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Poggio's beginnings at the papal curia.

The Florentine brain drain and the fashioning of the humanist movement

Clémence Revest

In his always stimulating *The Florentine Enlightenment 1400–50*, the historian George Holmes vigorously emphasized the decisive role of a “Florentine-curial axis” in the rise of the humanist movement at the turn of the fifteenth century.¹ Holmes pointed out that many young humanists left Florence for Rome at the end of the Western Schism and found employment in the papal chancery, especially under the pontificate of John XXIII (r. 1410–1415), to the extent that “during this pontificate the papal court became a center of Florentine humanism to rival if not surpass Florence itself.”² Holmes further argued that this relative “brain drain” not only provided professional and economic opportunities, but was also a *sine qua non* factor for the prestige and the influence of the new culture of the *studia humanitatis*. The paradigm sketched by Holmes, tended to de-compartmentalize the history of Florentine humanism, and to temper an enduring *campanilismo*, by taking into account intellectual relations and circulations beyond the city, articulated with other socio-political contexts, in this case the Roman curia.

Our argument is about pushing such a logic further, and showing that it allows us somehow to reverse the point of view: in other words, to leave Florence, in order to observe the global and reticular dynamics of development of the humanistic culture in Europe. Within this, in return, we can re-register the itineraries and activities of the Florentines, at various levels. This effort of realignment leads us, in a first step, to reflect on the fact that Florentine humanism developed at least partly outside Florence, through a decisive movement of emigration. It leads us, moreover, to go beyond a territorialized and, in a sense, regionalized vision of the birth of the humanist movement, to arrive at thinking about the mesitself—certainly structured by networks, hubs, and clusters—as a decentralized space of identity creation.³

Such a perspective aligns with the direction of current historiography that favors a multipolar approach to the development of humanism. In particular, this perspective, while recognizing the prominence of Florence, integrates the city into an essential dynamic of exchanges and flows between interconnected cultural milieus in central and northern Italy and Europe, more broadly.⁴ These cultural milieus varied in their nature and importance. One of the most significant was the papal court, characterized by socio-economic attractiveness, its cosmopolitanism, and scholarly and spiritual authority.⁵

Within this perspective of Florentine humanism in motion, we will focus here on the significant case of the beginnings of Poggio Bracciolini's career, from his arrival in Rome at the end of the year 1403 to his departure for England in the service of Bishop Henry Beaufort in 1418.⁶ Apart from one particular aspect (the discovery of manuscripts in monastic libraries of the Germanic world and the letters written during the Council of Constance), this youthful period remains relatively little studied, and poorly documented by archival research. The fundamental biography published by Ernst Walser in 1914 casts some light on Poggio's path at the pontifical chancery at the end of the schism.⁷ However, a more systematic survey in the pontifical archives, crossed with humanist literature, enables better understanding of his activities, his social and institutional situation, as well as his network of relations within one of the most important bureaucracies in the late-medieval, occidental world.

Poggio's emigration was, from an individual point of view, the starting point of a social and intellectual ascent, which led a young and penniless notary to become a figurehead of the pontifical administration and humanist culture in the second quarter of the fifteenth century. From a more global perspective, these beginnings echo those of a small group of Florentines curialists, lovers of the *studia humanitatis*, who remained in constant connection with their hometown. Finally, Poggio's case illustrates, in an emblematic way, how much the early fifteenth-century Roman curia was a beating heart for the nascent humanist movement, both as a melting pot and as a European springboard.⁸

“You, new and unknown to all”: a story of upward mobility

The first trace of Poggio's departure for Rome is a letter addressed to him by Coluccio Salutati from Florence on 23 December 1403.⁹ The famous chancellor was delighted to learn that his young protégé had arrived without incident, and had already found a professional situation in the service of Cardinal Landolfo Maramaldo. More precisely, Poggio probably worked as a secretary for this Neapolitan prelate. The Florentine diplomat Maso degli Albizzi addressed a missive to Maramaldo on 4 February 1404, in response to “*quanto m'avavate fatto scrivere per Poggio*.”¹⁰ Very quickly, Poggio entered the administration of Pope Boniface IX, with the office of *scriptor apostolicus*. Three letters written in Florence (two by Coluccio Salutati, dated between 9 and 24 February 1404, and one from Leonardo Bruni, probably from the same period) praised the promotion.¹¹ Salutati attributed the promotion to Francesco Piendibeni da Montepulciano, an influential apostolic secretary, whom the chancellor had long known, and with whom he shared a love of ancient literature.¹²

Both Salutati and Bruni insisted on the extraordinary and unexpected nature of the nomination, highlighting the youth, inexperience, and poverty of Poggio. Salutati wrote: “you, new and unknown to all, you have been placed before everyone else.”¹³ Bruni, meanwhile, recalled that, “you did not bring with you to Rome any penny or anything, apart from your virtue and your skills.”¹⁴ Poggio was indeed the son of an apothecary riddled with debts. He had worked as a copyist, and had managed to become a notary in Florence in 1402, but had little experience, and neither university degree nor literary opus to his credit. Poggio himself proudly recalled, four decades later, his rapid accession to the office of *scriptor* in his funeral oration in tribute to Bruni in 1444. “Meanwhile,” he wrote, “I left for the Roman curia under the pontificate of Boniface IX, and soon after my arrival I became an apostolic scribe, a useful office that associates honesty with dignity.”¹⁵ In his *Vitae quorundam pontificum* (ca. 1459), Poggio wrote of the liberality of Boniface IX:

For while he could draw from the office of scribe, which was vacant, three hundred guilders of gold, when he heard that I was a young man of twenty-three who loved *studia humanitatis*, he would not go beyond two hundred and fifty. He loved erudite men and listened to them willingly.¹⁶

Like Bruni, at the end of his life Poggio idealized the story of his entrance to the curia as a sign of the coming triumph of the *studia humanitatis*.

More concretely, in 1404 Poggio became one of the many *scriptores apostolici*. These men constituted the backbone of the apostolic chancery and enjoyed a number of privileges;

especially the status of *familiaris papae*, a regular income (in principle), and a priority access to the attribution of ecclesiastical benefices and exemptions.¹⁷ Their main task was to engross the papal letters (*de cancellaria* or *de curia*) drafted by the abbreviators or by the secretaries. For this reason, the name “Poggius” or “Pogius” appears on the original copies of the papal letters registered in the *Registra Vaticana* (letters *de curia*) from the first year of the pontificate of Innocent VII. The name appears eleven times in the *Registrum Vaticanum* 333, mainly in the bulls concerning legations, or diplomatic negotiations for the union of the Church.¹⁸ The oldest example dates to 24 December 1404, in the margin of a letter relating to the mission of a pontifical commissioner in the patrimony of Saint Peter.¹⁹ Poggio’s activity as a scribe is then attested in a relatively regular manner (there is an average of six mentions of “Poggius” per register between 1404 and 1415), notwithstanding the vicissitudes of the curia in those years of crisis.²⁰

In fact, during a sudden revolt of the Romans on 6 August 1405, Poggio was compelled, like all his colleagues, to flee the city in haste and to go to Viterbo with the pope.²¹ This is confirmed by the pontifical letters from Viterbo that contain the mention “Poggius.”²² His time in Viterbo is also revealed through a striking account that he recorded in the *Vitae quorundam pontificum*:

It was around noon and overwhelming heat oppressed those many who fled the fury of the people. I myself, who was only a teenager, had heard a noise, and, wanting to know what it was, I saw corpses being transported across the bridge. As I was at the palace, seeing everyone ready to flee and having covered myself, I walked the road and I almost did not escape.²³

Once peace was restored, Poggio returned with the curia to Rome in the spring of 1406. Soon after, he learned of the death of his mentor, Coluccio Salutati. He wrote a letter to Niccolò Niccoli on 15 May, full of sadness and regret. “The wound might have been a little lighter,” he claimed, “if I could have seen him alive at least once after going to Rome.”²⁴ A safe conduct from Innocent VII directed to the attention of “*magister Pogius de Florentia, scriptor litterarum apostolicarum, familiaris noster*” on 24 August, shows that he left the city again in the summer, and it is clear he traveled to Florence and to the Mezzogiorno in the following months.²⁵ Poggio returned to the curia, and resumed his activities as a scribe, at the beginning of 1407, after the coronation of Gregory XII. Letters in the registers of the Venetian pontiff contain the mention “Poggius” from 18 February.²⁶ The young *scriptor* soon confronted political events relating to the Western Schism, after the failure of negotiations between the rival popes in the autumn of 1407.²⁷ The breakdown forced Poggio to follow the successive movements of Gregory XII in Tuscany. He was in Lucca in February 1408; and in Siena during the summer.²⁸ During this time, most of the pope’s cardinals revolted, joining dissident cardinals from the Clementist obedience, and announced the organization of a general council in Pisa.

