feel like a stranger, and wants her ashes to be interred in Italy.

She loves her garden and her animals, but this is not life as depicted in glossy magazines, it is hard

work. “I erected fences, but even so the wild boar got in and ate all my potatoes. They drive me mad! They destroy everything, even the flowers in the garden. I’m going to buy a shotgun.”

She pointed out the senseless way in which, according to the huntsmen, the wild boar population had become too numerous. “Thirty years ago”, she said, “they were non-existent. But the locals wanted something to hunt, so they introduced wild boar. By a stupid coincidence, the animals they introduced belong to a breed that produce a litter of 12 instead of the usual three. It’s absurd. They say they need a lot of animals so they have something to shoot.”

Philosophically she added, “You need to keep calm, otherwise you can’t live in close contact with nature.”

A lawyer called Thomas Kudlazek worked as a successful notary in Hamburg until he and his psychologist wife decided they wanted more from life. They bought Villa Cardero on Montebello, another promontory. Thanks to modern communications technology, he has no trouble in administering and increasing the money he has invested in Germany via the internet. What interests him in Anghiari is education, education, education! Furthermore, in 1984, he set up an “Association for the protection of German property owners in Tuscany”. This is a useful and necessary facility, as the Italian legal system is much more complicated than the German one.

A German sociologist named Stefanie Risso came many years ago to work as a translator for Vittorio Dini, a professor for sociology at the University of Siena/Arezzo. She then tried many ways to keep her head above water in Italy, working as a translator, writer and estate agent. She worked for some time for a successful agency that deals in holiday homes. She was also one of the founding women members of the University of Autobiography.

“The Tuscan faction” is how the Germans dub the 60,000 or so of their fellow-countrymen who have bought houses in Tuscany. Many live here for much of the year, not only in their holidays. Some work, others are retired.

Large tracts of the land would run to waste without the immigrants who have made their homes here for one reason or another. When a farmer abandons his farm, the saviour and loving restorer of the cultural inheritance will be someone from north of the Alps, often described by the Italians as a “barbarian”.

This results in a multi-layered culture that, in the eyes of experts, could contribute to a genuine Europe. One day the locals will also comprehend the opportunity they are being offered.

More work on the Old Town

Conservation in former times. Under an act of 1571, no-one was allowed to remove coats-of-arms, signs, titles or inscriptions, whether painted or sculpted, from public or private buildings. Adding one's own sign was also forbidden, on pain of a fine of 2,000 lire.⁷⁰

In principle, this is an example of conservation of monuments, since it demanded respect for the signs of the past, and would not allow people to put up their own signs in place of the old ones.

Towns as monuments. In the 1960s, conservationists gradually learned the meaning of town conservation, which establishes links between one large area and another.

The impetus for this is not hard to make out. Some Italian old towns had already been excellently preserved. The French Loi Malraux – the only one of its kind at the time – placed conservation orders on nearly 400 old towns in their entirety. In the 1970s, this strict law influenced what was then West

Germany.

Having placed conservation orders on the famous cities of Florence, Lucca and Siena, Italian conservationists turned their attention to smaller towns.

Italian conservation orders are extremely tough if you compare them with their German equivalents. The German ones are watered down by a thousand compromises. The Italians are fierce in their attention to detail, particularly regarding exteriors. If anyone fails to comply, the authorities are merciless in forcing him to make good his mistakes. This applies equally to ground-floor space with shop windows and to inappropriate advertising.

Italian conservation orders do not allow for personal taste or any alternatives. The fact is, a monument is a monument, and everyone has to accept this. Those who think differently have to go elsewhere.

We have the strict implementation of these laws to thank for the fact that Italy still has old towns. In Germany, they would have changed out of all recognition.

Like everything everywhere, the legislation has its weak points. It is restricted to buildings and ignores context. It ought to ban cars from the piazzas.

Conservationists have made one mistake in Anghiari by exposing the stones the buildings are made of, and establishing this as a matter of principle. From a historical point of view, this is wrong. It is clear that the masonry is of poor quality. These are stones that were removed from the bed of the Tiber, and they would always have been whitewashed in the past. All the buildings would therefore have been covered in plaster. The only exception would have been the well pointed brickwork, mainly done in the 14th century.

Disaster as an opportunity. The Upper Tiber Valley is a Category II earthquake zone. Disaster in the form of a earthquake struck on 26th September 1997.⁷¹ The town received government aid for a time, and thus obtained a certain amount of financial leeway. Safety and other measures were paid for. Some of the side effects of the measures were actually of greater importance than the main ones.

The uninhabited monastery of Sant'Agostino at least had its exterior walls restored. Debates about its use have stalled.⁷²

The old walkway along the town wall. The municipal authorities had the old walkway below Sant'Agostino restored, with excellent results. The Old Town has profited from having a grandstand view of the Tiber Valley.

There is also a staircase in the apse of the church, which at this point doubles as a tower in the fortifications. It links the Old Town to the car park. Mayor Danilo Bianchi had a lift installed.

I giardini del vicario. Danilo Bianchi also restored the *vicario's* garden behind the present-day town hall. A bar was installed in the left wing of the town hall. A most attractive area has been created, designed in 2003 by the architect Valerio Dell'Omarino, at the point where the interior and exterior of the Old Town meet, and with a view over the expanse of the Tiber Valley to the Apennine mountains.

It has delighted the many tourists who have visited the town since Mayor Talozzi's days.

Superficiality (*superficialità*). Much of the work done on the Old Town has been done unsatisfactorily, without prior analysis, documentation or precise execution.

One example of this is Via del Destino, which was lowered by one metre by means of a ramp, in order to restore the walkway on the top of the town wall. However, the sewage pipes were incorrectly installed, so earthworks had to be raised on one side. Other inaccuracies followed.

Fabiano Giabbanelli, a citizen of Anghiari, protested.

For a start, a fence was put up to hide the building site from public view.

The office for the conservation of public monuments found in favour of Giabbanelli.

However, the side that had been raised could not be lowered again, because the waste water pipes had already been installed, so the area was just touched up a bit.

The administration also demanded access for the disabled. Giabbanelli was able to show that half the historic Old Town was made up of obstacles that hindered access for the disabled. So many hurdles could never be dismantled.

At the same time, the municipal authorities were putting in steps in other places. This constituted an offence against the same law that guaranteed access for the disabled. Moreover, the steps are too narrow, and they lack intermediate platforms.

Following this, the administration built a ramp at the end of Via delle Mura di Sotto, at a point where there used to be steps. This measure ruined twelve metres of historic area – there had always been an observation post at this point.

Mending the town wall. The town walls were repaired between 2003 and 2005, as they were gradually becoming loose. Their anchorage had always been weak in parts. At some points the wall is only 40cm thick. Water seeps in between the rocks and the wall and pushes the wall outwards.

Popular theatre

Once films became widespread – silent ones in the 1920s and “talkies” from the 1930s – the theatre went into decline.⁷³

Renaissance. The Culture Prize gave rise to a modest renaissance. Gian Franco Vené wrote an ironic musical called “Baldaccio d’Anghiari. Storia e leggenda di un capitano di ventura”. It dealt with people’s desire for a hero, but Baldaccio is a gangster rather than a hero. It is not difficult to work out its relevance to the present day.

