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Publishing in Laurentian Florence

Jacopo di Poggio Bracciolini's Edition
of Poggio's *Historiae Florentini populi**

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Poggio Bracciolini's eldest son, Jacopo (1442–1478), was not only an author in Latin and the vernacular but also an accomplished scribe. Probably his most important project was the Latin edition (1472) and vernacular translation (1476) of his father's last, incomplete work, *Historiae Florentini populi*, an alternative history of Florence. This article will examine the publication in manuscript and print of the Latin and Italian texts.

Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459), apostolic secretary from 1403 until 1418 and again from 1423 until 1453, is known not only for his role, from the late 1390s onwards, in developing the humanistic book script, *littera antiqua*, and the sensational, well-publicized manuscript discoveries during the Council of Constance between 1414 and 1418, but also for his extensive literary output comprising letters, moral dialogues such as *De avaritia* (1429) and works in dialogue form pertaining to contemporary history, such as *De varietate fortunae* (1447–1448), as well as a collection of novellas, *Facetiae* (1452). Furthermore, he made some translations from Greek (Diodorus Siculus as well as Xenophon's *Cyro-*

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paedia).¹ From early on a staunch Medicean, his career seemed to have been crowned by his appointment to the chancellorship of the Republic of Florence in 1453 at the age of 73. In 1456, however, the chancery was in such a state of chaos that Poggio was sidelined, embittering him greatly towards the Medici regime.²

Poggio's correspondence indicates that he was working on a lengthy text in the last years of his life.³ In 1458 he wrote to his friend Domenico Capranica:

Sed cum multa recenseantur, a quibus proficisci potuerit scribendi tarditas, una ommissa res est, que precipua me occupatum tenuit diutius in scribendo, ut cum finis iam adesset, cupidus ac studiosus incubui ad absolvendum inceptum opus, quod, tanquam in tela accidit, tantummodo sum orsus. Textura adhuc caret; sed ea brevi, ut spero, perficietur. Sepius enim repetere iubemur que scribimus antequam edantur, ne qua detur detractoribus obloquendi occasio. Hec causa extitit que me ab reliquis distraheret curis.⁴

¹ The classic biography is E. WALSER, *Poggius Florentinus: Leben und Werke*, Leipzig, 1914. On his role in developing the new script, see now T. DE ROBERTIS, "Humanistic script: origins", in *The Oxford Handbook of Latin Palaeography*, ed. by F. T. Coulson, R. G. Babcock, Oxford, 2020, pp. 511–25. For the letters, see P. Bracciolini, *Lettere*, ed. by H. HARTH, 3 vols, Florence, 1984–1987; for the literary works mentioned, see P. Bracciolini, *Dialogus contra avaritiam*, ed. by G. GERMANO, Livorno, 1994; Id., *De varietate fortunae*, ed. by O. MERISALO, Helsinki, 1993 (*Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae*, B 265); and Id., *Facëties: Confabulationes*, ed. and transl. by S. PITTALUGA, É. WOLFF, Paris, 2005. There is no modern edition of the Diodorus Siculus translation, see C. SIDERI, *Per la fortuna di Diodoro Siculo fra XV e XVI secolo: la traduzione latina di Poggio Bracciolini e i primi volgarizzamenti, con un saggio di edizione critica dei testi volgari*, unpublished PhD diss., Università Ca' Foscari, Venice, 2020, pp. 41–42, accessible at <<http://dspace.unive.it/handle/10579/17835?show=full>>, 29 November 2022. The Cyropaedia translation has not been printed.

² For Poggio and the Medici, see O. MERISALO, "The *Historiae Florentini populi* by Poggio Bracciolini. Genesis and fortune of an alternative History of Florence", in *Poggio Bracciolini and the Re(dis)covery of Antiquity. Textual and Material Traditions: Proceedings of the Symposium Held at Bryn Mawr College on April 8–9, 2016*, ed. by R. RICCI with assistance from E. L. PUMROY, Florence, 2020, pp. 25–40, at 25, with bibliography, n. 1.

³ See Bracciolini, *Lettere*, ed. HARTH.

⁴ "But while many things may be listed as having delayed my writing, one thing has been left unsaid. It has too long kept me particularly busy, as, the end approaching, I willingly and industriously set out to finish the work that I had begun and for which, as happens when weaving a web, I had

The only extensive text that seems to come into question here is Poggio's history of Florence, *Historiae Florentini populi*, which was published posthumously by his son Jacopo Bracciolini. The official, state-sponsored history of the city from Antiquity to the fifteenth century, also entitled *Historiae Florentini populi*, had been written by Poggio's friend Leonardo Bruni (1370–1444) between 1415 and 1442.⁵ As indicated by the title *Historiae*, Poggio's work, while touching in brief upon Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, concentrates on the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, from the wars against Archbishop Giovanni Visconti of Milan (c. 1290–1354) to the peace of Lodi (1454). It is not a straightforward continuation of Bruni's work but rather an alternative history of Florence.⁶