Like most Roman curialists, Poggio left Gregory XII and went to Florence before the winter of 1408–1409.²⁹ Doubtless, he shared the general indignation against the pontiff, to whom Poggio referred several times in his later writings. In the *Vitae quorundam pontificum*, he evoked a hypocritical and incompetent pope, surrounded by greedy nephews.³⁰ He devoted one of his famous *Facetiae* to a story comparing Gregory to a “mountebank,” who, after having made false promises for a long time, “turned his back on the spectators and presented them his

ass.”³¹ Similarly, in his treatise *Contra hypocritas* (1447), Poggio denounced, through the interlocutor Carlo Marsuppini, the acts of the pontiff and his entourage as examples of the corrupting power of ambition. He singled out Giovanni Dominici, named cardinal by Gregory, for scathing recriminations, and supported his claims in the first person of the humanist: “I for my part, I said, witnessed this, Carlo, I participated at that time in all these things.”³²

No evidence survives to document Poggio’s participation in the Council of Pisa, which opened on 25 March 1409 and concluded with the election of Alexander V on 26 June. However, Poggio quickly resumed his office in the new Pisan chancery. He again followed the roaming papal administration, and “*Poggius*” appears on an original papal bull dated 24 November 1409 in Pistoia.³³ After the sudden death of Alexander V, the name appears again in the registers of the new Pope, John XXIII, in Bologna in June 1410 and then in Rome on 1 May 1411.³⁴ Above all, some of these archival documents show that Poggio also exercised the office of *abbreviator*, which consisted of drafting the minutes of apostolic letters.³⁵ John XXIII confirmed this position by a letter of grace issued on 14 November 1411, which introduced Poggio as a *scriptor apostolicus*, a papal familiar, and an *abbreviator*.³⁶ In this document, we learn furthermore that he obtained the office of *scriptor* of the apostolic penitentiary, previously held by Leonardo Bruni. Poggio enjoyed promotion in the year immediately following the Council of Pisa. In the context of reorganization of the curia, promotions also favored the career of other less well-known humanists, such as Benedetto da Piglio.³⁷

The activities related to his appointment in the apostolic penitentiary are not known, but Poggio continued to work as an apostolic scribe in the service of John XXIII, always at the mercy of an extremely eventful political situation. In June 1413, the invasion of Rome by the troops of King Ladislaus of Naples drove the curia from the city.³⁸ The pope had to stay several months at the gates of Florence in the monastery Sant’Antonio del Vescovo, where Poggio engrossed apostolic letters.³⁹ He followed the pontiff until the new general council took place in Constance. The name “*Poggius*” appears in the documents produced in the German city from February 1415.⁴⁰ It is likely, at this moment, that Poggio became an apostolic secretary. On 23 February 1415, an apostolic letter was issued in favor of “*magistro Poggio Gucii [...] secretario and scriptori nostro*,”⁴¹ and on 18 March, a certain *Andrea Acolitus* from the diocese of Poitiers was instituted as a tabellion (a public notary) after the examination “*per dilectum filium magistrum Pogium Gucii secretarium nostrum*.”⁴²

If the office of apostolic secretary was still relatively new and informal at the beginning of the fifteenth century, it already designated a type of elite of rhetor, who was directly linked to the pope. The office became, precisely at the end of the Western Schism, a specific target for humanists’ recruitment.⁴³ In addition to their professional and institutional aspects, all Poggio’s offices offered privileged access to the ecclesiastical benefices that were processed by the chancery. Indeed, Poggio received two canonries with prebends in the diocese of Bordeaux, one in the cathedral and one in the monastery Saint-Seurin beyond-the-walls.⁴⁴

The letter of 23 February 1415, mentioned above, indicates that Poggio had filed a petition and consequently the pope revoked all concessions that could prejudice the possession of these benefices. In short, the letter suggests that Poggio already held the canonries in principle, but that other clerks were obstructing the execution of the grace. On 15 March 1416, Poggio complained in a letter to Guarino Veronese: “I hoped to join you [in Florence], but a new impediment occurred: indeed disputes are being prepared against me about a benefit.”⁴⁵ The

litigation lasted throughout the Council of Constance, dragging on while the humanist and his colleagues awaited the council's uncertain outcome. On 22 May 1417, the letter in his favor from 23 February 1415 was registered at the special request of Cardinal Vice-Chancellor Jean de Brogny.⁴⁶ Soon after, Poggio took his place in the chancery of Martin V (elected in November 1417), and his name as an apostolic scribe appears in a petition dated 9 December 1417.⁴⁷ However, when the pope descended to the other side of the Alps and arrived in Mantua in the autumn of 1418, Poggio chose to enter the service of the Bishop of Winchester, Henry Beaufort. He followed Beaufort to Normandy, then to London, where he remained for four years.⁴⁸ Despite the vagaries of the crisis, the young Florentine who went to Rome "new and unknown to all" crossed the steps of a kind of curial *cursus honorum*. His career might not have been, at that moment, bright or lucrative enough for his taste, but was certainly already remarkable.

Poggio's ascent on the scholarly plane was also impressive. When he left Florence, he was a young and a rather inconspicuous protégé of Salutati. He was not, for example, mentioned by Bruni in the *Dialogi ad Petrum Paulum Histrum*.⁴⁹ However, from his early years at the curia, Poggio was already engaged in research that later established his reputation. Just after arriving in Rome, for example, he gathered a first epigraphic collection (not preserved). Salutati praised him, writing "I see now that fairly soon you will give us the whole Urbs, thanks to these ancient inscriptions."⁵⁰ He also searched for lost classical writings, since Bruni mentioned in two letters to Niccoli at the end of 1406 that Poggio was in Campania looking for *antiquitates*, in particular in the library of Montecassino.⁵¹

Some volumes copied by Poggio during the period are also preserved and, what is particularly important, they testify to his participation in the development of the new script *all'antiqua*.⁵² If he is no longer regarded today as the isolated inventor of humanistic writing, it is clear that at the beginning of the fifteenth century, in Florence and then in the curia, Poggio actively contributed to its development. Several manuscripts dated from these early years are attributed to him, in particular volumes containing Cicero's correspondence to Atticus (dating to 1408), Jerome's Latin translation of Eusebius' *Chronicle* (completed at the curia of Gregory XII in Siena, between December 1408 and January 1409) and Cicero's first book of *Academica* and *De legibus* (dating, according to his son Jacopo, to the pontificate of John XXIII).⁵³ Additionally, the script *all'antiqua* appears in papal documentation, specifically in a fragment of a *rotulus* of payment of apostolic scribes written between the autumn of 1405 and the summer of 1408, which has been attributed to Poggio by Cesare Scalon.⁵⁴

Last, Poggio already professed radical ideas in favor of the *studia humanitatis* and had adopted the sarcastic tone that became one of his hallmarks. Two letters written by Coluccio Salutati from Florence a few months before his death (17 December 1405 and 26 March 1406) reflect these characteristics. Salutati wrote about the debates agitating the correspondence between Poggio and himself.⁵⁵ The old master opposed the anti-modern positions adopted by Poggio, asking, "Where does it come from, Poggio, that you want the older ones to have so far surpassed those who came after, in an incomparable way?"⁵⁶ He commented upon Poggio's radical stylistic demands, and warned him against his imprudent taste for satire.