This musical comedy was staged in the Teatro Comunale on the occasion of the awarding of the 1982 Culture Prize. It was performed by the Compagnia dei Ricomposti and directed by Gian Franco Vené. The music was composed by Annibale Del Sere, a weaver⁷⁴. Mario Guiducci was responsible for artistic co-ordination, Patrizia Corridore for costumes, Maria Pia Fabiani for dressmaking and Alberto Vellati for lighting.

On tour. The company travelled by coach to Germany and Holland in 1982 and gave three performances, one at Cologne Fire Station, one at a socio-cultural centre at the University of Bielefeld and another in Oberhausen.

Revival. On Friday 1st May 1992, it was again performed at the theatre in Anghiari by Valerio Barni, Cecilia Bartolomei, Santino Del Sere, Annibale Del Sere (a minstrel), Walter Del Sere (Baldaccio), Domitilla Del Pia, Elisabetta Guiducci, Mario Guiducci (also musical director), Loris Leonardi, Eugenio Papini, Giuseppe Ricceri, Domenico Rossi, Cristina Rumori, Ermindo Santi, Cinzia Talozzi, Katia Talozzi and Carlo Urci. The musicians were Ezio Boncompagni, Walter Canicchi, Roberto Cherici and Massimo Dalla Raggione. Eleonora Guiducci and Paola Rosselli were the bridesmaids. Maria Pia Fabiani was the prompt.

“Teatro Povero”. A young theatre director, Andrea Merendelli, was engaged by the company in 1996. He came from Anghiari-Tavernelle, and had been a drama student in Florence.

This was also the first year in which a play in the series “Tovaglia a Quadri” was staged.⁷⁵ These

plays were based on the “Teatro Povero” that originated in the small village of Montichiello⁷⁶ near Montepulciano. The plays were more or less conceived as a joint effort on the part of the cast, and the subject matter was the village itself, past and present. Some years later, in 2004, Regione Toscane recognised the high standard of the performances. The musical was performed ten times a year on Poggiolino square.

Audiences were also attracted by the food and drink. They wined and dined at long tables, while the players performed between courses. Every performance was sold out, even though the tickets were anything but cheap.

Living tableaux (*quadri viventi*) are produced in honour of Our Lady of Loreto. Pasqualino Meoni described them thus: “Her feast day is 10th December, and a 14th century picture of her can be seen in the *Badia*. The mediaeval tradition of “living tableaux” was revived in 2002.

A procession passes through the town on the feast day itself. It sets out from the *Badia* and follows the lower walls as far as Sant'Agostino, then on to Piazza Mameli, where it turns to the right and enters the area between the two town gates. It then returns to the *Badia*.

The procession halts at various places along the way. A “living tableau” is presented at every station – a scene composed of actors standing as still as statues.

One of these tableaux is at Porta Sant'Angelo, a second under the windows of Talozzi's house, then one at the top and one at the bottom of the area between the two town gates. The final tableau is on Poggiolino square.

Every neighbourhood (*ogni rione*) creates one tableau, on which numerous families collaborate over a longer period of time.

Deliberations take place in their living rooms. Props, materials and flowers are needed for the scenes, all of which are paid for by the townsfolk themselves.

Each tableau is different, so we agree among ourselves which one suits which neighbourhood.

There was once a landslide under Talozzi's house. The earth movements created a grotto, in which the Nativity could be re-enacted. St. Joseph and the Three Kings were present. I was dressed as a Roman guardsman, complete with uniform, lance and shield.

One year, they made a very large tableau in a garden. Vittorio Meoni, then 15 years of age, played the part of Christ.

The various town quarters are in competition with each other, they all want to produce the best tableau. We often go to the others and tell them ours is best.

The most beautiful girl is chosen to play the Madonna, a rôle that raises her to pre-eminence among the girls in the town. Next day, people on the piazza will respectfully say, “That's the girl who was the Madonna”.

Sometimes there's a bit of jealousy. Or the rôle is promised to one girl, but then given to a different one who is even more beautiful.

People from all around – from Sansepolcro and Città di Castello – come to this very long procession.

Torches are lit everywhere.

I can remember putting pottery bowls, about two to three metres apart, on a wall. We filled them with oil, put in a wick and lit the lamps. They burned for two to three hours.

The whole town is illuminated. The children carry lanterns (*lampioncini*). The tableaux are floodlit.”

A project to improve the square in front of the theatre

Anghiari boasts one of the most glorious series of squares in Tuscany, but one square is still waiting for a face-lift: Piazza IV Novembre in front of the theatre.

Valerio Dell'Omarino of Anghiari drew up a plan to improve it, which he presented in 2006. The given situation is not easy to deal with, but he was able subtly to incorporate the historic structure of the Corsi garden, with its round elements and axes, into the plan [...]. His design included car parks above the theatre (on Via Bozia) and a lift to connect the two. This would have removed cars from the covered market and the square. If his plan had been realised, it would have been the “icing on the cake” for this beautiful town.

The Free University of Autobiography

Decline. Anghiari, together with Arezzo and Cortona, was at the cultural forefront in the area for ten years, from 1976 onwards. But not much happened after Mayor Talozzi left office and after the death of the author Vené in 1992.

But the old circumstances were still affecting cultural life in a subtle way. The ground turned out to be more fertile than expected.

In 1999, Dr. Duccio Demetrio, a professor at the University of Milan-Bicocca and Severio Tutino, a journalist, founded the Libera Università dell'Autobiografia di Anghiari.

A culture of remembrance. This not-for-profit facility takes no account of age or title, but is dedicated to the writing down of personal experiences and memories. People may have various reasons for doing this. They may wish to record and document history, they may have social, cultural or literary reasons, or educational or theoretical ends.

A culture of remembrance has been created.

Saverio Tutino, an author and journalist, is the honorary president. He founded the Diary Archives in the neighbouring town of Pieve Santo Stefano, which calls itself Città del diario⁷⁷. Their president was Duccio Demetrio and the academic director Loretta Fabbri. Organisation and secretarial work were in the hands of the extremely efficient and hard-working Renato Li Vigni.

Courses are attended by students at the University of Milan-Bicocca, together with participants from all over the world. Publications are issued.⁷⁸

In 2004, the institution had a budget of about 150,000 euros at its disposal.

Letter-writing circle. Stefanie Risso founded and ran a circle (“Il Circolo”) in 1999. Many writers in many different languages exchange letters. In the first year, there were over one thousand letter writers. Stefanie Risso recalled, “They wrote a thousand letters, needing nothing more than a table and a stamp.” The letters are read and answered at the Circle’s headquarters by employees, Italians and non-Italians who live in Anghiari. Its motto is “Know others and know thyself”. They co-operate with the Mass Observation Archive at the University of Sussex, the Deutsches Tagebucharchiv in Emmendingen (Germany) and the Kärsämäki Life Story Academy in Finland.

Remembrance as a form of therapy. When the IV Convegno nazionale narrazione e terapia took place in Anghiari in 2002, a sensational exhibition of works by Carlo Zinelli, a schizophrenic artist, was held in Villa Miravalle.