Jacopo di Poggio: Life and Works

The short life of Poggio's eldest son, Jacopo di Poggio, was heavily marked by his Republican convictions, a love-hate relationship with the Medici regime, and activity to promote his father's literary legacy. Exiled in 1466 for anti-Medicean activities, he was allowed to return to Florence on paying a fine of 2,000 florins. In the late 1460s and early 1470s he was definitely mixing in the highest echelons of Florentine society.⁷ By 1477, however,

only put the threads in place. It is still lacking a well-defined structure, but I hope to complete it soon. Of course, we are told to revise our text several times before publication in order not to expose ourselves to slanderers. This reason has kept me from attending to other business." Letter to Domenico Capranica, *ep. fam.* 9.45.7–15; Bracciolini, *Lettere*, ed. HARTH, vol. 3, p. 507. For an analysis of this passage, see MERISALO, "Genesis and fortune", p. 26.

⁵ See L. Bruni, *Historiae Florentini populi*, ed. and transl. by J. HANKINS, *History of the Florentine People*, 3 vols, Cambridge, MA, 2001–2007 (The I Tatti Renaissance Library, 3).

⁶ For Poggio's friendship with, and somewhat complex attitude to, Bruni, see A. FIELD, *The Intellectual Struggle for Florence: Humanists and the Beginnings of the Medici Regime, 1420–1440*, Oxford, 2017, p. 293.

⁷ A. DE LA MARE, "New research on humanistic scribes in Florence", in *Miniatura fiorentina del Rinascimento 1449–1525, Un primo censimento*, 2 vols, ed. by A. GARZELLI, Florence, 1985, vol. 1, pp. 395–574, at 448 (Inventari e cataloghi toscani, 18), identified him as Lorenzo's Secretary A, active between 1469 and 1471. Another possible identification of Secretary A is, however, with ser Luigi di Andrea Lotti of Barberino, Lorenzo's first chancellor, see V. ARRIGHI, "3.15 Le origini della cancelleria medicea: Luigi Lotti", *Consor-*

a progressive estrangement from the Medici, no doubt due to his political views, led him to approach Lorenzo's political enemies. In that year, he entered the service of Cardinal Raffaele Riario (1461–1521), great-nephew of Pope Sixtus IV. One of the leaders of the Pazzi conspiracy against Lorenzo and his brother Giuliano on 26 April 1478, Jacopo was among the first to be hanged at the Bargello.⁸

In addition to his scribal activities, Jacopo wrote some original texts in Latin, such as the dialogue *Contra detractores*, dedicated to Lorenzo, probably at the end of the 1460s, and a Life — of which only the *volgarizzamento* by Battista Fortini has been preserved — of the *condottiero* Pippo Spano, a friend of Poggio's.⁹ Jacopo's edition of Poggio's *Historiae Florentini populi* was the most important of his Latin-language works.¹⁰ Imitating Petrarch and Brunì, who had translated novellas from Boccaccio's *Decameron* into Latin, Jacopo also made a Latin version of the novella of Quintius Fulvius and Gisippus (*Decameron* X 8). On the other hand, Jacopo also specialized in translations from Latin to Tuscan. Texts included Lives of the *Scriptores historiae*

terie politiche e mutamenti istituzionali in età laurenziana. Catalogo della mostra, ed. by M. A. MORELLI TIMPANARO, R. MANNO TOLU, P. VITI, Florence, 1992, pp. 98–100. I have the pleasure of thanking David Speranzi of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale of Florence for providing copies of this article; also see D. SPERANZI, "Palatino Baldovinetti 62", in *I manoscritti datati della Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, III: Fondi Banco Rari, Landau Finaly, Landau Muzzioli, Nuove Accessioni, Palatino Capponi, Palatino Panciatichiano, Tordi*, ed. by S. PELLE, A. M. RUSSO, D. SPERANZI, S. ZAMPONI, Florence, 2011, p. 100 (Manoscritti datati d'Italia, 21).

⁸ For Jacopo's biography, see O. MERISALO, "Jacopo di Poggio Bracciolini, traducteur des *Historiae Florentini populi* du Pogge", in *Passages. Déplacements des hommes, circulation des textes et identités dans l'Occident médiéval*, ed. by J. DUCOS, P. HENRIET, Toulouse, 2013 (Études médiévales ibériques. Méridiennes), pp. 57–64, and O. MERISALO, "Il concetto di *libertas* individuale da Jacopo di Poggio Bracciolini", *Studi umanistici piceni*, 33 (2013), pp. 131–36, with bibliography.

⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 131 and n. 5, with bibliography. The dedication copy of the dialogue is BML, 46.2 (fols 71–92).