However, the years of the Council of Constance clearly marked a crucial acceleration in Poggio's intellectual trajectory. At this moment, he became a renowned author and antiquarian. Only two letters and an epigram written in tribute to Salutati survive from the years before

Constance. However, in the space of two years, between 1416 and 1417, Poggio, compelled to *otium*, composed his first important works: the letters about the Baths of Baden (18 May 1416), the trial and execution of Jerome of Prague (30 May 1416), and the discovery of Quintilian's complete manuscript in Saint Gall (15 December 1417); the orations addressed to Emperor Sigismund to call for the end of the schism (ca. 1416), and to the council fathers about the reform of ecclesiastical manners (summer 1417), and those composed for the funeral of Cardinal Francesco Zabarella (late September 1417).⁵⁷ Poggio's cultural and moral ideals, as well as his rhetorical skills began to appear in these texts, many of which—notably the letter on Jerome of Prague and the funeral oration for Zabarella—spread across Europe. His notoriety developed simultaneously, thanks to his finds in the monastic libraries of Cluny, Saint Gall, Murbach, Fulda, Langres, and Cologne between summer 1415 and summer 1417, some of which are attested by autograph copies.⁵⁸ The most famous of his rediscoveries was, of course, the complete copy of the *Institutes of Oratory*, which the humanist and his friends publicized by staging it as a heroic rescue of Latin literature from Germanic barbarism.⁵⁹ This epic manner of representing the quest for lost manuscripts immediately made Poggio famous and was integrated into the powerful mythology of humanism. In short, Poggio's first fifteen years in the curia were a pivotal point in his professional, social, and intellectual rise. Away from Florence, he arrived at the front of the political and literary scene.

Poggio and his brothers: a Tuscan *sodalitas* at the papal chancery

Poggio's individual route fit into a broader phenomenon of sociability, which contributed to the development of the humanist movement. It did this first through a small group of Tuscan scholars active at the papal chancery in the early fifteenth century. During that period, Poggio belonged to a group of compatriots who shared the same literary tastes, the same reverence toward Coluccio Salutati, and who worked together in the apostolic bureaucracy. In Salutati's last letter addressed to Poggio, dated 26 March 1406, the chancellor wrote: "You left, as well as others, to the Roman curia, which I hope will be happy and fruitful."⁶⁰ He referred in particular, as he immediately specified, to Leonardo Bruni, who arrived in Rome on March 1405, also in search of better employment.⁶¹

The two friends had already bonded through a common erudite thirst and the same radical desire to revive the *aetas priscorum*. They shared the joys and hopes of their research, and kept in regular contact with Niccolò Niccoli in Florence. In January 1416, Bruni evoked both the difficulties of his own project to write the history of the Florentine people, and joy at the discovery of two Ciceronian speeches by Poggio.⁶² In the same way, Poggio expressly asked Niccoli to read Bruni his letter on the Baths of Baden, quoting in passing the maxim *cum amicorum inter communia omnia sint*.⁶³ This intellectual complicity was nourished by a deep familiarity between these scholars, who greeted each other with a "my dear brother." Indeed, Bruni, returning from his wedding in Arezzo in 1412, made a detour to Terranova to visit the family of his friend.⁶⁴

Such a friendship was fueled, between 1405 and 1415, by their professional collaboration at the papal chancery. As soon as he arrived in Rome, Bruni was propelled to the rank of apostolic secretary; an exceptional promotion, probably instigated by Innocent VII to make himself agreeable to the chancellor of Florence, and Bruni boasted about it.⁶⁵ At Bruni's death in 1444, Poggio claimed in his funeral oration that he was at the origin of the recruitment, since he had

extolled the merits of Bruni in the curia and used his influence with two curialists. This assertion is not corroborated by any other source.⁶⁶

The pontifical archives attest that soon after Bruni's arrival, the two worked together to write the papal correspondence. In January 1406, a safe conduct, copied in a register of Innocent VII, presents for the first time together the names "*Poggius*" and "*L. de Aretio*," respectively as scribe and as secretary.⁶⁷ Taking into account moments of rupture, and absences due to the vagaries of the curia and personal vicissitudes, it is clear that the two friends collaborated regularly. Out of the seventy-two papal letters copied by Poggio which can be inventoried, almost half (thirty-five) were drafted by Bruni.⁶⁸ This close collaboration undoubtedly went hand in hand with mutual solidarity in career advancement. For example, when Bruni was in a delicate situation at the end of the year 1408 and left for the baths of Petriolo, he said that he was waiting for Poggio's advice. "I have", he wrote, "more consideration for you than for any people who are inside and even outside the curia: you can judge with more ease than all the others, to help me more firmly."⁶⁹ When Poggio obtained the office of scribe in the apostolic penitentiary previously held by Bruni in November 1411, it is likely that this transfer resulted from an arrangement between them. Thus, it is not surprising that, when Poggio sought support in 1426 to defend the dignity of the apostolic secretaries, he asked his friend to write to Martin V.⁷⁰

Salutati, in referring to the Florentine emigrants in 1406, probably also thought of Jacopo Angeli da Scarperia. Jacopo was one of his closest disciples, who had left for Rome in 1401.⁷¹ Jacopo was also another inventor of the humanistic script and one of the first translators of Greek at the turn of the fifteenth century. He was probably *scriptor apostolicus* from 1403 (his name appears in the registers as "*Ja. Angelus*"), before he became *abbreviator* under Gregory XII and, briefly, apostolic secretary under John XXIII.⁷² Angeli was notably famous as the unfortunate competitor with Bruni for the office of secretary in 1405. After this episode, Salutati sent him a remonstrance letter in which he underlined that, "I want, since I am a father to each of you, that you are brothers for each other, that you take care, you cherish, you love one another."⁷³ Angeli, as soon as Poggio entered the curia, supplied him a manuscript of Cicero, which he copied. Angeli died too soon (at the beginning of the year 1411) and remained in the shadow of his two brightest compatriots.

To this small group of young Tuscan humanists, Bartolomeo Aragazzi, a native of Montepulciano, can also be added. He entered the apostolic chancery in 1410 (his signature is "*B. de Montepoliciano*") and was passionate about *studia humanitatis*.⁷⁴ His scholarly friendship with Poggio was attested from the Council of Constance. There, he participated in the search for manuscripts, and accompanied Poggio for the famous Quintilian discovery at Saint Gall. In addition, between December 1414 and 1416, he copied a volume that contained Poggio's recent letter on the Baths of Baden.⁷⁵ During the pontificate of Martin V (he was at that time apostolic secretary) Aragazzi also appears as one of the interlocutors in Poggio's dialogue *De Avaritia* (ca. 1428–1429).

Beyond these few relatively well-known figures, other less-familiar names appear discreetly in the sources. Poggio was cited in three archival documents as a witness or a prosecutor for Florentine officers of the papal chancery, men who were also mentioned in his correspondence or more generally in humanist literature. For example, Zuccaro de' Zuccheri, a Florentine notary employed at the papal chancery from at least 1402. Zuccaro resigned from his office of

scriptor apostolicus in Florence on 9 July 1408, through his prosecutors Poggio Bracciolini and Leonardo Bruni. He then resumed his activities at the chancery after the Council of Pisa (his signature is “*çucharus*” or “*zucarus*”).⁷⁶ The same Zuccaro copied, among other things, Bruni’s act of nomination of his own prosecutor in Florence (that is, Niccolò Niccoli) on 24 October 1410, at his first appointment as chancellor of the Signoria.⁷⁷ At the same time, Zuccaro exchanged some familiar correspondence with Bruni, who sent him two letters in December 1407 and February 1409 about curial matters, praising his “very sweet Zuccaro” and mentioning “our Poggio.”⁷⁸ For his part, Poggio evoked Zuccaro’s name in several letters between 1424 and 1436, and attributed to him two of his *Facetiae*. In that work, he claimed to remember the good words of “our friend,” the “most pleasant of men.”⁷⁹

Bartolomeo Bertini da Vincio deserves mention too. The Florentine became an apostolic scribe in 1403, his signature is “*B. de Vincio*.” On 30 October 1406, he established his prosecutor, in the presence of “*Ser Poggio de Terranova, apostolic scribe*,” for an expected grace for two canonries in Florence.⁸⁰ He is also mentioned in a letter Poggio wrote from England to Niccoli in 1421. In the letter, Poggio referred to Bartolomeo as a “rather wise man” with whom he had an epistolary exchange about the situation at the curia.⁸¹

