
FOUNDATION OF THE RENAISSANCE:
THE CIVIC CULTURE
OF EARLY ITALIAN HUMANISM

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That Francesco Petrarch was the first Renaissance humanist, that he was the first modern man, and that he ushered in a new period of European history known as the Renaissance is the boilerplate of general survey courses as they move from the middle ages to the modern world. Indeed, Petrarch dramatically embodied many aspects of the transition, and thus he strides across our histories, a figure like the ancients' Athena or Michelangelo's Sistine Adam, his humanism seemingly 'new born and perfect.'¹ His life and writings seem to sketch a clear break with the medieval and a foundation for the modern, and provide a simple answer to a very difficult question of historical development.

In support of the generalists' viewpoint, no modern specialist of whom I am aware denies the importance of Petrarch in the definition, development and dissemination of early Renaissance humanism, and each has his or her own list of his most important contributions. Nonetheless, the specialist has come to understand and appreciate the immediate historical contexts of Petrarch's accomplishments by focussing on the late medieval urban, literate and lay milieu of his northern Italy, and its peculiar cultural and intellectual expression in what is variously described as pre-humanism, protohumanism or early humanism.² The undeniable fact is that the cultural roots of Italian Renaissance humanism, which Petrarch himself inherited, recognized and built upon, developed over the two generations before his birth in 1304.

In short, during the thirteenth century literate northern Italian urban laymen, generally unconnected with the traditional intellectual centers of court, cathedral or university, acquired a taste for and interest in classical Latin literature.³ They expressed this interest in at least three ways: their hunger for new texts--an obvious precedent for the insatiable and more clearly articulated search for manuscripts carried out later by Petrarch, Boccaccio and Poggio Bracciolini; their desire to deal with these texts actively, in ways that clearly foreshadow the textual criticism and philological researches of the Renaissance; and their attempts to emulate the ancient authors in both

revived and traditional literary forms. That the large majority of these literati were members of the notarial profession was a matter neither of design nor coincidence, but is key to understanding the nature of the classical revival that leads directly to the Italian Renaissance.⁴

These men's new attitudes and activities constitute a movement clearly distinct from earlier medieval patterns of 'renaissance' as exemplified by the Carolingian classical revival or the interests and writings of the twelfth-century 'renaissance', both of which were firmly rooted in the assumptions and structures of the Christian Church.⁵ Their work was neither a direct development out of medieval 'humanism', nor a programmatic base for a widespread intellectual movement.⁶ Indeed, placed against this background, Petrarch's role as a developer and publicist of this trend is cast in even higher relief: without Petrarch the role of humanism in early modern Europe might have been very different, the effects of these men far more scattered and piecemeal.⁷

In assigning meaning to the term 'humanism' I fall somewhere between Paul Oskar Kristeller's assertion that it is strictly an educational and cultural program based upon Latin and Greek classics consisting of grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry and moral philosophy (the *studia humanitatis*),⁸ and the view of many, especially medievalists and moderns, that humanism is a matter of appreciation for man *qua* man in his natural setting, an appreciation exemplified in many works of pagan antiquity.⁹ I see humanism as a matter of both personal attitude and cultural activity, centered on the pagan Greco-Roman classics as sources and exemplars, that focus on the real experiences of human life without direct reliance on divine or religious explanations or frames of reference. Thus, history remains terrestrial and not the story of salvation, poets remain poets and not theologians, and moral philosophy loses its foundations in the Ten Commandments and Beatitudes, and needs to be worked out in terms of purely human relationships and natural standards. By this approach, then, much of what passes for medieval 'humanism' must be relegated to medieval 'classicism', since the courts, cathedral schools and northern universities, and the literate clerics that populated them, simply could not set aside Christian revelation, tradition and authority in favor of a fully secularized basis for intellectual activity.¹⁰

The lay literati of Italy's urban communes, however, could; and among these the notary stood out, as time and again the major advances in this activity are attributed to members of this ancient profession. The remainder of this paper outlines the crucial role of the lay notary and his culture in the northern Italian classical revival of the later thirteenth and early fourteenth

centuries. Recent historians of pre-Petrarchan humanism have unequivocally recognized the importance of the Italian notary in the developments that led directly to a clearly identifiable Renaissance humanism.¹¹ Benjamin Kedar, in his short study of Genoese notaries is typical, though he makes his point in a negative way: "...as notaries played a major role in the spread of early humanism, one may adduce the numerical smallness of the Genoese notariate as one of the reasons why Genoa lagged in the adoption of humanist culture."¹² During the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, notaries constituted the largest percentage of literate laymen in virtually any given city: Bologna had 2,000 notaries in 1294, Milan 1,500 in 1288, Padua 600, and much smaller Treviso 487 in 1327. Florence had 367 registered just to work within the city walls.¹³ George Holmes has gone so far as to claim that the notary represented the typical urban citizen who, far more than the merchant, made the Italian cities different from those of the rest of Europe.¹⁴ It is clear that the vast majority of written material of all kinds on which we base our understanding of Italian history for the period was written and/or copied by notaries, and this includes much literary work as well.