¹⁰ This is the title transmitted by both the dedication copy to Frederick, BAV, Urb. lat. 491, and BNM, Lat. Z. 392 (= 1684). The Urbino manuscript once gives the variant "Iacobi Poggii Florentini in historias Florentinas Poggii patris. prohemium" (fol. 1^r).

Augustae as well as Poggio's Latin translation of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, dedicated to Ferdinand I of Aragon, king of Naples, a connection inherited from Poggio and, again, no friend to the Medici. An even more important project was the *volgarizzamento* of his own edition of Poggio's History of Florence. In 1469–1471, Jacopo dedicated to Lorenzo a commentary on the chapter *Nel cor pien d'amarissima dolcezza* (TF Ia) of the first redaction of Petrarch's *Trionfo della fama*.¹¹

Editing the *Historiae Florentini populi*: Jacopo's Edition of Poggio's Text

Judging by the preface to the dedicatee, Frederick of Montefeltro, duke of Urbino (1422–1482), another highly placed contact inherited from Poggio, Jacopo had finished his edition of Poggio's unfinished History in eight books by 1472.¹² Furthermore, Jacopo gives important information on the genesis of Poggio's treatise and his own role in editing the text:

Poggius enim ingrauescente etate tamquam emeritis stipendiis, cum Roma, ubi magna cum laude uixerat, uenia a Pontifice impetrata in patriam reuertisset, ut memorie tante urbis consuleret,

¹¹ MERISALO, "Il concetto di *libertas*", p. 132, with bibliography. The commentary circulated in both manuscript (e.g. BML, Ashburnham 965) and print: GW M34531 ("Poggius, Jacobus: Sopra il trionfo della fama di Francesco Petrarca, ital. [Rom: Apud S. Marcum (Vitus Puecher), vor 15.X.1476]", ISTC ip00851000; and GW M34528 ("Poggius, Jacobus: Sopra il trionfo della fama di Francesco Petrarca. Florenz: Francesco Bonaccorsi für Alexandro di Francesco Varrochi, 24.I.1485"), ISTC ip00852000.

¹² In the preface, Frederick's successful siege of Volterra in 1472 is referred to: "Cumque hoc anno tua uirtute Volaterrani, antiquissima Etrurie ciuitas, montis asperitate et loci natura freti imperio nostro rebelles sub iugum uenerint", here quoted according to BNM, Lat. Z. 392 (= 1684), fol. 4^r. ("And since this year, thanks to your valour, the Volterrans, a most ancient people of Etruria, who, trusting to the difficult mountain ground and the very nature of the site, had rebelled against us, were subjected to our power.") Frederick's letter of thanks has been preserved in BAV, Urb. lat. 1198 fol. 81^{r-v}; Frederick refers to Jacopo as *amicus suus*; cf. also Jacopo's 1472 letter of presentation to Frederick added to his brother Battista's Life of Condottiero Niccolò Piccinini in BAV, Urb. lat. 916, fol. 58^v: "Non nouus venio in amicitiam. sed paternam resumo. quae tibi egregia cum Poggio fuit". ("I am not establishing a new friendship [with you] but taking over my father's friendship — yours with Poggio was excellent.").

inter priuata publicaue negocia commentaria rerum Florentinarum, a primo bello cum Iohanne Mediolanensi Archiepiscopo usque ad pacem cum Alfonso per Nicolaum pontificem factam, morte preuentus reliquit. Mihi uero, ut primum per etatem licuit, ne nostre rei publice plurimorumque clarorum uirorum memoria deperiret, nihil fuit potius quam *omnia in octo digesta libros summa cum diligentia in unum corpus redigere ac legenda posteris tradere*.¹³ (Emphasis mine.)

Jacopo's contribution is even more important according to his own translation of the preface:

come prima et per l'eta et per molte occupationi m'e stato licito, achioche la memoria della cicta nostra et le opere di molti prestantissimi huomini per Ytalia non manchassi, a nessuna altra cosa o piu dato opera che a ridurla insieme, et *diuisola con somma diligentia in octo libri*, mandarla in luce et farne copia a ciascuno desideroso d'intendere.¹⁴ (Emphasis mine.)

While the Latin text is somewhat vague as to the origin of the division of the text into eight books, the vernacular text attributes it to Jacopo. Interestingly enough, the vernacular version also explicitly refers to a very concrete operation of publishing (*mandarla in luce*) and distributing the text to those wishing to understand the subject (*farne copia a ciascuno desideroso d'intendere*). Considering the existence of Brunì's *Historiae*, the official state-sponsored history of Florence, it is safe to assume that

¹³ "Poggio, getting on in years, retiring, as it were, from business, was given leave by the Pope to return from Rome to his native country. In order to enhance the memory of such an eminent city he wrote the first draft of a history of Florence from the first war with John, archbishop of Milan, until the peace made with Alfonso through the mediation of Pope Nicholas. He left this work incomplete at his death. My main occupation, as soon as my age would permit it, has been to preserve the memory of our state and the memory of many famous men. Thus, I have built up a text *out of one divided into eight books* and handed it over to posterity to read." BNM, Lat. Z. 392 (= 1684), fol. 3^v. For a detailed analysis of this passage, see MERISALO, "Genesis and fortune", pp. 30–31.