There are other examples as well. Marino Guadagni was a Florentine cleric who served as secretary of Cardinal Giordano Orsini, and as *scriptor apostolicus* from 1409 (his signature is “*M. de Guadagnis*”).⁸² On 23 March 1416, in Florence, Guadagni appointed as prosecutors for his business at the Council of Constance three of his colleagues at the chancery, all Tuscan—Poggio Bracciolini, Bartolomeo Aragazzi and Baronto da Pistoia (Baronto di Filippo de’ Cremonesi, whose mention in the papal letters is “*B. de Pistorio*”)—as well as a Florentine merchant following the curia, Aldighiero di Francesco Biliotti.⁸³ Guadagni continued his career at the curia and, twenty years later, he was the dedicatee of a youthful work of Leon Battista Alberti: the Latin translation of the *Life of Saint Potitus*.⁸⁴ It is worth noting, in passing, that two of Guadagni’s prosecutors, the apostolic scribe Baronto da Pistoia and the merchant Aldighiero Biliotti (then in charge of the business of the Alberti bank at the curia) also appear in Poggio’s *Facetiae*: in three tales recounted by Baronto’s cook, Giannino, and in one told by Biliotti about the Florentine merchants in Avignon.⁸⁵

Ultimately, a network of Tuscan emigrants in the curia (in the chancery in particular) emerged around Poggio, composed of colleagues more or less involved in the development of *studia humanitatis*. They were linked by a system of exchange of services, and by the bawdy conviviality later described by the humanist as the “*Bugiale*.” These men, connected to Poggio, composed the “the first generation of the Florentines in Renaissance Rome,” as evoked in Arnold Esch’s works.⁸⁶

Living in a beating heart of humanism

Poggio’s beginnings at the curia went beyond this close group of Tuscans. In Rome, the Florentine integrated himself into a cosmopolitan world of office holders and clerics, in which he expanded his circle of friends and protectors. He created valuable links with other leading humanists, especially from northern Italy. For example, Antonio Loschi, the former chancellor of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, came to Rome in the summer of 1406 for an embassy in the service of the Republic of Venice.⁸⁷ Appointed apostolic secretary by Gregory XII, the Vicentine worked in the service of the papacy particularly from the pontificate of John XXIII, during

which he collaborated with Poggio. A pontifical letter dated from Bologna on 29 July 1410, bears both signatures (“*A. de Luschis*” for the secretary, “*Poggius*” for the scribe). Moreover, this letter granted safe conduct to the Paduan humanist, Ognibene Scola, who had been at the curia since the end of 1409.⁸⁸ The following month, Poggio also engrossed the letter that granted safe conduct to Antonio Loschi himself (18 August 1410).⁸⁹ The erudite exchanges between Bruni and Loschi during the same period are well attested (especially about Bruni’s Greek translations). In addition, the Vicentine appears repeatedly in the *Facetiae* and, in the preface to book one of the *De varietate*, Poggio recalled their rides in the middle of Roman ruins. These pieces of evidence suggest his close professional and personal relations with Poggio after the Council of Constance.⁹⁰

Poggio interacted with other humanists from outside of Tuscany. At the chancery Poggio had the opportunity to meet Cencio dei Rustici, a young Roman, whose passion for Antiquity equaled Poggio’s.⁹¹ Cencio was appointed apostolic scribe on 15 September (his signature in the papal letters is “*Cincius*” or “*Cencius*”), then secretary in 1414.⁹² Like Bartolomeo Aragazzi, Cencio participated in the expeditions to Saint Gall in 1416, and addressed a letter about the finds to his old teacher Francesco da Fiano.⁹³ Still in the curia, Poggio befriended Guarino Veronese who, in February 1410, accompanied the Byzantine ambassadors, Demetrios and Johannes Chrysoloras.⁹⁴ Guarino impressed Leonardo Bruni, who recommended him to Niccoli in Florence.⁹⁵ Poggio and Guarino then began an epistolary exchange, the first traces of which can be traced back to 1416. In that year, Poggio informed Guarino of his discoveries of manuscripts and the latter sent him the *De re uxoria* written by a promising young Venetian humanist, Francesco Barbaro. Poggio, in turn, showed the opus to his colleagues Cencio dei Rustici and Biago Guasconi.⁹⁶

In general, Poggio’s career in the service of the popes, his activities as well as his travels and encounters, echo those of many other humanists, more or less famous, at the same time. The papal curia at the end of the Western Schism was a melting pot for the humanist movement, not only in terms of relations between Rome and Florence, but at least for all of north-central Italy. Beyond regional affiliations, it was a common area of collaboration and exchange. There humanists could build relationships with potential protectors, especially cardinals, interested in their studies. Poggio, as shown above, wrote a funeral oration in Constance in tribute to Francesco Zabarella, a Paduan cardinal who was one of the most important jurists of his time, as well as a fervent admirer of Petrarch.⁹⁷ In the same way, Leonardo Bruni concluded some of the letters he wrote to Poggio with greetings addressed to prelates involved in the development of humanism. For example, in 1416, in two of his letters composed from Florence, he asked Poggio to greet the cardinals Francesco Zabarella, Alamanno Adimari, and Branda Castiglione, and the bishops Francesco Piendibeni and Bartolomeo Capra.⁹⁸ These are some of the clues to a sociability woven between ecclesiastical power and humanist culture, and that created the career opportunities in which Poggio thrived.

At the curia Poggio used those first years serving the popes as an occasion to build a constellation of eminent and pan-European connections. It is very likely that Poggio’s ties with certain cardinals’ households shaped his early career, starting with Maramaldo’s household during his early years in Rome. Among this *familia* was Petrillo Filomarino, who derived from a powerful and ancient lineage of the Neapolitan nobility.⁹⁹ When Poggio arrived at the curia, in fact, Petrillo was Boniface IX’s parent and *camerarius*.¹⁰⁰ His relationship with Poggio in

the cardinal household probably led this high-ranking curialist to befriend other humanists, as we can deduce from a long letter sent to him from Leonardo Bruni in the early summer of 1408, and from the *Facetiae* that Poggio attributed to him.¹⁰¹ The Bolognese cleric Francesco Pizolpasso was also in the service of Cardinal Maramaldo around 1400. Pizolpasso's interest in humanist culture and links with Bruni and Poggio are well known.¹⁰² Coluccio Salutati, in an undated letter, addressed him as the "secretary of the lord of Bari [Maramaldo]," which was obviously his first office in the curia before he became *camerae clericus* around 1410.¹⁰³ These pieces of evidence suggest that Pizolpasso could have been Poggio's intermediary for his entry into the service of Maramaldo in late 1403.

It was, however, in the entourage of Cardinal Francesco Uguccione (died 14 July 1412), archbishop of Bordeaux, that Poggio seems to have found the most profitable support. He indicated that he joined the cardinal's *familia* amid his *Vitae quorundam pontificum*, stating that he "entered with the cardinal of Bordeaux" at the conclave that took place during the Council of Pisa in 1409.¹⁰⁴ His proximity to the cardinal also appeared through the joke about Gregory XII that is attributed to Uguccione in the *Facetiae*, in which Poggio describes the cardinal as "a serious man of exceptional wisdom."¹⁰⁵ These links were related to the benefices in the diocese of Bordeaux that the Florentine received in 1415, which also involved other of Uguccione's familiars. The connections bore fruit for Poggio. An original bull of John XXIII, drafted by Poggio (signed "*Poggius*") and dated 1 June 1412, ordered that a canonry with prebend in the cathedral of Bordeaux be conferred on Pey Berland, secretary of Cardinal Francesco Uguccione.¹⁰⁶ In addition to being a new document related to the young Gascon cleric Pey Berland, the bull also highlights the way Poggio had access, through his relations with cardinal Uguccione, to the benefices with prebends in this diocese.¹⁰⁷

Finally, Poggio's Bordeaux ties also stretched to England. This is confirmed by a bull of Martin V dating back to the spring of 1423, which was published by Ernst Walser.¹⁰⁸ It states that Richard Petworth, the secretary of Bishop Henry Beaufort, exchanged a canonry with prebend in the diocese of Bordeaux. This canonry, says the letter, was previously transferred by Poggio Bracciolini, "cleric of the diocese of Arezzo, scribe of apostolic letters and pontifical abbreviator," who had not managed to take possession of it. Poggio's transfer to Petworth took place after the confirmation of the grace to the Florentine, on 22 May 1417, presumably after his departure for England, when he despaired of settling this dispute and preferred to find an (unknown) arrangement with a new colleague. There is no doubt that the enduring friendship he forged with Petworth (to whom he continued to write throughout his life) was nourished by an exchange of services between familiars of Beaufort.¹⁰⁹