Organising cultural life. In 2004, on every second Sunday of the month, the University organised an antiques and second-hand book market on the main square. A splendid side-effect of this was the absence of cars on the square, although it made one furious to think how this historic and aesthetically pleasing scene is misused at other times – and all to the short-term advantage of some egoists who are obsessed with their cars.

Since 2005, children have also been involved in the Università. On certain days, they are ferried by bus to an open-air theatre in the countryside.

Since the final years of the 20th century, the Università has been the driving force in the cultural life of the town.

If the Culture Prize of the 1970s and 1980s was about “culture for everyone” (to quote Hilmar Hoffmann), the Università is in some way “culture with everyone” and, what is more, at an international level.

Notes on:

The second half of the 20th century (16.)

- 1 Details in: Bertoldi, 1994.
- 2 Nenni, 1983.
- 3 Ferrini, 1975.
- 4 Bianchi, 1981.
- 5 Babbini, 1973 – 1974.
- 6 Moretti, 2004, no page number.
- 7 Michael Peterek in Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcic, 1995, illustration on p. 35.
- 8 For an interview on the company history of Busatti, see Schütte, 1995, 202/206.
- 9 Fanfani, 1971, 39.
- 10 Bolletti, 2004.
- 11 Moretti, Calli, 2004, no page number.
- 12 Moretti, Antiquari, 2004, no page number.
- 13 Moretti, Antiquari, 2004, no page number.
- 14 Terenzi, 1968.
- 15 Noferi, 2004, no page number.
- 16 Istituto Statale d'Arte, 2002.
- 17 The entry requirement for over 14-year-olds is a certificate from the Lower Middle School (Scuola Media Inferiore).
- 18 Mostra “Tabernacoli”, 2000.
- 19 After the Taglieschi family died out, the complex of houses changed hands several times. The Anghiari parish priest, Monsignore Danilo (“Nilo”) Conti bought it in 1954 from the Brizzi family. Previously, in 1947, he had inherited the complex of houses (known as Palazzo del Marzocco) facing it from his sister, who had bought the property from the Testi family in 1941. A project to convert the Taglieschi house in 1956 did not come to fruition. (The idea had been to convert it to meet the requirements of contemporary functionalism, which would have wreaked havoc.) In 1959, Don Conti gave both houses to the State as a gift, with the proviso that a museum (already under discussion) should be set up. In 1961, the lengthy restoration of the Taglieschi building was started under the auspices of the Office for the Preservation of Monuments, which had taken over responsibility for the building, and the museum began to be developed. The local authority is unable to exert any influence, as the museum is subject to the direction of the State (Soprintendenza per i Beni Ambientali, Architettonici, Artistici, e Storici per la Provincia di Arezzo). See Trotta, 1993, 50/54 for the history of the ownership of the building.
- 20 See also: Cesarini/Torricini, 1986.
- 21 Quoted in Morini, 2001, 35.
- 22 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 73.

- 23 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1992, 80/81. De Simoni, 1998.
- 24 Franco Talozzi was born in Chiusi (in the Province of Siena) in 1937. His parents were peasant farmers. He went to a primary school run by nuns, which was administered by the local landlord. He spent three years at secondary school. – When he was 16, he took a job as a waiter in nearby Chianciano Terme. – In 1957, he started work at the tax office, dealing with purchase tax. In 1957/1958 he worked in Castiglione del Lago, in 1959/1964 in Chiusi Stazione, 1959/1964 in Radicofani, and 1964/1969 in Buonconvento. He moved to Anghiari in 1969, where he was in charge of the tax office. Between 1973 and 1983, he worked in the tax office of Sansepolcro, after which he retired. – He held various offices in the communist party (PCI), of which he was a member, including that of party secretary. In 1972, the region of Tuscany appointed him as director of the Martini Institute for care of the elderly. In 1975, he became a town councillor, and in July 1976 mayor. He was re-elected in 1980, but resigned in March 1982, to make room for his successor. As this did not work out, Talozzi was asked to take up the duties of mayor again. He remained in that position until 1990. Later, he clashed with his (communist) party in Arezzo and Anghiari, resigned and ran for office as an independent candidate (*indipendente per lo sviluppo ed il progresso di Anghiari*). He was re-elected as mayor, remaining in office, as agreed with the other parties, until February 1992, when it was time for the next candidate to take his turn. Talozzi then took on the job of president of the local public transport company, which had got into trouble. His hobbies are literature, music, politics as history of peoples, the church and folk tradition.
- 25 Teatro Comunale dei Ricomposti, 1989. The regional government was implementing a plan for the restoration of Tuscan theatres. Planning was in the hands of the Ufficio Tecnico Anghiari, with Del Sere, Maurizio Vitellozzi and Luciano Martini. Prof. Francesco Guerrieri of the Facoltà di Architettura di Firenze collaborated in the restoration work. The purchase price was 542 million lire; labour and furnishings added up to another 450 million lire. One thousand working days were put in by each workman.
- 26 There was a public library – and also rules for borrowing books – in the Franciscan monastery of Santa Croce in 1630. In 1947, the Workers' Association created an initial nucleus of what was to become the library on the premises of the Camera del Lavoro (Via Corso Matteotti). Many books came from the old Casa del Fascio, which had been based in Palazzo Corsi in the 1920s. In 1970 or thereabouts, the library was moved to Piazza del Popolo. In 1979, the municipality decided to enlarge it, and to set up the historical archives, both of which were to be housed in Palazzo Corsi.
- 27 The story played out against a different background. Saverio Tutino, who later moved to Anghiari [...], and was for dozens of years a star among Italian journalists, particularly as far as the secret services went, told the author the kidnapping of General Dozier was orchestrated by the Italian secret services and the CIA for propaganda purposes, and the left was blamed.
- 28 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 37.
- 29 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 38.
- 30 Babbini/Finzi, 1979, 18.
- 31 Babbini, 1989, 35.
- 32 Trotta/Casciu, 1991, on Sant'Agostino. Casciu, 1993, on Palazzo Taglieschi and Palazzo Marzocco.
- 33 Centro, 2000. Leonardo da Vinci described “*como si deve figurare una battaglia*” in cap. 145 of his *Trattato della pittura*.
- 34 Relazione del Sindaco sui beni culturali presentata al Consiglio Comunale del 13/2/1977. Biblioteca popolare comunale Anghiari.
- 35 “In un momento come quello attuale dove la crisi economica si accompagna anche una crisi generale dei valori umani, morali e civili, mettendo in discussione tutte le scelte di indirizzo sociale e soprattutto culturale finora seguite, è nostro compito primario lavorare alla riconversione di indirizzi sbagliati; educando il cittadino, elevando la cultura, per renderlo sempre più capace di comprendere la realtà e per trasformarla positivamente: bisogna concorrere tutti per costruire un modello nuovo di vita la quale tenda a superare gli egoismi individuali, di categoria e di gruppo che ci sono creati nella società, sviluppatasi in modo tumultuoso affinché si affermino sempre più quei valori morali, ideali che ci permettano di andare avanti nello sviluppo dell'intero patrimonio culturale, umanistico e sociale del nostro paese ... I nostri beni culturali sono come nel racconto di Cecov “*La Steppa*” che cercava disperatamente un poeta, affinché di lei parlasse per riscattarla della solitudine e dall'abbandono. Diamogli anche noi il loro poeta cioè tutta la cura e l'attenzione dovuta ...”
- 36 Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1983. On Democrazia Cristiana. Giuseppe Bartolomei, 1985.
- 37 Comune di Anghiari , PDF file no. 8, Zona A.L.R. 21-5-80 no. 59. Progettisti: G. Corsi, D. Grifoni, S.M. Pratico (all architects).