¹⁴ "as soon as [my] age and many occupations would permit me, in order to preserve the memory of our city and the deeds of many excellent men in Italy, I have concentrated on making a continuous narrative of [the text], and *after having divided it into eight books* with the greatest care, publishing it and giving a copy of it to whomever would wish to be informed"; BNCf, Palatino Baldovinetti 62, fol. 2^v.

Poggio-Jacopo's treatise aims at presenting a fresh view on the latest period of the glorious and tormented history of the city-state. The public targeted will consist not only of Florentine readers but all those interested in expanding their knowledge of the subject.

That Jacopo carried out a thorough revision of Poggio's text, at least part of which might have remained at a very sketchy stage at the author's death, has been demonstrated elsewhere.¹⁵ Jacopo's edition has been preserved in four manuscripts, of which two, BAV, Urb. lat. 491, and BNM, Lat. Z. 392 (= 1684) were written in the fifteenth century, and two others, BML, Plut. 65.40, and Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, V. G. 34, are from the sixteenth. Jacopo's *volgarizzamento*, variously entitled *Historie fiorentine*/*Istoria fiorentina* circulated in both manuscript and print in the fifteenth century. In addition, there is a very interesting fifteenth-century fragment with the first four of the books, BNCF, Palatino Capponiano 64 (see below, p. 339).¹⁶

Publishing the *Historiae Florentini populi* in Latin

a. Vespasiano da Bisticci

The celebrated publisher of luxury manuscripts, Vespasiano da Bisticci (1421–1498), author of *Vite* of important personalities encountered during his long professional life between 1440 and 1480, was responsible for the dedication copy of Jacopo's edition that was presented to Frederick of Montefeltro, Vat. Urb. lat. 491.¹⁷ It was

¹⁵ For a detailed analysis, see O. MERISALO, "Terranovam natale meum solum. Remarks on the textual history of Poggio Bracciolini's *Historiae Florentini populi*", *Renaissanceforum*, 3 (2007), < https://www.njrs.dk/3_2007/10_merisalo.pdf > (accessed 29 November 2022), and, more concisely, MERISALO, "Genesis and fortune", pp. 32–34.

¹⁶ For a detailed analysis of this manuscript, see *ibid.*, pp. 33–34.

¹⁷ For a detailed description of this manuscript, see *La biblioteca di un principe 'umanista'. Federico da Montefeltro e i suoi manoscritti*, ed. by M. G. CRITELLI, <https://spotlight.vatlib.it/it/humanist-library/catalog/Urb_lat_491> (accessed 29 November 2022), as well as A. LABRIOLA, "7. Poggio Bracciolini, *Historia Florentina* [sic]. Libri I–VIII", in *Federico Da Montefeltro and His Library*, ed. by M. SIMONETTA, J. J. G. ALEXANDER, C. MARTELLI, Milan, 2007, pp. 152–61. Frederick's arms on fol. iv^v, just as the emblem "F(redericus) C(omes)" on fol. 1^r, date the manuscript to the time before

written by Gundissalvus Fernandez de Heredia († 1511), apostolic protonotary, bishop of Barcelona (1478) and Tarragona (1490), who worked for Vespasiano da Bisticci between 1469 and 1482 producing volumes for Frederick of Montefeltro, Lorenzo and Pierfrancesco de' Medici, Alfonso di Ferdinando, duke of Calabria, as well as Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary. The sumptuous programme of illumination and decoration was carried out by, among others, Pietro del Massaio, Francesco Rosselli, and the Master of the Hamilton Xenophon, active from 1460 until 1480, who was a member of the workshop of Francesco d'Antonio del Chierico until 1478.¹⁸

Even the second fifteenth-century manuscript, now BNM, Lat. Z. 392 (= 1684), is probably connected to Vespasiano's enterprise. This luxury manuscript on parchment was possibly decorated by Mariano del Buono and workshop, employed by Vespasiano between 1470 and 1480.¹⁹ The script is an upright *littera antiqua*; the arms on fol. 1^r have yet to be identified (Pl. 5). The text conforms to that of Frederick's dedication copy. The manuscript was acquired by 1715 by G. B. Recanati (1687–1734), who used it for the first printed edition of the Latin text in that year.²⁰

b. The Informal Circuit: Copying as an Exercise?