To simplify the teaching of the early middle ages, historians sometimes make the claim that the Church had a monopoly on literacy, especially through the monasteries and later cathedral schools. Though a convenient fiction, it is a fiction nonetheless. Throughout the middle ages, from Rome's last gasps until our period, notaries stalked the earth, and not only in areas controlled by Byzantine administration.¹⁵ I have traced the history of this occupation in an article for the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of Medieval Italy*,¹⁶ and in this research was struck by its continuing presence and importance. Like cities and urban culture it waxed and waned, but never disappeared. Early on there had been both ecclesiastical and lay notaries, but this distinction dissolved in most of Italy by the twelfth century, and the same men worked for monasteries and cathedral chapters as merchants, counts and podestà. Though a notary might serve the interests of pope or bishop, his was a thoroughly lay function.¹⁷ Notarial training, aside from that in the papal curia, took place in a secular setting--at court, in a school or through apprenticeship--and was not directly connected to ecclesiastical institutions or even the university law schools.¹⁸ Nonetheless, the notary's exposure to elements of Roman law linked him to that tradition as to the civic milieu that both he and it transformed.

In his provocative study of medieval humanism, Walter Ullmann sketches the revival of Roman law in the context of the Investiture Contest between

papacy and emperor in the later eleventh century.¹⁹ In hashing out the relationship of imperial and papal—or church and state—authority and power, both sides resorted to Roman civil law as codified by Justinian in the sixth century and still studied and applied in Lombard courts and cities. This largely pagan legal code, with all of its Roman thoroughness and apparent relevance to both imperial and increasingly organized urban political and administrative needs, came to be the focus of study in Italy's first real *studii generali*, the law schools in Bologna and, later, Padua. With this legal renaissance begins the secularization of civic culture, (for Ullmann, anyway) as it relies in no way on ecclesiological considerations (as did, for example, the feudal oath). Ullmann sees a real bifurcation between the 'regenerate' Christian living by the Bible and church, and the 'unregenerate' citizen living by the Roman law and commune. However unsettling (and accurate), his picture does account for the increasing secularism and overt rejection of ecclesiastical control during the period in northern Italy, the battleground between pope and emperor. It was in this rapidly articulating environment that the notaries—lay servants of church, emperor, nobility and *popolo*, whose functions were defined in Roman law and whose traditions were long-standing—rose in importance.

Northern Italy began developing a documentary culture that was literate in Latin but fell short of the standards of the church and university. Civic society demanded the creation and preservation of records of all sorts, as civic institutions were founded and developed.²⁰ During the communal movement, beginning in the twelfth century, northern Italian cities defined themselves away from control by the traditional authorities of emperor, nobility, pope or prince-bishop, establishing civic entities unencumbered by medieval political theory and filled with administrative offices and new social groupings, including the commune itself, the *popolo*,²¹ guilds, lay confraternities and political sodalities of Guelfs and Ghibellines.²² No less than the individual citizens who required notary-prepared contracts, land conveyances, wills and court pleadings, these new institutions required record-making and preservation, tasks generally relegated to the notaries.²³

The later twelfth and thirteenth centuries, then, witnessed four important steps toward early humanism: the re-emergence of Roman law, the development of new civic institutions, the secularization of attitude that accompanied both, and the increased importance of the notary as a nexus for all of these.