- 38 Finzi, 1994, 46.
- 39 The plasterwork done in 1895 was removed in 1963, and the façade re-plastered.
- 40 Babbini, 1989, 37.
- 41 Babbini, 1989, 126/130, including his biography.
- 42 Giuseppe Bartolomei (1923-1996) Resistance fighter, co-founder of the regional Democrazia Cristiana, councillor in Anghiari; 1954/1961 party secretary in the Province of Arezzo. He was head of Prime Minister Amintore Fanfani's Office from 1961 to 1963. In 1973, he was President of the Senate. From 1980, he acted as Minister for Agriculture and Forestry in the Forlani Government and in subsequent governments until 1982. From 1984 to 1996, he was President of Banca Toscana. Bartolomei, 1990.
- 43 Giorgio Manzini, co-author of *Le bombe di Milano*. His works include: *Una vita operaia*. Torino, 1976., 2nd ed. 1977, 3rd ed. s.a. – *Indagine su un brigatista rosso*. Torino 1978. – *Una famiglia italiana*. – *Padroni e contadini. Il primo processo dell'Italia unita*. Milano, 1983.
- 44 The book: Meyer, 1985 was published to coincide with the exhibition.
- 45 Publication: Calabrese, 1985.
- 46 Vené, 1972. Vené, 1988. Vené, 1989. Vené, 1990.
- 47 Flaminini, 2004, no. 22, 27/48.
- 48 Report in the Oberhausen local edition of the *Neue Ruhr Zeitung*, 1 May 1980.
- 49 Diario di Piazza Baldaccio. Walter del Sere, Danilo Bianchi, Rossano Bianchi, Gino Dente, Massimo dalla Ragione, Roberto Santi. Responsabile Saverio Tutino; c. 1982.
- 50 University of Karlsruhe Faculty of Architecture, Institute for Regional and Federal State Planning, Chair of Town Planning. The 1993 summer term seminar was titled: Selected areas of town planning. Town – culture – landscape. A socio-spatial analysis based on Anghiari/Tuscany. Supervised by Roland Günter, Martin Einsele, Michael Peterek, Darko Stevcic. Field work in Anghiari from 16th to 30th August 1993. Evaluation in the winter term of 1993/1994. Barbara Wameling, Janne Günter, Stefania Bolletti, Franco Talozzi and Gian Franco di Pietro, and radio journalist Rosvita Krausz were also involved. – Einsele/Günter/Peterek/Stevcic, 1995.
- 51 Comparable both artistically and in terms of the period when he was writing with the German poet Rainer Maria Rilke.
- 52 Dente, 1996.
- 53 Mayors after 1946: 1946 Antonio Ferrini; 1966 Berio Nocentini; July 1976 Franco Talozzi, re-elected May 1980; March 1982 Gianfranco Giorni, resigned June 1985; Franco Talozzi, resigned March 1990; Enrico Galoppi, resigned June 1990; Franco Talozzi, resigned January 1992; Fedele Boncompagni; August 1992 Danilo Bianchi. March 1994 State Commissioner (Commissario Prefettizio); June 1994 Maddalena Senesi, re-elected May 1998; June 2002 Danilo Bianchi.
- 54 Detti/Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1968. Funds were exhausted in 1968; the publication appeared in 1972.
- 55 Mariani, 1990.
- 56 It was originally a stream that flowed into the Tiber.
- 57 Stefania Freddo's comments on harsh life in the countryside, in: Moroni, 2001, 45ff.
- 58 Profilo territoriale.
- 59 Hausmann, 1997.
- 60 Giuseppe Bartolomei, Vangelo, 1993. On a time of profound change; useful insights into the thinking of Democrazia Cristiana. – Bartolomei, 1994.
- 61 On Berlusconi: Giovanni Ruggieri, Berlusconi. Showmaster der Macht. Die Biographie. Berlin, 1994. Jens Renner, Der Fall Berlusconi. Rechte. Politik. Mediendiktatur. Göttingen, 1994. On his mindset: Tobias Jones, Italien – das dunkle Herz des Südens. Berlin, 2004 (English title: The Dark Heart of Italy).
- 62 Bettino Craxi: socialist party leader in 1976; Prime Minister in 1983. He accepted large bribes and evaded taxes on foreign investments. He fled to Tunisia in 1994; an international warrant was issued for his arrest, but he died there in 2000.
- 63 Large sums of money, for instance in 1991, flowed to the “socialists” through Swiss bank accounts, via the P2 secret Lodge.
- 64 The judges established that Craxi's party, and Craxi personally, benefited from a huge bribe paid by the chemical group Enimont. Further large sums were paid to former governing parties and serving ministers. After his fall, Raul Gardini, head of Enimont, shot himself in the head. – In 1989, Berlusconi was given a custodial sentence of two years and four months for four bribes. In 1991/1992, he provided Craxi's party (Craxi too was sentenced) with illegal funds via an offshore bank account (“All Iberian”).
- 65 Livy [59BC – 12AD], History of Rome, Book I. Tacitus [55AD – 125AD], The Annals, a history of Rome