The publication history of Poggio-Jacopo's *Historiae* in manuscript ends with the Venice volume. There is, however, some dissemination of the Latin text in the sixteenth century. A volume, now BML, Plut. 65.40, on paper datable to the early years of the century, shows a series of more and less inexperienced hands seem-

August 1474 when he was created Duke of Urbino. Thanks to Ada Labriola for kindly providing a copy of her article (October 2020).

¹⁸ *La biblioteca di un principe 'umanista'*, ed. by CRITELLI.

¹⁹ MERISALO, "Genesis and fortune", p. 31, with bibliography.

²⁰ For this learned patrician, friend of Apostolo Zeno, among others, who bequeathed his important manuscript library to the Marciana in 1734 and edited the Latin version of Poggio-Jacopo's *Historiae Florentini populi* in 1715, see MERISALO, "Genesis and fortune", p. 31, with bibliography, and pp. 36–37, as well as *Archivio dei possessori, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana*, < <https://archiviopossessori.it/archivio/1130-recanati-giambattista> >, (accessed 29 November 2022).

ingly without aesthetical ambitions either for the script or the volume's general appearance. The manuscript belonged to the learned Canon Antonio Petrei († 1570), a noted bibliophile and teacher, who bequeathed the volume to the private library of the Medici in 1568.²¹ Unsurprisingly, it is the only volume containing Poggio-Jacopo's *Historiae* in the Medici collections. The text contains the full Urbino version. Copying out this long text might have been a school exercise. Another similar volume, slightly later, is Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, V. G. 34. It was written on Italian paper made between the 1510s and the 1530s, by several hands, mostly inexperienced, both Italian and Transalpine (at least one Germanic). The scripts are both Gothic *hybridae* and *all'antica* cursives, with all the marginal hands Italian.²² The volume belonged to the Farnese library in the time of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (1520–1589) and was found among the books in the *Guardarobba del S(ignor) Cardinale Farnese* at Palazzo della Cancelleria, Rome, inventoried at his death.²³ This volume might be another school exercise.

c. The Informal Circuit: Circulating in Draft

The first codicological unit (fols 1–88), datable to the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century, of the paper manuscript that is now BNCF, Palatino Capponiano 64, contains the first four books of the treatise in a version attributable to

²¹ MERISALO, “Genesis and fortune”, pp. 31–32.

²² For this manuscript, see *ibid.*, p. 32, and MERISALO, “Jacopo di Poggio Bracciolini (1442–1478), traducteur”, p. 60 n. 18.

²³ See O. MERISALO, “I codici in scrittura latina di Alessandro Farnese (1520–1589) a Caprarola e al Palazzo della Cancelleria nel 1589”, *Progressus*, 3/1 (2016), pp. 202–03 and bibliography, <<https://www.rivistaprogressus.it/wp-content/uploads/outi-merisalo-codici-scrittura-latina-alessandro-farnese-1520-1589-caprarola-al-palazzo-della-cancelleria-nel-1589.pdf>> (accessed 29 November 2022). For the manuscript, see the list of books in Naples, Archivio di Stato, Farnese, 1853, fol. 104^r. A list of manuscripts in the Latin script from the 1589 inventory contained in the Naples volume on fols 99^v–109^r was published by F. FOSSIER, *La bibliothèque Farnèse. Étude des manuscrits latins et en langue vernaculaire*, Rome, 1982 (Le Palais Farnese, III, 2), pp. 39–40, who introduced numbering of volumes not present in the original. I have the pleasure of thanking the staff of the State Archives of Naples for excellent working conditions in January 2020.

Poggio himself.²⁴ It must consequently be a copy of a now lost earlier draft by Poggio. The other texts in the volume are part of Bruni's translation of the *Corpus Demosthenicum* and part of a *volgarizzamento* of Petrarch's *De remediis utriusque fortunae*.²⁵

Publishing *Historiae Florentini populi* in the Vernacular

a. In Manuscript

Jacopo not only edited the Latin-language treatise but also made a *volgarizzamento* of his own edition, variously entitled *Historie fiorentine*/*Istoria fiorentina*, most probably by August 1474. The translation had a limited circulation in manuscript at the end of the fifteenth century and a considerable success in print from 1476 onwards.

The manuscript tradition presents some interesting details as regards the overall publishing history of the treatise either in Latin or in the vernacular. The luxury manuscript, now BNCF, Palatino Baldovinetti 62 (for which see Pl. 6) was copied by Francesco di Niccolò di Berto de' Gentiluzzi, as stated by the colophon on fol. 151^r: "MCCCLXXIII Fra<n>ciscus me scripsit".²⁶ In the midst of the Florentine vine-stem decoration of the left margin on fol. 1^r is Jacopo's portrait, probably by Francesco d'Antonio del Chierico, who frequently worked for Vespasiano da Bisticci's publishing house (see above, p. 337). The other texts are a chro-

²⁴ See MERISALO, "Genesis and fortune", pp. 32–34. The short preface describes the chronological limits and the structure of the work on fol. 1^r: "paulo na(m)q(ue) supra centesimum annum florentini bella p(o)p(u)li tum repulsa tum illata recensere institui que sunt in otto libros digesta".