For Poggio, as for other Italian humanists of his generation, the integration into the world of the curia was, in many ways, a social springboard to the "ruling classes."¹¹⁰ It opened to him the doors of a European audience. His departure for England was in this respect comparable to the departures of Bartolomeo Capra and Pier Paolo Vergerio for Buda, in the service of Emperor Sigismund, at the end of the Council of Constance.¹¹¹ Poggio Bracciolini was a Florentine who spent almost fifty years in the service of the papacy and, from the outset, this choice of professional emigration paid off. As summed up by Guido Cappelli, "beyond the appellation [*florentinus*] Poggio owed everything to the curia."¹¹² Through the study of this first youth in Rome (and elsewhere, depending on the crisis) the dynamics of Florentine humanism "outside the walls" emerge: the shaping of the humanist movement in the first decades of the fifteenth

century is thus glimpsed through a Florence–Rome axis born from the shared hope of social mobility, but also from the spread of this culture, in Italy and soon in Europe.

ARCHIVAL ABBREVIATIONS: ASV: Vatican City, Archivio Segreto Vaticano; BAV: Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; Cam. Ap.: Camera Apostolica; Div. Cam.: Diversorum Cameralium; Plut.: Plutei; Reg. Suppl.: Registra Supplicati onum; Reg. Vat.: Registra Vaticana; Vat. Lat.: Vaticana Latina

NOTES

- 1 George Holmes, *The Florentine Enlightenment, 1400–50* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1969), esp. 56–67.
- 2 Ibid., 60.
- 3 A stimulating comparison could be made with the heuristic model developed by Irad Malkin about ancient Greece: Irad Malkin, *A Small Greek World. Networks in the Ancient Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), esp. 4–64.
- 4 See for example Élisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, *Renaissances italiennes 1380–1500* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2007), esp. 62; Guido Cappelli, *L’umanesimo italiano da Petrarca a Valla* (Milan: Carocci, 2010); David Rundle, “Humanism across Europe: The Structures of Contacts,” in *Humanism in Fifteenth-Century Europe*, ed. David Rundle (Oxford: The Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature, 2012), 307–35.
- 5 On the history of the relationship between humanism and the papal court see, in particular, John F. d’Amico, *Renaissance Humanism in Papal Rome: Humanists and Churchmen on the Eve of Reformation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983); Paolo Brezzi and Maristella de Panizza Lorch, eds., *Umanesimo a Roma nel Quattrocento, Atti del Convegno (New York, 1–4 dicembre 1981)* (Rome and New York: Istituto di studi romani-Barnard College, 1984); Maria Chiabò et al., eds., *Alle origini della nuova Roma: Martino V (1417–1431). Atti del convegno (Roma 2–5 Marzo 1992)* (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1992); Anthony Grafton, ed., *Rome Reborn: The Vatican Library and Renaissance Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1993); Germano Gualdo, *Diplomatica pontificia e Umanesimo curiale*, ed. Rita Cosma (Rome: Herder, 2005); Thomas Frenz, *L’introduzione della scrittura umanistica nei documenti e negli atti della curia pontificia del secolo XV* (Vatican City: Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia, Diplomatica e Archivistica, 2005); Luca Boschetto, *Società e cultura a Firenze al tempo del Concilio: Eugenio IV tra curiali, mercanti e umanisti (1434–1443)* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2012). On the period of the end of the Western Schism, see in particular Concetta Bianca, “Il concilio di Costanza come centro di produzione manoscritta degli umanisti,” in *Das Konstanzer Konzil als europäisches Ereignis, Begegnungen, Medien, Rituale*, ed. Gabriela Signori and Birgit Studt (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2014), 379–89; Clémence Revest, “Roma, fine agosto 1406: Muse alla corte dei papi,” in *Atlante della letteratura italiana. I. Dalle origini al Rinascimento*, ed. Amedeo de Vincentiis (Turin: Einaudi, 2010), 322–9, with further bibliography therein.
- 6 For a general profile of Poggio’s life and works see Ernst Walser, *Poggius Florentinus: Leben und Werke (1380–1459)* (Leipzig and Berlin: Teubner, 1914); Emilio Bigi and Armando Petrucci, “Bracciolini, Poggio,” in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 13 (Rome: Treccani, 1971), 640–6, www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/poggio-bracciolini_ (Dizionario-Biografico); Iiro Kajanto, *Poggio Bracciolini and Classicism: A Study in Early Italian Humanism* (Helsinki: Suomalainen tiedeakatemia, 1987); *Poggio Bracciolini 1380–1980: Nel VI centenario della nascita* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1992).
- 7 Walser, *Poggius Florentinus*, 18–70. For his later career at the curia, see also Walter von Hofmann, *Forschungen zur Geschichte der Kurialen Behörden vom Schisma bis zur Reformation*, vol. 2 (Rome: Von Loescher, 1914), 110; Frenz, *L’introduzione*, 159–62; Phyllis Goodhart Gordan, “Poggio at the Curia,” in *Umanesimo a Roma*, 113–26.
- 8 These elements are drawn from my doctoral dissertation, which is currently under preparation for publication: Clémence Revest, “*Romam veni: L’humanisme à la cour pontificale de la fin du Grand Schisme, d’Innocent VII au concile de Constance (1404–1417)*,” 2 volumes (PhD Diss., Université de Paris-Sorbonne, Università degli studi di Firenze, 2012).
- 9 Coluccio Salutati, *Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati*, vol. 3, ed. Francesco Novati (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1896), 653–6.
- 10 Guasti, Cesare, ed., *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi per il comune di Firenze*, vol. 1 (Florence: Cellini, 1867), 66–7.
- 11 Salutati, *Epistolario*, 3–8; Leonardo Bruni, *Lettres familières*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Laurence Bernard-Pradelle (Montpellier: PULM, 2014), 107–9.
- 12 See Paolo Viti, “Francesco da Montepulciano,” in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 49 (Rome: Treccani, 1997), 807–11, www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-da-montepulciano_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/.