- under the Julio-Claudian emperors. Suetonius [70AD – c.155AD], *The Twelve Caesars*.
- 66 After seven years of investigations, Andreotti was put on trial in Palermo. Two hundred and fifty hearings took place, 350 witnesses testified, charges ran to 200,000 pages. The prosecution maintained he had associated with, and tolerated, the mafia. He was said to have had secret meetings with mafia leaders. The prosecution asked for life imprisonment. He was acquitted in 1993. Thirty witnesses had confirmed his dealings with the mafia, but only one, whom the court believed, had denied them. Protests took place throughout the land.
- 67 Such tactics were not only used by the rulers of ancient days, but also by Lorenzo de' Medici, known as "the Magnificent" (1449-1492).
- 68 Di Pietro/Fanelli, 1973.
- 69 Stefania Bolletti, *Archittettura popolare ad Anghiari. Costruzione/Trasformazione. Uso e significati simbolici dello spazio abitato*. Tesi di Laurea. Università degli studi di Firenze, Facoltà di Archittettura, Istituto di Ricerca Territoriale e Urbana. Anno Accademico 1985-1986.
- 70 Taglieschi, 1991/1614, 329.
- 71 Michael Arcaleni, Il terremoto in Alta Valle di Tevere. In: *Pagine altotiberine II*, 1998, no. 4, 7/24. Giovanni Cangi, Il terremoto del 30 settembre 1789 in Alta Valle del Tevere: note sulle istruzioni provvisionali e assistenza all'opera di ricostruzione. In: *Pagine altotiberine VI*, 2002, no. 17, 43/58.
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- 73 Andrea Merendelli, La piazza e l'accademia: Lo spettacolo in Anghiari nel secoli XVI-XVII. Tesi di Laurea, Università di Firenze, Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia. Storia dello Spettacolo. 1992-1993. Biblioteca Comunale d'Anghiari. – Laura Vichi, Musica e cultura accademica al Teatro dei Ricomposti di Anghiari tra XIX e XX secolo. Tesi di Laurea, Università di Siena/Arezzo, Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia. 2002-2003. Contains descriptions of opera, theatre groups, la Società Filarmonica. Biblioteca Comunale d'Anghiari.
- 74 Vené, 1992.
- 75 Programmes from 1995: Vichi, 2002, 76ff.
- 76 See also Günter, Toscana, 1985, 114/115.
- 77 Stefania Migliorucci, Il vivaio della memoria. In: *Pagine altotiberine III*, 1998, no. 5, 91/96. History of the Premio dei diari. The archives have been in Pieve Santo Stefano since 1984. Saverio Tutino: "Banca della memoria". Contains a bibliography.
- 78 Ilaria Moroni (ed.), Due paesi in racconto. Anghiari e Monterchi tra memorie individuali e collettive. Prefazione di Duccio Demetrio, Milano 2001. (Libera Università dell'Autobiografia). – Caterina Benelli/Sara Moretti (eds.) Quando avevo la tua età ... I nonni si scrivono ai nipoti. Comune di Anghiari, Istituto Comprensivo Statale, Libera Università dell'Autobiografia di Anghiari, Anghiari 2001. – Armando Zanchi, Il giro della vita. Storia esemplare di un individuo flessibile. Milano 2001. Laboratorio della memoria/Autobiografie. Armando Zanchi, a metalworker born in Anghiari in 1927, lives in Arezzo. It is the autobiography of a young man who was "always prepared to move on to the next place, but never to change". Premio XVI Premio Pieve-Banca Toscana. Fondazione Archivio Diaristico Nazionale, creato 1984 da Saverio Tutino. Stefanie Risso (ed.) La vita per posta. Cento europei si ricordano. Libera Università dell'Autobiografia di Anghiari 2002 (in Italian, English and German).

17. The urban fabric in architectural theory

A record of the times. The elderly preserve their life and times in the form of history, not merely their own personal history, but also the interlocking histories of many other people. They are always recounting their tales, every afternoon, next-door to their homes, on the piazza.

But it is unusual, more or less a coincidence, for someone in a place like Anghiari to write down such oral history. For the most part, when a person dies, his history dies with him.

In Anghiari, it is the stones, not human memories, that preserve former times.

Historians are not yet adept at reading the stones. As long as a historian sees himself as a member of a narrow academic discipline, he will largely shift responsibility to academics in other disciplines. And the members of this second – or seventeenth – discipline will equally fail to look beyond the confines of their own compartmentalised subject.

A history of men and women. The history of Anghiari is not the history of dukes and emperors. It is first and foremost the history of men and women.

Historians have more or less ignored them. The impetus to examine social history did not come from academic historians. In the Anghiari area, credit must go to Vittorio Dini, a sociologist at the University of Siena/Arezzo, for his anthropological studies, especially his investigations into agro-pastoral culture. The town of Anghiari was also an object of his research.

The urban fabric and the time dimension. The past, the present and the future are inextricably woven into the one fabric. Only ignorance – born of superficiality – could tempt us to unravel it. Lazy thinkers might try, hoping to bring it under their control. But dimensions of time are not really kept under control, because the fabric is so complex.

The municipal authorities, in Anghiari and beyond, must also understand they have a responsibility for the living fabric (*intreccio*) of a town, not only for certain processes they themselves have subjected to analysis.

It takes time and effort to discern this fabric, render it transparent and handle it productively. This process began in Anghiari in 1973, and is still proceeding slowly but surely.

It has the potential to be productive. Town planners are coming round to the view that the urban fabric may turn out to be productive. Bit by bit, they are realising how useful it can be – for present and for future generations – to re-discover the past.

It sometimes requires just as much effort to re-activate the past as to create something new, and it may be of greater importance. Those who re-visit the past are not merely being passive. We may compare their activities with those of great artists in drama and music. Those musicians who are performers rather than composers bring the music of the past alive, so that audiences may experience it in the present.

No-one would dream of saying Verdi and Beethoven were old hat, and we could manage without them. All music lovers will appreciate the fusion of the past and the present, and will wish to experience this in the future too. We cannot speak too highly of the achievements of great performers.

Modernist errors. When we review the past decades and the achievements of those years, we see how few promises have been fulfilled. Modern architects were highly praised, and their creative powers were held to be greater than those of their predecessors throughout the course of history. History was considered over and done with, unimportant, even null and void. It was as though there had never been any creative architects before our time. But “modernist” declarations and agreements proved to be absurd.

All historical movements once belonged to “the present”, which is how we can read them at any point in time.

When we look back, a great deal of what we think of as “modern” turns out not to be innovative at all. It is short-lived, “in”, functional (from the point of view of the building industry), and above all banal. The “Modern Movement” cannot in any way be seen as the pinnacle of urban activity.

It is much more important to re-open and re-discover what history has to teach us. It will give us values we can draw on now and in the future.

Wasted investments. Fabio Marraghini, a town planner from Anghiari, believes “Ninety per cent of investments in trendy new buildings have produced more disadvantages than advantages. It is important to learn to let things be; we have to behave with humility (*umiltà*) instead of with the arrogance of many architects who somehow see themselves as the creators of the universe.”

Survival in the wake of structural change. The fabric of Anghiari has been well preserved. Some of it has already been revealed, some is still waiting to be discovered.

Nowadays (2005 at the time of writing), the Old Town has an orderly appearance. It is in excellent shape, and has survived the era of structural change much better than most other towns. Very little has been lost.

New and necessary infrastructure – like sanitary facilities, water, electricity and gas, for example – has been installed sensitively, without detriment to what has evolved during the course of history.

The town has its exceptionally talented Mayor Franco Talozzi to thank for this. It is lucky to have had him.

A high standard of normality. Talozzi was an exceedingly competent and innovative mayor. He and those around him (especially Gian Franco Vené) raised standards in the town to an exceptionally high level, and filled it with cultural life. His achievements were more or less unique in Central Italy.

This great era drew to a close during the 1980s. Normality has returned, but standards are higher than before.

This is what keeps the town attractive.

Talozzi may have had undistinguished successors, but the town was on the right track. Its historic potential continued to be revealed, albeit slowly, and town planners put it to good use. Anghiari improved step by step, sometimes imperceptibly. After a while, to our surprise, the improvements were there for all to see.

Increasingly, we can see and feel that the urban fabric is intact.

But there is still a lot to do.

The sequence of squares has only been half discovered; this is work still in progress. Where the sequence has been restored, where it is once more intact, it is a success story. But even this first part could be made more visible. Part two has yet to be tackled.

Structural change has not yet been accomplished in the minds of the people, whatever their station.

Do it yourself – or nothing will get done. Don't expect much – if anything at all – from those in charge. The theatre and the beacon of hope that is the Free University of Autobiography were both grass-roots projects.

Temporary sanity. At festival times, the main square and the long street are free of cars. On such occasions, everyone agrees this is a good thing. After the festivities, people become pessimistic or helpless. When there is talk of banning cars for good, they ramble on about popular revolts. It's all nonsense, of course, but it's part of the local government mindset. Any attempt to create a sensible solution falls on deaf ears.