²⁵ The volume belonged to the extensive library of Canon and Marquis Giovan Vincenzo Capponi (1691–1748), which passed to Marquis Vincenzo Capponi, an important bibliophile in his own right. In 1854 Vincenzo Capponi's library entered the Grand Ducal Library, Biblioteca Palatina; see *ibid.*, p. 32 and bibliography.

²⁶ This scribe, active from 1460 until 1503, notary to the Signoria in 1475, was a specialist of vernacular manuscripts. He also copied BML, Plut. 43.15 for the Capponi, see DE LA MARE, "New research", pp. 425, 494. For a detailed description of this manuscript, see SPERANZI, "Palatino Baldovinetti 62", p. 100. The initial on fol. 4^r had been cut out by the eighteenth century, as is stated in the note on fol. iv^v. The Baldovinetti library entered the Biblioteca Palatina in 1852; *ibid.*

nicle on the Ciompi rebellion of 1378 by Alamanno Acciaiuoli and two 1446 letters of Neri di Gino Capponi.²⁷ The manuscript bears the Capponi arms.²⁸ The production of the volume was carefully supervised by Jacopo, who made a number of annotations in the margins. It also points to an interesting development in the publication history of the *volgarizzamento*, since the title of the first book on fol. 4^r has been partly erased.

Incomincia el primo libro della hystoria//<f>iorentina composta
per poggio bracciolini//[-----] eloquentissimo ag[-----] del[----
-----]

In his description of the manuscript, David Speranzi read the erased text as follows: line 3, beg. “doctore”, end “agli [...] del popolo fiorentino”. Even the explicit on fol. 151^r has been written on an erasure, the lower text on lines 5 and 6 reading “a excelsa et gloriosa signoria del popolo fiorentino”.²⁹ It would seem therefore that Jacopo might have cherished the hope of dedicating the *volgarizzamento* to the Signoria of Florence, a hope squashed before the Baldovinetti manuscript was finished. All manuscripts and the printed version of the *volgarizzamento* bear the dedication to Frederick known from the Latin version. Since Frederick is not yet titled Duke but simply “s(ignore) di Urbino” (fol. 1^r) and “s(ignore) di Urbino” as well as “conte d’Urbino” (fol. 151^r), August 1474 is most probably the *terminus ante quem* of the *volgarizzamento*.³⁰

BNCF, II.III.86, *Hystoria fiorentina*, is another Florentine luxury manuscript, probably written by no less a scribe than Niccolò di

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Although the Capponi were not yet involved in anti-Medicean activities in the 1470s, they emerged as major opponents in the 1494 events that led to the exile of the Medici from Florence. For the Capponi and the Medici, see MERISALO, “Genesis and fortune”, p. 35 n. 44.

²⁹ See SPERANZI, “Palatino Baldovinetti 62”, p. 100.

³⁰ Frederick of Montefeltro was solemnly invested with the duchy of Urbino by Sixtus IV in August 1474; G. BENZONI, “Federico da Montefeltro, duca di Urbino”, in *DBI*, 45 (1995), <

Giampiero Fonzio.³¹ It bears the Strozzi arms (Pl. 7).³² The Strozzi connection runs deep in the publishing history of the *volgarizzamento*. This wealthy dynasty that had only recently, in 1466, been allowed to return to Florence, continued to be one of the most powerful opponents of the Medici.³³

A third manuscript, now New Haven, CT, Yale University, Beinecke Library, 321, was most probably also copied for the Strozzi. It was written on paper in a very professional Humanist cursive hand that Albinia de la Mare identified as Niccolò Fonzio's, who frequently worked for the Florentine merchant Girolamo di Carlo Strozzi (1441/2–1481/2), making for him, for example, a copy of Bruni's *Historiae Florentini populi* in the translation of Donato Acciaiuoli, ordered by Marco di Carlo, Girolamo's younger brother, in 1474.³⁴ In fact, in the 1474–1475

³¹ For the identification of the hand, see DE LA MARE, "New research", pp. 460–61 and 515–16. More recently, L. HELLINGA, "Poggio Bracciolini's *Historia Fiorentina* in manuscript and print", *La Bibliofilia*, 115 (2013), pp. 119–34, at 123–24 argued that both this volume and New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, 321 (see below) would have been written by a Ser Antonio di Jacopo, an otherwise unknown scribe, mentioned in Girolamo Strozzi's accounts as having produced a copy of the *volgarizzamento* (see below p. 343). While the two hands resemble each other, the Nazionale one, characterized by de la Mare as Fonzio's cursive hand, is more inclined to the right, and also differs from the Beinecke one as regards the morphology of the *e*, the *g* and the ligature *ct*. While there is no conclusive evidence to contradict the Nazionale hand's identification as Fonzio's, the Beinecke hand might well be that of Ser Antonio di Jacopo. Further research is needed.