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- 13 Salutati, *Epistolario*, vol. 4, 6: “tu, novus et incognitus cunctis, antepositus es cunctis.”
- 14 Bruni, *Lettres familières*, 107: “te neque pecunias ullas nec quicquam omnino preter virtutem ac bonas artes tecum Romam detulisse.”
- 15 Poggio Bracciolini, “Oratio funebris in obitu Leonardi Arretini,” in Leonardo Bruni, *Epistolarum libri VIII*, vol. 1, ed. Lorenzo Mehus (Florence: 1741), repr. James Hankins (Rome: Edizione di Storia e Letteratura, 2007), CXX: “Accidit interea, ut ego ad Curiam Romanam proficiscerer Bonifacio IX pontifice, fieremque paulo post, quam accesseram, litterarum apostolicarum scriptor, quod officium et utile est, et honestati, dignitatieque conjunctum.”
- 16 Poggio Bracciolini, “Vitae quorundam pontificum [addendum],” in *Storiografia pontificia del Quattrocento*, ed. Massimo Miglio (Bologna: Pàtron, 1975), 176: “Nam cum ex officio scriptoriae, quod v[a]cabat, trecentos aureos posset percipere, audiens me XXIII anni adolescentem studiis humanitatis delectari, nolui nisi ducentos vigintiquinque.” On Poggio’s authorship, see Carlo da Capodimonte, “Poggio Bracciolini autore delle anonime Vitae quorundam pontificum,” *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia* 14, no. 1 (1960): 27–47.
- 17 On the papal chancery at the end of the Middle Ages, see von Hofmann, *Forschungen*; Brigide Schwarz, *Die Organisation kurialer Schreiberkollegien von ihrer Entstehung bis zur Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1972); Thomas Frenz, *I documenti pontifici nel Medioevo e nell’età moderna* (Vatican City: Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia, Diplomatica e Archivistica, 1989); Bernard Barbiche, *Bulla, legatus, nuntius: études de diplomatique et de diplomatie pontificales, XIII^e–XVII^e siècle* (Paris: École des Chartes, 2007). I also recommend Thomas Frenz’s page on the website of the University of Passau, www.phil.uni-passau.de/fakultaetsorganisation/fakultaetsangehoerige/histhw/forschung/ (accessed 28 May 2018). For the period at the end of the Western Schism, see Revest, “Romam veni,” vol. 1, 347–94, and vol. 2, 13–21, with further leads therein.
- 18 ASV, Reg. Vat. 333, fols. 115r; 117r; 130r; 131r; 144v; 148r; 171r; 281r; 318v; 319r; 382v.
- 19 ASV, Reg. Vat. 333, fol. 144v.
- 20 Revest, “Romam veni,” vol. 1, 391–2, and vol. 2, 21.
- 21 Carlo di Cave, “Gubernatores Camerae almae Urbis Romae, Gubernatores libertatis reipublicae Romanorum. Un conflitto politico e istituzioni durante il pontificato di Innocenzo VII,” *Archivio della Società Romana di storia patria* 124 (2001): 141–74.
- 22 For example, in ASV, Reg. Vat. 333, fol. 382v; Reg. Vat. 334, fols. 12v–13v.
- 23 Poggio Bracciolini, “Vitae quorundam pontificum,” in *Liber pontificalis*, ed. Louis Duchesne (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1955), App. 2, 553: “Erat circa meridiem, et aestus fervens multos pedibus furorem populi fugientes conficiebat. Ego adolescens audito rumore, et ipse scire quid esset cupidus, pontem transiens tracta cadavera conspexi. Cum essem in palatio, videns singulos ad fugam promptos, et ipse iter togatus ac pede ingressus, pene confectus sum. Excitabatur pulvis equitantium ingens, qui addito calore quosdam in via deficere coegit.”
- 24 Poggio Bracciolini, *Lettere*, ed. Helen Harth (Florence: Olschki, 1984), vol. 1, 219–21, in particular 220: “quod quidem fortassis esset levius paululum, si eum semel postquam Romam veni, viventem aspicere potuissem.”
- 25 For the safe conduct, see ASV, Reg. Vat. 334, fol. 219r. On Poggio in Florence and Mezzogiorno, see below.
- 26 ASV, Reg. Vat. 335, fol. 54v.
- 27 On this complex period and the Council of Pisa, see Giuseppe Alberigo, *Chiesa conciliare: Identità e significato del conciliarismo* (Brescia: Paideia, 1981), 90–118; Aldo Landi, *Il papa deposto: Pisa, 1409: L’idea conciliare nel Grande Scisma* (Rome: Claudiana, 1985); Dieter Girgensohn, “Von der konziliaren Theorie des späteren Mittelalters zur Praxis: Pisa 1409,” in *Die Konzilien von Pisa (1409), Konstanz (1414–1418), und Basel (1431–1449). Institution und Personen*, ed. Johannes Helmuth and Heribert Müller (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2007), 61–94; Hélène Millet, *Le concile de Pise: Qui travaillait à l’union de l’Église d’Occident en 1409?* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010).
- 28 ASV, Reg. Vat. 336, fol. 192r.
- 29 Cesare Scalton, “Un nuovo rotolo della curia di Gregorio XII (novembre 1408–marzo 1409),” in *Storie di cultura scritta: Studi per Francesco Magistrale*, vol. 2, ed. Paolo Fioretti (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull’alto Medioevo, 2012), 767–80, especially 770 and 778.
- 30 Bracciolini, *Vitae quorundam*, ed. Duchesne, 554.
- 31 Poggio Bracciolini, *Facéties*, ed. Stefano Pittaluga, translated by Étienne Wolff (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2005), 32–3. The Latin is “Tum histrio, post solis tandem occasum, ne nihil actum videretur, versis ad eos renibus, culum populo ostentavit.”
- 32 Poggio Bracciolini, *Contra hypocritas*, ed. Davide Canfora (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2008), 29–31, “Huius, inquam, rei testis sum, Carole, qui id temporis rebus omnibus interfui.”
- 33 Třeboň, Státní oblastní archiv (CZ-SOAT), Historica Třeboň (1216–1625), 118. Digitized version on *monasterium.net* (<http://icar-us.eu/cooperation/online-portals/monasterium-net/>), accessed March 30, 2018, <http://monasterium.net/mom/CZ-SOAT/Historica/118/charter?q=Alexander%20V>.
- 34 For example: ASV, Reg. Vat. 340, fols. 84r–85r; ASV, Reg. Vat. 342, fols. 245r–247v. Poggio left the curia at the beginning of 1411 in order to attend his sister’s wedding. See Bruni, *Lettres familières*, 352–3.

- 35 See in particular Tilmann Schmidt, *Die Originale des Papsturkunden in Baden-Württemberg 1198–1417* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1993), n°1212 (letter dated December 10, 1410). However, it should be noted that Coluccio Salutati already greeted Poggio as “*abbreviator*” in his letters dated between December 1405 and March 1406, but that, to my knowledge, is not corroborated by any archival document.
- 36 ASV, Reg. Lat. 157, fols. 299v–300r (the letters mention Francesco da Piendibeni as secretary), ed. Walser, *Poggius Florentinus*, 329–30.
- 37 Clémence Revest, “Benedetto da Piglio, l’humanisme et la curie à la fin du Grand Schisme,” in *Benedetto da Piglio, Libellus penarum*, ed. Jean-Daniel Morerod (Neuchâtel: Société d’histoire de la Suisse romande, in press).
- 38 Clémence Revest, “La prise de Rome le 8 juin 1413, vue par les curialistes de Jean XXIII,” in *Società e poteri nell’Italia medievale: Studi degli allievi per Jean-Claude Maire Vigueur*, ed. Silvia Diacciati and Lorenzo Tanzini (Rome: Viella, 2014), 131–46.
- 39 For example, see ASV, Reg. Vat. 345, fols. 59r–60v; ASV, Reg. Vat. 346, fols. 14v–15r.
- 40 ASV, Reg. Lat. 140, fols. 210v–211v; ASV, Reg. Lat. 182, fol. 141r.
- 41 ASV, Reg. Lat. 182, fols. 30r–v.
- 42 ASV, Reg. Lat. 184, fol. 199r.
- 43 D’Amico, *Renaissance Humanism*, 29–35; Peter Partner, *The Pope’s Men: The Papal Civil Service in the Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 86–91; Germano Gualdo, *Diplomatica*, 391–404; Birgit Studt, “*Tamquam organum nostre mentis*. Das Sekretariat als publizistisches Zentrum der päpstlichen Aussenwirkung,” in *Kurie und Region: Festschrift für Brigide Schwarz zum 65. geburstag*, ed. Brigitte Flug, Michael Matheus, and Andreas Rheberg (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2005), 73–92; Clémence Revest, “Aux origines d’une figure majeure de la papauté renaissante: La nomination de l’humaniste Gasparino Barzizza à l’office de secrétaire apostolique,” in *Église et État, Église ou État? Les clercs et la genèse de l’État*, ed. Christine Barralis et al. (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2014), 123–38, <http://books.openedition.org/psorbonne/3585?lang=fr> (accessed May 28, 2018).
- 44 ASV, Reg. Lat. 182, fol. 30r–v.
- 45 The letter is edited in Guarino Veronese, *Epistolario*, ed. Remigio Sabbadini (Venice: R. Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, 1915), vol. 1, 107. The Latin is “*Ut aliis litteris ad te scripsi sperabam ad vos venire, at novum supervenit impedimentum: lites enim mihi parantur super beneficio quodam.*”
- 46 ASV, Reg. Lat. 182, fol. 30r, marg.: “*Registrata hic de mandato speciali domini mei Cardinalis vicecancellarii mihi facto die XXIIa mensis maii Anno domini Mo CCCCo XVIIo. Antonius de Ponto.*”
- 47 ASV, Reg. Suppl. 106, fol. 170v.
- 48 Poggio Bracciolini, *Lettere*, vol. 2, 16 and 134: “*cum primum Pontifex Mantuam venisset, ego subito me in Angliam conferrem.*” See Alessandra Petrina, *Cultural Politics in Fifteenth-Century England: The Case of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester*, (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 59–90, especially 61–66; and Maxson in this volume.
- 49 Riccardo Fubini, however, suggested that the *Dialoghi* contained implicit allusions to the argument between Salutati and Poggio about the relationship between Christian doctrine and Ancient eloquence: Riccardo Fubini, “All’uscita della Scolastica medievale: Salutati, Bruni e i “*Dialoghi ad Petrum Paulum Histrum*,” in *L’umanesimo italiano e i suoi storici* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2001), 75–103, especially 86–8.
- 50 Salutati, *Epistolario*, vol. 3, 655. The Latin is “*Video quidem te pauco tempore nobis Urbem totam antiquis epigrammatibus traditurum.*”
- 51 Bruni, *Lettres familières*, vol. 1, 209–13. These indications echo the safe-conduct delivered to his attention at the end of August 1406 and his links with the Neapolitan cardinal Landolfo Maramaldo (perhaps he was on mission to his service).
- 52 See the very useful recent synthesis (with a detailed bibliography) at Teresa de Robertis, “I primi anni della scrittura umanistica: Materiali per un aggiornamento,” in *Palaeography, Manuscript Illumination and Humanism in Renaissance Italy: Studies in Memory of A. C. de la Mare*, ed. Robert Black, Jill Kraye, and Laura Nuvoloni (London: The Warburg Institute, 2016), 55–85.
- 53 Cicero’s letters are at Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Hamilton, 166 (fol. 162r: “*Scriptis Poggius anno domini MCCCCVIII a mundi vero creatione VI mil. et DCVII*”), digitized version, http://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN812464044&PHYSID=PHYS_0001&DMDID=. See de Robertis, “I primi anni,” n°65. Jerome’s Latin translation is at Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut.67.15 (fol. f.76r: “*Hunc librum scripsit Poggius Florentiae summo cum studio ac diligentia diebus XII Roman. Pontif. Residente [marg. Gregorio XII] iterum Senis cum sua curia. Valeas qui legis*”), digitized version, <http://teca.bmlonline.it/>. See de Robertis, “I primi anni,” n°28. Cicero’s *Academica* and *De legibus* are at Vatican City, BAV, Vat. Lat. 3245 (fol. 70v: “*Hospes erit non ingratus, presertim cum phylosophiam et leges a Cicerone editas a se vero Iohannes XXIII pontificis tempore scriptas afferat*”), digitized version https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3245. See Élisabeth Pellegrin, *Les manuscrits classiques latins de la Bibliothèque Vaticane, vol. 3, part 2, Fonds Vatican Latin, 2901-14740* (Vatican City and Paris: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana and CNRS Editions, 2010), 148–9.