Dramatic scenes. It is the scenes that are the town's greatest asset. They form the most important part of the fabric. They were saved from annihilation in the years of structural change and, in their own special way, made productive again. The fabric of Anghiari, and its scenes in particular, are among the best that Italy has to offer.

Nature as a stage. Nature was the original architect. Let us look at the topography. The earth was created in millions of years. Humans could not have chosen a better master builder than nature in two

thousand years. The title of Gian Franco Vené's final book, the one he was working on at the time of his death in 1992, was "A million years". His idea is a revelation, in that it throws light on the urban fabric.

The topography of Anghiari is drama, even now.

It is bursting with contrasts: sequences of hills and valleys, concave and convex shapes, high and low, vertical and horizontal, slopes and level ground. Campo alla Fiera offers views of the upper regions; the Tiber Valley and the lower section of the *stradone* views of the lower ones. The panorama can be viewed – from above, from below and from the side – from Via della Circonvallazione.

Interaction. Nature and mankind interact in creating earth's surfaces. Men make their arrangements, while nature brings its enormous forces into play, producing meadows, fields, woods, plants, bushes, trees, blossoms, colours, all kinds of surfaces, clouds of fragrances, sunny spots and shady ones.

High-standing tree trunks divide a space up into fragments, create localities, mark areas off, form grids, open up or create a sense of distance – a variety of relationships comes into being.

Man-made drama. The second master builder – over thirty centuries – has been Man. The degree of energy human beings have put into such work has varied, as have their ideas. Throughout the long history of their creations and designs, men have placed their faith in the drama of nature.

The sequence of squares in Anghiari is one of the finest things Tuscany has to offer. Several squares cluster round the Town Hall, there is one in front of the *Badia*, there is Piazza Mameli, and, to one side, the multi-faceted Poggiolino.

The continuation of this sequence – the *piazzetta* and main market place, the covered market, the square in front of the theatre and Piazza della Fontana – has been preserved but neglected.

Since the 1970s, the town has again been working to enhance its scenery. Its most recent project has been the town wall with its walkway (*la ronda*) and the *vicario*'s garden (*giardino del vicario*).

Interwoven spaces. The fabric of the town is firstly made up of many interwoven public spaces.

Secondly, it also consists of numerous buildings that overlap and interlock.

It is almost impossible to guess who lives behind the walls, in which rooms, and how large their apartments are. This fact can be traced back to specific mediaeval forms of property ownership. If you view the town from the ring road, the interplay of "building block" houses is particularly striking.

Thirdly, the urban fabric is composed of the people caught up in it. Sometimes they are hurrying from A to B; at other times, they are searching for something unawares; often they are meditating on the fabric.

Much more. There is actually nothing special about all this. It can be explained away in terms of urban functions and the simplicity of its appearance. And yet it transcends all these things because there is so much more to it. Everything acts in concert, whether someone has willed it to or not.

Many prosaic things thus turn into poetry.

For a start, there is the magic of many different kinds of material, all with their specific nuances: stones, plaster, bricks.

Many phenomena are elusive and can hardly be put in words. You have to let your senses absorb them.

Villa Miravalle, with its towering cypress trees, stands in a Mediterranean forest.

Sounds. Birds are chirping in a language unknown to us. The buzz of human voices.

Clouds of swallows wheel above the valley fold with the *stradone*, tracing the strangest circles in

the sky. What sort of system lies behind their movements?

Time. The angular town tower has large clock faces under its windows. What is the meaning of time?

Modesty rewarded. The individual house does not have to be much; it is the whole picture that counts. A house has fulfilled its purpose if it shelters those who dwell within or, often, those it hides. Its façade is a simple garment, one that rarely stands out.

Its outward appearance is not self-serving; rather, it serves the space as a whole. It shapes this space by lining up with other houses. A house is at the service of those who have to, or wish to, live in it, which is why it has scant regard for itself. It forms part of a whole – a street or a square.

Over the course of centuries, many human beings have wanted nearly all their houses to be like this. An invisible web of basic ideas held in common has assumed a specific form, and has turned into bricks and mortar.

People are caught in the warp and the weft of the fabric, thus becoming “public” in the most primitive – and at the same time most sophisticated – sense of the word.

Thus, day by day, elements become highly public and can be experienced by the senses; an atmosphere is created, a mood full of associations. Theodor Hetzer, in holistic studies that have been ignored by historians of art and architecture, summed it all up magnificently in the following words: “In Italy, all things experienced by the senses are connected, the heights and the depths, the sublime and the everyday. But within this unity, it is the things that men have built that nearly always take pride of place.”¹

Dialectics. Not everything everywhere is laid bare to the public eye, as in the case of some 16th century façades that provide a stark contrast to an intensely public scene. Nowhere are entrances to houses less inviting; they seem to discourage callers, appear to be mere breaks in the wall, are guarded and locked. Indeed, the prosperous residents of such houses behaved like oligarchs in their day. The entrances and windows did not allow passers-by to peep inside. Nowhere were possessions deemed so rigorously sacrosanct. Castle-type elements reappeared, taking on a new significance. Rustic stone masonry was used to frame windows and doorways, and to border façades.

Space as a fabric. The language of architecture was largely reticent. It served to create space.

Paradoxical. Tangible matter was shaped by allowing our senses to experience the air, the intangible spaces in between, as intensely as possible. Sunlight and dim shadows acted as spaces.

Spaces and alchemy. We see variations on such spaces: longer or shorter ones, some that assume strange shapes, some, above all, that differ in atmospheric density.

Space is more than the deduction we learned about in our maths lessons at school (Cartesian space), and which we, like maniacs, stupidly go in search of. Our space – in its present density – is alchemy. It is made up of, and mixes, a host of ingredients.

On stage. If you enter our town, you become an actor, one of those who play a part in the fabric. You cannot help it. Wherever you walk or stand in the town, you are surrounded by stage scenery. The people here play their rôles. Their appearances and the scenery around them are a whole, an interwoven, multi-layered fabric. This is where Piero della Francesca and Federico Fellini created their pictures based on the world around them, interweaving the characteristics and the surrounding atmosphere.

Streets. The fabric of the Old Town allows us to experience in a particularly keen way what Walter Benjamin described as follows: “Streets are the dwelling places of the collective. The collective never

sleeps, it is ever in motion. Between the walls of the houses, it experiences, learns, perceives and devises the same things as individuals do within their four walls.”²

The piazza provides a theatrical experience all year round. A lot can happen within a short time. You will bump into nearly everyone you want to meet.

The main square is scenically very varied. On the one hand, it is open in a peculiar, even unique way. Your gaze moves up and down the long steep street and over the Upper Tiber Valley. On the other hand, it is enclosed.

It is both an open space and a covered space. Once upon a time, arcades (now demolished) provided covering. Later, the covered market was built. Everyday life is lived out on the piazza, the market is held there, it provides a stage for numerous festivals that resonate in one's memory long after the event.

Backbone. The *stradone*, the long street, provides a stark contrast. It is an axis, a spine that stiffens the agglomerated houses and streets.

The narrow lanes also provide contrasts.

The piazza is divided in two – a large square and the smaller *piazzetta* to the east.