³² The volume subsequently belonged to the library of the learned Florentine Jacopo Gaddi, was acquired by Emperor Francis Stephen I, Grand Duke of Tuscany in 1755. Francis Stephen donated it to the Biblioteca Magliabechiana, see MERISALO, "Genesis and fortune", p. 35 and n. 46.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 35 and n. 45.

³⁴ See DE LA MARE, "New research", pp. 458 and n. 295; for the patron, p. 516, Appendix I, no. 40A. The manuscript was part of the Strozzi library until at least the nineteenth century; it then passed to Prince Piero Ginori-Conti (1865–1939) and was finally acquired by the Beinecke in 1964. For a detailed description, see B. S. SHAILOR, "Beinecke ms. 321", in Yale University, *Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library. General Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts. Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts*, <<https://pre1600ms.beinecke.library.yale.edu/docs/pre1600.ms321.htm>> (accessed 29

accounts of Girolamo di Carlo Strozzi is found a payment for a copy of Jacopo's *volgarizzamento* of the *Historiae Florentini populi*.³⁵ It was finished by June 1475. The scribe is, however, identified in the accounts as Ser Antonio di Jacopo (see n. 31 above).³⁶

b. In Print

It is probable that the Beinecke manuscript is indeed the model for the printed version of the *volgarizzamento*.³⁷ Girolamo di Carlo's accounts show that he would send books from Florence to Marco di Carlo Strozzi to be sold in London in the 1470s. In the end, the copy of Acciaiuoli's *volgarizzamento* was not sent to London but taken to Venice. There Girolamo spent eleven months between June 1475 and May 1476 not only doing business with Filippo and Lorenzo Strozzi & co. of Florence and Naples but also setting up an ambitious printing project of Bruni's and Poggio's histories in Acciaiuoli's and Jacopo's *volgarizzamenti*. He also ordered a new vernacular translation of Pliny the Elder by the renowned Florentine humanist Cristoforo Landino, most

November 2022). There is a digital copy at <<https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/10269852>> (accessed 29 November 2022).

³⁵ See F. EDLER DE ROOVER, "Per la storia dell'arte della stampa in Italia. Come furono stampati a Venezia tre dei primi libri in volgare", *La Bibliofilia*, 55 (1953), pp. 107–17, at 108. Girolamo began his career in Naples in the enterprise of Filippo and Lorenzo di Matteo Strozzi & co. before 1466, then proceeded to do business on his own or occasionally in collaboration with other merchants in Flanders and England, principally Southampton (in Italian *Antona*), also on behalf of Filippo and Lorenzo Strozzi and his younger brother Marco di Carlo who had settled in Southampton, then in London at the end of the 1460s. Girolamo was often in Venice in the 1460s and 1470s, sending merchandise from Italy to Marco di Carlo who reciprocated with merchandise from England, see *ibid.*, pp. 107–08. Girolamo Strozzi's accounts are now Florence, Archivio di Stato, Carte Stroziane V, 52 and 53.

³⁶ See EDLER DE ROOVER, "Per la storia", p. 108 and n. 3.

³⁷ HELLINGA, "Manuscript and print", pp. 125–29 gives a convincing comparative analysis of the manuscript and the print to bear out this conclusion. The use of the Beinecke manuscript as the model for the print had already been argued for by C. MEYERS, *The Transition from Pen to Press*, unpublished MA diss., Yale University, 1983, and endorsed by SHAILOR, "Beinecke ms. 321".

probably completed in February and printed in June 1476 by Nicolas Jenson, a famous printer of French origin, in Venice, and paid for by Girolamo and his associate Giambattista di Luigi Ridolfi.³⁸ Jacopo di Poggio was consulted on the choice of the translator.³⁹

Acciaiuoli's translation of Bruni's *Historiae*, the *Historia fiorentina*,⁴⁰ was printed in Venice on 12 February 1476, whereas Jacopo's *volgarizzamento*, the *Istoria fiorentina*, came out on 8 March 1476.⁴¹ Both were printed by "messer Iacopo de' Rossi di natione gallo",⁴² i.e. Jacques Le Rouge alias Jacobus Rubeus, a productive printer of French origin active in Venice between 1473 and 1478, then in Pinerolo from 1479 until 1483; his types were still in use in Embrun in 1489/90 and there is a print attributed to him in 1505. Le Rouge printed classical and humanist authors but also Roman and canon law as well as, for example, breviaries. The two *volgarizzamenti*, in addition to the 1505 print, are his only vernacular texts.⁴³