- 54 Cesare Scalon, "Poggio Bracciolini scrittore papale in littera antiqua fra il 1405 e il 1408," in *Libri, scuole, e cultura nel Friuli medievale: "Membra disiecta" dell'Archivio di Stato di Udine* (Padua: Antenore, 1987), 54–77.
- 55 Salutati, *Epistolario*, vol. 4, 126–45 and 158–70.
- 56 Ibid., 136. The Latin is "unde venit, o Poggi, quod priores velis adeo incomparabiliter posteros superasse?"
- 57 For the letters, see Bracciolini, *Lettere*, vol. 1, 128–35; vol. 2, 153–63. For the oration to the emperor, see Martin C. Davies, "Poggio Bracciolini as Rhetorician and Historian: Unpublished Pieces," *Rinascimento* 22 (1982): 162–7; for the oration to the council fathers see Riccardo Fubini, "L'orazione di Poggio Bracciolini a Costanza sui vizi del clero," in *Umanesimo e secolarizzazione da Petrarca a Valla* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1990), 303–38. For the funeral oration, see Poggio Bracciolini, *Orationes, invectivae, epistolae, descriptiones quaedam, et facetiarum Liber* (Argentine [Strasbourg]: Johann I Knobloch, 1511), fols. XXV–XXVIII.
- 58 See in particular Remigio Sabbadini, *Le scoperte dei codici latini e greci ne' secoli XIV e XV* (Florence: G. S. Sansoni, 1914), vol. 1, 77–82; Idem, *Storia e critica di testi latini* (Catania: Battiato Editore, 1914), 43–9 and 383–96; Albinia C. De la Mare, *The Handwriting of Italian Humanists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973); Tino Foffano, "Niccoli, Cosimo e le ricerche di Poggio nelle biblioteche francesi," *Italia Medioevale e umanistica* 12 (1969): 113–28. For the autograph manuscripts, see, for example, the collection of Cicero's speeches now preserved in the Vatican library: Vatican City, BAV, Vat. Lat. 11458, digitized version https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.11458. See Augusto Campana, "La copia autografa delle otto orazioni ciceroniane scoperte da Poggio nel 1417," *Ciceroniana* 1 (1973): 65–8; De la Mare, *The Handwriting*, 65 and 78–9.
- 59 Clémence Revest, "The Birth of the Humanist Movement at the Turn of the Fifteenth Century," *Annales, Histoire, Sciences Sociales* [English version], 68 (2013): 425–56 especially 451–4, www.cairn-int.info/article-E_ANNA_683_0665--the-birth-of-the-humanist-movement-at.htm.
- 60 Salutati, *Epistolario*, 168: "Ivisti tu et alii in Romanam curiam, quod felix faustumque sit opto."
- 61 Gualdo, *Diplomatica pontificia*, 405–33.
- 62 Bruni, *Lettres familières*, vol. 1, 397–401.
- 63 Bracciolini, *Lettere*, vol. 1, 128–35.
- 64 Bruni, *Lettres familières*, vol. 1, 359–61.
- 65 Revest, *Romam veni*, vol. 1, 180–8.
- 66 Bracciolini, "Oratio funebris in obitu Leonardi Arretini," cxx. The Latin is "laudando Leonardum, et orationis elegantiam, virtutemque prae ceteris extollendo, ac simul quaedam ejus scripta ostendendo effeci, ut is, licet ignotus tum Pontificis, tum ceteris, ab Innocentio secretarius fieret, duorum praesertim opera, qui Pontifici erant carissimi, mihi que satisfacere cupiebant."
- 67 ASV, Reg. Vat. 333, fol. 382v.
- 68 Revest, *Romam veni*, vol. 1, 392–3.
- 69 Bruni, *Lettres familières*, vol. 1, 303. The Latin is "tibi enim plus tribuo quam ceteris hominibus qui et in curia et etiam extra curiam versantur: facilius quam ceteri iudicare et solidius prestare potes."
- 70 Bracciolini, *Lettere*, vol. 2, 70.
- 71 Paolo Farzone, "Iacopo di Angelo da Scarperia," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Treccani, 2004), vol. 62, 28–35, [www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/iacopo-di-angelo-da-scarperia_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/iacopo-di-angelo-da-scarperia_(Dizionario-Biografico)/); Stefano Zamponi, "Iacopo Angeli copista per Salutati," in *Coluccio Salutati e l'invenzione dell'Umanesimo*, ed. Concetta Bianca (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2010), 401–20.
- 72 Revest, "*Romam veni*," vol. 1, 88–90; vol. 2, 6, 10, 17 and 24.
- 73 Salutati, *Epistolario*, vol. 4, 113: "Cupio, quod, cum utrique sim pater, sitis mutuo fratres, quod invicem vos colatis, diligatis, ametis."
- 74 "Aragazzi, Bartolomeo da Montepulciano," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Treccani, 1961), vol. 3, 686–8, [www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bartolomeo-aragazzi_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bartolomeo-aragazzi_(Dizionario-Biografico)/); Paola Scarda Piacentini, "Controfigure della storia: Bartolomeo Aragazzi de Montepulciano, Pietro de' Ramponi da Bologna," *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 34 (1985): 236–54.
- 75 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 90 sup. 42, digitized version at <http://teca.bmlonline.it/>. See De la Mare, *The Handwriting*, 85–90; Concetta Bianca, "Introduzione," in Coluccio Salutati, *De fato et fortuna*, ed. Concetta Bianca (Florence: Olschki, 1985), xcvi–cii; Fabio Ventrusco, "Cencio de' Rustici, Bartolomeo Aragazzi e il De Baccho di Elio Aristide: una nota testuale," *Studi Classici e Orientali* 47 (2001): 405–7.
- 76 The act of resignation is edited in Walser, *Poggius Florentinus*, 329. See also Arnold Esch, "Florentiner in Rom um 1400: Namenverzeichnis der ersten Quattrocento-Generation," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 52 (1972): 476–525, in particular 525; Francesco Paolo Luiso, *Studi su l'epistolario di Leonardo Bruni*, ed. Lucia Gualdo Rosa (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1980), 44, n. 4; Revest, "*Romam veni*," vol. 2, 15 and 35.
- 77 Cristina Rodolico Schupfer, "Il Bruni cancelliere nel 1411," in *Leonardo Bruni cancelliere della Repubblica di Firenze: Convegno di studi, Firenze, 27–29 ottobre 1987*, ed. Paolo Viti (Florence: Olschki, 1990), 117–29,