The fabric we experience is at its most apparent in the natural way people deal with their past. The past is entrenched in the present.

People exchange banalities, just to talk. Hard facts do not seem to exist. The speaker usually assumes a character – he is an angel, a lion, a monster, saint or potentate. Whether what he says is true or not is another matter, this is mere talk.

Ordinary folk have their drastic sayings, while educated people talk in allegories. They say a beautiful woman gets her Junoesque shape from sitting still; or they refer to “saints' petticoats”.

Some folk cannot stop talking about love. The piazza is the place for courting couples.

A bell strikes the hour, filling the air with its sonorous notes. We sense the passing of time in our innermost being. Eternity is contained in the moment. A moment would be nothing if eternity were not unfolded in it.

Learning. A historic Tuscan town can teach us these lessons. In this case, reading history is an existential process, in which people come to understand other people. The result is no longer meditation for its own sake, but action prompted by the fabric of an entire existence, carried out in it and for it, action that endlessly transcends the moment.

The town is full of magnificent living-rooms. Antique dealers are everywhere, displaying their wares in shops that have abandoned their old identities. Passers-by are amazed to see one splendid interior after the other. Parts of the old streets have gained a new and fascinating function.

Light. When evening falls, light is not created mechanically as elsewhere. Lighting here is the product of human hearts and minds, and it creates spaces for human beings. It is full of atmosphere and inner movement, progressing from brightness to twilight and dusk, from wakefulness to sleepiness, from the brightness of day to night-time dreams.

Anghiari is one of the few places in Europe where they have installed street lighting appropriate to the historic appearance of the town, achieving this through the type of lamp and the colour of the light. Street lamps have been placed in such a way, and at such intervals, that the various streets take on a character of their own. Unfortunately, this is not the case elsewhere, where streets are lit to look alike.

When street lighting was first introduced, the light was cold and bluish, and people in general were unhappy about it. The light bulbs were swapped for warm and yellowish ones, so the light produced is soft and pleasant, befitting the colour of the façades.

The keyword “fabric”, as used by Alison and Peter Smithson, has generated many practical and theoretical applications.³

The quality of the town is its cultivated fabric.

Fabric is alchemy.

Sometimes you can work out how it is made up, sometimes not. Often you can but marvel at the effects.

The individual and the whole/the collective are bundled up in a range of possibilities for living together, connecting, overlapping and even contrasting.

Perception. Automatically, our sense of sight – which has become blurred in the face of the many banalities we are constantly confronted with – is enlivened, challenged, sharpened.

We behave in a more sensitive way, perceive things more accurately, take greater pleasure in the movements that allow us to experience the scenery more intensely. We become, like actors, more aware of our own bodies.

Challenged, we find it easier to concentrate, not only on what is outside us, but also on ourselves.

Tempi. A fabric like this will only tolerate a reduced tempo. The motor car, on the other hand, is programmed non-perception, technological ignorance, comfortably anti-life. The urban fabric can only be perceived at a walking pace, or by standing and staring.

“Conglomerate ordering”. We walk here through “conglomerate order” (Alison and Peter Smithson).

Everyone, consciously or unconsciously, is trying to work out what is there.

Trite explanations will not do. Many things play their part, many important factors remain unexplained.

The sky seems to be more intensely sky, the sun likewise. The same is true of darkness, narrowness or width.

It is what phenomenologists refer to as an intensifying of experience.

Rough places are found alongside the smooth, and the strange thing is, they do not get in each other's way. The character of each becomes clearer, the sharper the contrast between them.

We look for order, but in vain. And yet we do not feel frustrated, because it is clear that order is only ever an approximation.

A wise person is no longer satisfied with the simplifications handed down to us.

We come to take pleasure in the labyrinthine. The lanes in the Old Town form a network that could hardly be more odd, and yet it is thoroughly logical in itself. The confusion keeps us on our toes, provides us with a challenge.

Expectation. What lies around the next corner? Where does the street go from here? What will it be like? What's going on on the other side of the square? When are we coming to the next one? Surprises, puzzles, fulfilment against all odds.

The human hand is in evidence everywhere. We can see how the mason applied plaster; the ground bears traces of the stonemason's tools. The fact that things are not quite perfect suggests Man has been at work. At times, every situation seems simple, but if you wish to imprint a scene on your memory, it becomes clear how very complex – difficult or impossible – it is to memorise. In that case, we are grateful for photography, but on going through our snapshots, we realise it's better to go there.

Another theory for town planners. Alison and Peter Smithson require architects and town planners to study the “urban fabric”. But that's not all. They say we should remember that everything is

part of a fabric.

This requirement is inconsistent with received wisdom that teaches us to behave as if we were inventing the wheel from scratch.⁴

The Smithsons say we should tackle things the other way round, beginning with the fabric, and then creating something individual.

Oscillation. “When we study physics, we learn that light is an oscillating field. We may assume everything oscillates, which is an existential observation. It is probably the underlying reason for music, which amplifies the oscillation in our bodies and is the most obvious example of oscillation. Language, all language, oscillates too. The same is true of all that is depicted visually. It also applies to architecture, although buildings would appear to be fixed. We assume things are stable, but stability of this kind does not exist. All sensations oscillate in one way or another. The deeper atomic level is the basis for oscillation – it sets everything in motion. We find this reinforced in the world of sensation, above all in space. Its atmosphere is in every case a particular kind of oscillation. All his life, Leonardo studied oscillation and depicted it.” (Janne Günter)

Before and after the discovery of perspective. The fabric of the town, its heart and the oldest part, was created before the advent of perspective.

The long straight street foreshadows perspective, which in fact came a century later.

An awareness of perspective definitely enhanced the world. Some towns have been designed with perspective in mind. But after a certain productive period, it is in danger of being reduced to a dogma. Centuries later, it is often nothing more than a trite, all-powerful formula. Where this is the case, it often kills off everything that cannot be categorised.

In Anghiari, however, there are loose links between the principle of building with perspective in mind and the way things were done previously. Early examples of perspective go to show how dense the fabric is.

In their “Italian thoughts”, Alison and Peter Smithson wrote that one of the characteristics of a building of conglomerate ordering is that, by nature, it engages with everything around and above it – with other buildings, people, the sky, mountains, birds, aeroplanes. As soon as a building face is not equally engaged with one of these elements, the building can no longer be included in their “Canon of Conglomerate Ordering”. They pointed out the difference between a “Janus” building, which opposes, and a conglomerate, which blends.⁵

Houses resonate with echoes of other houses, as the Smithsons said, in the most natural way possible.

A successful balance is achieved between this and the limited amount of freedom a house has to be itself.

Variations within the fabric. The fabric connects, and where such connections are particularly strong, as in Anghiari, there is also considerable room for variation. Any differences must not, however, take on a life of their own; it is important they fit in.

This is how conglomerate order is created. It has a casual air about it, seems inexhaustible, appears ever fresh. This is because we have never done, and our minds and our feet have never quite completed their journey. And if we look over our shoulder, the things we have seen already look a bit different, with the result that always we begin again.

This is how I encounter Piazza Mameli.

This is how I see Via Nenci.

All the various scenes have one thing in common: the fabric and conglomerate order.