According to Girolamo di Carlo's accounts, both *volgarizzamenti* were printed in around six hundred copies, mostly on paper, and normally sold together. Considering the differences between the two histories, this is an interesting development and no doubt contributed to Poggio-Jacopo's dissemination also in pro-Medicen circles even after Jacopo's disgrace. A few copies on parchment have been preserved; they, of course, catered to the taste of more upmarket customers. The initial price for Bruni's twelve-book work was two florins and for Poggio's eight-book work, one florin. Copies were sent out to booksellers not only in Italy

³⁸ EDLER DE ROOVER, "Per la storia", pp. 108–10. The Pliny is GW M34342: "Plinius Secundus, Gaius: *Historia naturalis*, ital. Übers. Christophorus Landinus. Venedig: Nicolas Jenson, 1476. 2°"; ISTC ip00801000.

³⁹ EDLER DE ROOVER, "Per la storia", p. 109 and n. 3.

⁴⁰ GW 5612: "Brunus Aretinus, Leonardus: *Historiae Florentini populi*, ital. von Donatus Acciaiuolus. Venedig: Jacobus Rubeus, 12.II.1476 2°"; ISTC ib01247000.

⁴¹ GW M34604: "Poggius, Johannes Franciscus: *Historia Florentina*, ital. Übers. Jacobus Poggius. [Venedig]: Jacobus Rubeus, 8.III.1476 2°"; ISTC ip00873000.

⁴² GW M34604; fol. <n.vii'>.

⁴³ See ISTC, <https://data.cerl.org/istc/_search?query=Jacobus+Rubeus&from=0> (accessed 29 November 2022).

but also in London and Bruges, the likely targets being the large Florentine merchant communities in those places. Florence itself was rightly expected to provide a good market for both prints.⁴⁴ The Strozzi continued to sell the *volgarizzamenti* even beyond the death of Girolamo di Carlo in 1481/2, at least until 1483, though at a discount. It is not known when the 1476 run went out of print.⁴⁵ Of Jacopo's translation, more than 150 copies still survive in public holdings.⁴⁶

Conclusion

The publishing history of Poggio's last work, the *Historiae Florentini populi* is interesting from a number of points of view. Reflecting Poggio's conflict with the Medici regime in the last few years of his life from 1456 until 1459, he set out to compose a non-official history of Florence that could be seen as a counterpart to Bruni's official, state-sponsored *Historiae Florentini populi*. Poggio did not complete his text, which was heavily edited and brought to conclusion by his son Jacopo, whose short life was marked by his Republican ideals that put him on a collision course with the Medici regime. Poggio-Jacopo's *Historiae*, dedicated to Poggio's friend Frederick of Montefeltro, count and later duke of Urbino, who was to be one of the backers of the Pazzi conspiracy of 1478, reflect Jacopo's political stance as regards both content and publishing history. A few Florentine luxury volumes, of which at least the dedication copy to Frederick, now BAV, Urb. lat. 491, was produced by Vespasiano da Bisticci's publishing house, catering for princes and kings, under the close supervision of Jacopo himself, represent the short-lived upscale circulation, or commercial circulation *tout court*, of the Latin work in the fifteenth century. The Poggio-Jacopo Latin text is only transmitted in the sixteenth century in two paper manuscripts written by a series of more and less inexperienced hands which suggest that the copies were made as writing exercises. Poggio's incomplete text is transmitted as a draft in a paper manuscript from c. 1500. The Latin text was

⁴⁴ EDLER DE ROOVER, "Per la storia", pp. 112–13.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁴⁶ ISTC, <<https://data.cerl.org/istc/ip00873000>> (accessed 29 November 2022).

first printed in 1715 by G. B. Recanati, whose work began a true Poggio renaissance, leading to the publication of other important treatises such as *De varietate fortunae* (1723). Jacopo's publishing project was not limited to the Latin text but also covered the dissemination of the work in his own vernacular translation. Jacopo again closely supervised one of the luxury manuscripts, now BNCF, Palatino Baldovinetti 62, and seems to have entertained the possibility of dedicating the translation not to Frederick but to the *Signoria* of Florence, thus conferring it a new municipal status vieing with that of the state-sponsored Bruni text. In the end, Frederick was not dislodged from the position of dedicatee. Jacopo was also in close contact with the international Florentine merchant Girolamo di Carlo Strozzi, a member of a dynasty with a long history of conflict with the Medici, who decided to print both Donato Acciaiuoli's vernacular translation of Bruni's *Historiae Florentini populi* and Jacopo's *volgarizzamento* of his own edition, *Istoria fiorentina*, in Venice in 1476. The two histories were also quite often sold together, which no doubt contributed to diminishing their differences in public perception and probably conferred some aura of officiality to Poggio-Jacopo's text, ensuring its success well beyond Jacopo's political disgrace in 1478.