- especially 121 and 125–9. See also Luca Boschetto, “Le lettere di Leonardo Bruni in morte di Salutati e ai figli di Coluccio,” in *Coluccio Salutati e l’invenzione dell’Umanesimo. Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, 2 novembre 2008–30 gennaio 2009*, ed. Teresa De Robertis, Giovanni Tanturli, and Stefano Zamponi (Florence: Mandragora, 2008), 93–5, especially 94–5.
- 78 Bruni, *Lettres familières*, 250–3 and 314–17.
- 79 Bracciolini, *Lettere*, vol. 2, 5, 14–18; vol. 1, 12, 31–3; vol. 3, 2, 193–4; n°V, 8, 207–9. Idem, *Facéties*, 9 and 85–6.
- 80 The letter is edited in Walser, *Poggius Florentinus*, 328–9. See Revest, “*Romam veni*,” vol. 2, 14, 25, and 36.
- 81 Bracciolini, *Lettere*, vol. 1, 30.
- 82 On Marino Guadagni see Revest, “Benedetto da Piglio,” with further leads therein.
- 83 On Baronto’s signature, see Revest, “*Romam veni*,” vol. 2, 5 and 10. The act is edited in Walser, *Poggius Florentinus*, 333.
- 84 Leon Battista Alberti, “Epistola L. B. Alberti Marino Guadagni,” in *Opusculi inediti di Leon Battista Alberti*, ed. Cecil Grayson (Florence: Olschki, 1954), 88.
- 85 On Giannino, see Bracciolini, *Facéties*, 95–7. For the joke by Aldighiero Biliotti, see *ibid.*, 145. On this merchant see William Caferro and Philip Jacks, *The Spinelli of Florence: Fortunes of a Renaissance Merchant Family* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), 34.
- 86 Esch, “Florentiner in Rom.”
- 87 Gualdo, *Diplomatica*, 371–90; Paolo Viti, “Loschi, Antonio,” in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Treccani, 2006), vol. 66, 154–60, www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-loschi_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/.
- 88 ASV, Reg. Vat. 342, fol. 6r. See Luiso, *Studi*, 18, n.57.
- 89 ASV, Reg. Vat. 342, fol. 43v.
- 90 Poggio Bracciolini, *Les ruines de Rome (De varietate Fortunae)*, ed. and trans. Jean-Yves Boriaud (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1999), 11–13.
- 91 Maximilian Lehnerdt, “Cencio und Agapito dei Rustici,” *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Literaturgeschichte* 14 (1901): 149–72 and 289–318; Ludwig Bertalot, “Cincius Romanus und seine Briefe,” in *Studien zum italienischen und deutschen Humanismus*, vol. 2, ed. Paul Oskar Kristeller (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1975), 129–80; Giuseppe Lombardi, “Note su Cencio dei Rustici,” in *Scrittura, biblioteche e stampa a Roma nel Quattrocento, Atti del 2° seminario 6–8 maggio 1982*, ed. Massimo Miglio (Vatican City: Scuola vaticana di Paleografia, Diplomatica e Archivistica, 1983), 23–35; Concetta Bianca, “Dopo Costanza: Classici e umanisti,” in *Alle origini della nuova Roma*, ed. Chiabò et al., 85–110.
- 92 Von Hofmann, *Forschungen*, vol. 2, 110; Revest, *Romam veni*, vol. 2, 5, 11, 29, and 40.
- 93 Letter ed. Ludwig Bertalot in “Cincius Romanus und seine Briefe,” 144–7.
- 94 Gino Pistilli, “Guarini, Guarino,” in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Treccani, 2003), vol. 60, 357–69, www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/guarino-guarini_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/.
- 95 Bruni, *Lettres familières*, vol. 1, 348–53.
- 96 Published in Francesco Barbaro, *Epistolario*, ed. Claudio Griggio (Florence: Olschki, 1999), vol. 2, p. n°9. Guarino also sought to enter the curia at the end of the year 1417, but Poggio discouraged him: Veronese, *Epistolario*, vol. 1, 174.
- 97 See Giovanna Murano, “Francesco Zabarella (1360–1417),” in *Autographa. I.1, Giuristi, giudici e notai (sec. XII–XVI med.)*, ed. Giovanna Murano (Bologna: CLUEB, 2012), 121–7.
- 98 Bruni, *Lettres familières*, vol. 1, 396–405.
- 99 Gonzaga, Berardo Candida, *Memorie delle famiglie nobili delle province meridionali d’Italia* (Naples: De Angelis, 1875), vol. 2, 20–5.
- 100 ASV, Reg. Vat. 319, fol. 26r (Luiso, *Studi*, p. 50, n.108); ASV, Cam. Ap., Div. Cam. 2, fol. 10v.
- 101 Bruni, *Lettres familières*, vol. 1, 268–79. Bracciolini, *Facéties*, 114.
- 102 Angelo Paredi, *La biblioteca del Pizolpasso* (Milan: Hoepli, 1961); Riccardo Fubini, “Tra Umanesimo e concili: L’epistolario di Francesco Pizolpasso,” in *Umanesimo e secolarizzazione da Petrarca a Valla* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1990), 77–135. On his beginnings at the curia, see Salutati, *Epistolario*, vol. 3, 437–8; Von Hofman, *Forschungen*, vol. 2, 180; Revest, “*Romam veni*,” vol. 2, 33, 45, and 99.
- 103 Salutati, *Epistolario*, vol. 3, 437–51.
- 104 Bracciolini, *Vitae quorundam pontificum*, ed. Duchesne, 554. The Latin is “Ego qui cum cardinale Burdegalensi conclave sum ingressus quae viderim audierimque non libet loqui.”
- 105 Idem, *Facéties*, 32–3.
- 106 Bordeaux, Archives Départementales de la Gironde, G1, published in Archives historiques du département de la Gironde 8 (1866): 327–30 (reported by Walser, *Poggius Florentinus*, 25, n.4). On Pey Berland’s situation at the curia, see also ASV, Reg. Lat. 159, fols. 62r–v.
- 107 Bernard Guillemain, “Un évêque au milieu de son peuple: Pey Berland et les Bordelais (1430–1456),” in *Mélanges en l’honneur de Etienne Fournial* (Saint-Etienne: Publications de l’Université de Saint-Etienne, 1978), vol. 1, 167–75.

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- 108 ASV, Reg. Lat. 135, fol. 208, ed. Walser, *Poggius Florentinus*, doc. n°19, 334–5.
- 109 Roberto Weiss, *Humanism in England during the Fifteenth Century*, ed. David Rundle and Anthony John Lappin, 4th ed (Oxford: Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature, 2009), vol. 1, 34–6, posted online 16 October 2009, http://mediaevum.modhist.ox.ac.uk/system/files/weiss_instal_ic.pdf.
- 110 Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), 191–217.
- 111 Adriano Papo, “L’Umanesimo in Ungheria: il periodo degli esordi,” in *L’Umanesimo latino in Ungheria, Convegno internazionale di studi (Budapest, 18 aprile 2005)*, ed. Gizella Nemeth Papo and Adriano Papo (Treviso: Fondazione Cassamarca, 2005), 21–44.
- 112 Cappelli, *L’Umanesimo italiano*, 25. The Italian is “al di là dell’appellativo, alla curia Poggio deve tutto.”