Learning to do better. What can we learn from all this? We might consider putting right what has gone wrong in our towns.

In many cases, it will be impossible, but in others it might work. I believe we have not yet even begun to think seriously about it.

If there is something we do not like, the first trap we can fall into is wishing it away. In most cases, this is not an option – buildings are always worth vast sums of money.

Let us go down a different path. We can benefit from experience, accept what is already there and use it to create a fabric.

If we do indeed go down this path, we will not start with a blank sheet of paper but with existing potential. I have coined the phrase “thinking in terms of potential” to describe how we can put right the fundamental error of the twentieth century.⁶ For the most part, we find architecture banal when it is reductive. Let us therefore try to give it what it lacks, in order that it may become part of a fabric.

This is the point Thomas Sieverts started from when he coined the phrase “*Zwischenstadt*” or “in-between city”, a term that refers to the hugely problematic vast suburban sprawl around our big cities. The concept of urban fabric might open up possibilities for improving many of our *Zwischenstädte*.

With any luck, we might end up with places that are memorable, full of atmosphere and provide opportunities for employment, replacing those locations that disappear again within a short space of time.

Living with the fabric. Let us return to Anghiari. Its inhabitants have lived their fabric for centuries.

The 1960s were for many people a period of disorientation. The novelties on offer trapped them into forgetting their traditional values.

The 1980s, on the other hand, came up with an alternative: to re-think the old.

Since then, we have often been able to observe people with a fault-line running through their minds – in some cases they go for the novelties, in others they pursue the alternative course.

The same applies to how people treat the Old Town. Nearly everyone agrees how wonderful the fabric of the upper part is. However, the lower part of the Old Town with its large square is subject to 1960s-type thinking, even though half a century has since passed. The large market square is narrowly viewed from the angle of its functionality and its use is exclusively determined by accessibility for cars.

In this case too, it will be a complex matter to bring people to their senses, and will unfortunately be a long process. The author of this book set the ball rolling with regard to this debate some twenty or more years ago.

Anghiari gives its visitors an object lesson in both sides of the argument.

The quality of the common good. Collective building, assembled over the centuries from many individual units, can attain an exceptionally high quality if, as a matter of course, it is understood to be urban fabric.

Those who cherish the fabric will always behave in such a way that their new wants do not come into conflict with the hugely valuable elements that are already there. For example, they will walk the few steps – and mostly it will not be more than a few – to the car they have parked a short distance away. This will also be good for them, and increase their appreciation of the town.

Revitalisation. Those whose thoughts are habitually reductive are so fascinated by a small number

of things that their minds really have no room for anything else. This applies not only to the way they use the town, but also to other spheres of their lives: work, leisure or entertainment, and above all to the way they use the media, both television and computers.

The fabric of the town, by contrast, can revitalise its users, if only they learn to understand it.

The futures in the past. When we plan, we could also learn that all things last for a certain length of time, and that something may always be added on. If we have practised thinking about the past, looking back over a long period of time, it should be possible for us to apply the same technique to the future.

An abundance of futures is stored in the past, says Bazon Brock. It will be no different in the future. Our present time, the time of our planning, will very soon belong to the past.

Therefore, let us imagine, as realistically as possible, a number of such present times piled up one on top of the other, and each one a response to something already in existence.

Faces of the people that create the town

The town is made up of many, many people, generation upon generation. Those no longer with us can only be imagined, but we know they always looked like the ones who face us today.

The town is full of people engaged in various activities.

The town can yield an immense amount of information, but it has to be searched for, the traces uncovered in stones, façades and spaces. We are sometimes lucky enough to come across the occasional wad of papers that did not go up in smoke. Chance plays a significant part in all this, and in our discoveries.

Stories, endless stories, are at the heart of this information. They form the material that waits for a Dante or a Shakespeare to transform it. The drama of a fly will assume gigantic proportions as against the exploits of far-away kings.

People's conversations are full of communications and misunderstandings that lead to fateful decisions, or produce a cloud that quickly blows over. Where do they end? People turn towards, or away from, each other. Thus, they build networks or long-lasting feuds that, in their way, are networks too.

People constructed dwellings. Their initial motivation was to protect themselves against life-threatening dangers. Their second aim was aspirational, in that they sought the reflected glory of a beautiful dwelling.

Generation after generation has worked and re-worked the fabric without ceasing.

They used the word "town" at an early stage.

Fabric is more than the sum of its parts.

Many interwoven threads are tortuous, but they are interspersed with constant attempts to create order.

Does order betray a longing for safety and security? Or do people seek knowledge through order? Or dominion over others?

Academic disciplines arose, as ours did, as the product of a desire to understand. If a discipline genuinely wishes to prove itself, it must be obsessed, like literature is, with an idea. Our obsession is that this cosmos of a town, filled as it is with visible and invisible elements, shall not perish. We do not want to abandon it to oblivion. We try to imagine the way the many people in it live their lives.

We inhabit many kinds of dwellings in what we call a town. Although we are somewhat blind in the way we move about it, we would like to see clearly. We would like to join those who built such dwellings.

What sort of dwellings? We want to know more than their measurements.

The rooms of the buildings and the squares have faces.

The town consists of faces, human faces and faces that are walls.

These faces produce languages, both visible and invisible.

Space is what lies between people and walls. Professor Wolfgang Meisenheimer has devoted much of his research to arguing that “all spaces are filled with atmosphere”.

Tonino Guerra, a poet and scriptwriter of poetic films, told the film maker Klaus Helle, “All the time, our words speak to the air, and the air speaks to us. This is true everywhere, but it particularly applies to the language of Leonardo's *sfumato*.

Imagine a sheet of glass, transparent as the air. When the sun shines on it, tiny droplets of water do their choreographed movements, dancing in response to the slightest movements of the air.

Imagine you want to make a film about a river. A spider's web catches dew from the early-morning mist – this is how a river, a river that flows through mountains and plains, is born.”

This is a start. It gives us an idea of the spaces in the fabric.

Notes on:

The urban fabric (17.)

1 Hetzer, 1951, 12.

2 Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, V2. Frankfurt 1982, 1051.

3 Smithson/Smithson, 1996.

4 Alison and Peter Smithson did not mince their words in voicing their criticism: “At the 9th CIAM Congress in Aix-en-Provence, we realised that the things that fell through the net of many functions were so numerous ... that any attempt to categorise them according to the old CIAM manner would have greatly oversimplified the matter, and would, in addition, block mobility of thought. We trusted that reason – conscious of the manifold nature of the “functions” – would be best equipped to deal with the way they are linked and can change. This means we were interested in developing an understanding of architecture according to the type of order of free fall, an order with endless variations, with no predefined boundaries, one that would enable a developing order to manifest itself. Systems of measurement develop naturally out of the pleasurable dismantling of a programme; we opened our thinking to new possibilities.” (Smithson, 1996, 126). [The quote was translated from the German end-note.]

5 Smithson, 1996, 140.

6 I developed the theory of “thinking in terms of potential”, using as my starting point the example of the Emscher Park International Building Exhibition in the Ruhr District, a major town planning project (1989/1999). See: Roland Günter, *Im Tal der Könige. Ein Handbuch zum Reisen an Emscher, Rhein und Ruhr*. Essen 1994,

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