Despite the intersection of notaries and matters legal, the law schools and their products remained apart from the notarial profession. While the prepa-

ration for entry into both law school and notarial training were identical, being based soundly in Latin grammar, the university course in legal studies was far more extensive. According to most communal or guild statutes I have seen, the notary was expected to have only two or three years of formal training, and sometimes apprenticeship alone would suffice.²⁴ Notaries generally had to have a firm command of the vernacular as well as Latin, of the basic forms of notarial documents and letter-writing, and perhaps of the *Digest* of Justinian.²⁵ Notarial professional literacy was a rather *ad hoc* matter until late in the twelfth century. Beginning in Monte Cassino, and thence in the papal curia, Bologna and eventually France, there developed the *ars dictaminis*, or the art of formal letter writing.²⁶ Composing letters for lay and ecclesiastical authorities had always been an important function of the notary, and the *ars* emerged as a genre of handbook containing both theoretical considerations and models of epistolary composition. Many grammarians compiled these, and even in Bologna no one work dominated until 1328, when a single example was adopted as a textbook.²⁷ Because classical literature had left no theoretical models on epistolary construction, the form of the spoken oration and its component parts was adopted early on as a model for letters.²⁸ Since official public letters were written to be read aloud, there was no real problem with this format.²⁹ Formality and brevity were the soul of *dictamen*, and this important cultural product had little room for innovation, personal touches or classicalism. The writer of these letters, known as a *dictator* whether attached to court, chancery or commune, would have been exposed to a good deal of classical Latin during his early education in grammar,³⁰ but had little opportunity to exercise or develop it as part of his profession as a composer of letters.³¹ For purposes of earning a living, the urban *dictator* was also frequently a notary as well.

The *ars notariae*, or art of the notary, grew up in the shadow of *dictamen*, as a manual for understanding and composing other types of documents—private, commercial and official.³² The importance and general relevance of the material contained in such a manual is demonstrated by the required use of Rolandino de' Passageri's *Summa artis notariae*,³³ the most respected and utilized such *ars*, in the third year of the Florentine communal school curriculum, which educated the general citizen as well as the budding notary.³⁴ Combined with the much rarer *ars arengandi*, or art of speech making, the well-prepared notary-cum-administrator had the tools of his trade.³⁵ His was not a professional world of the book, however, but of the document, whose form, language and authenticity were matters of great importance.³⁶ Yet, he shared a place in the world of Roman law, to which the historical

developments and accretions of the texts were sometimes as vital as the relevant words themselves; in which the notion that 'then it was that way, but today it is like this', known as the *hodie* ("today") doctrine, was commonly applied and understood as distinguishing past and present; and in which careful study and comparison of texts and commentaries had to precede judgements based upon laws perhaps a millennium in age.³⁷ The notary was often instrumental--literally--in shaping communal law and in interpreting it during his occupation of any of a great many communal offices.³⁸ Unlike the lawyer or judge, the notary was no legal scholar, but rather a professional scribe with an amateur's access to and appreciation of this great monument of Roman civilization: its legal tradition.

In building up a picture of the later medieval notary, one last point needs to be made. Although notaries could and did originate from any social stratum, it is generally accepted that most came from the middling class: the poor could rarely afford the required education, and the noble sought occupations more remunerative or professionally higher in status; in Padua even higher-class *giuristi* had their offspring avoid the profession.³⁹ The historically higher-profile notaries sprang from the class of lower guildsmen,⁴⁰ and many had fathers, brothers, uncles and sons who were also notaries. Indeed, Petrarch's father, grandfather and great grandfather were all notaries, and Ser Petracco wanted his sons to raise their status through formal study of the law.⁴¹ This intergenerational and interfamilial cohesion helped coalesce the notarial profession, creating a very self-conscious class, and meant that notaries often supported the aspirations of the lower guildsmen when these opposed the nobility or church in political struggles that came and went as the middle ages waned.⁴² It also could mean that the notaries often supported the growth of powerful *signori*, attachment to whom could mean an increase in social standing or security. In general, it meant that they neither inherited nor were commissioned with status or wealth.⁴³ They were neither as well educated as the physicians, lawyers, judges or theologians, nor distracted by industrial or commercial wealth and its pursuit. As a class they were far more literate than their fellowguildsmen,⁴⁴ filled far more civic offices, and were indispensable to society as a whole, yet they shared no further traditional culture, as did clerics, nobles or the university men. Though educated heavily in the classics, they had to abandon them for the repetitious, hide-bound and downright bad style and usage of their trade. Some would, however, begin to harness their very obvious literacy to the pursuit of a cultural track that was pagan and unchivalric, denied to the illiterate, irrelevant to the accumulation of wealth and never

more than tangential to the university-trained: that of classical letters.⁴⁵

The fact that the notary had a good deal of leisure is attested to by his often combining another occupation with his own--from smith to priest to physician--and many doubled as teachers of grammar and rhetoric, which brought them again into contact with the ancients whose writings had graced their youth.⁴⁶ The notary, then, of all Italians, was in the best position to appreciate, revive and develop a humanism that was the clear forerunner to that of the Renaissance: he was literate, usually lay and urban, pursued a secular profession that required close attention to the written word and some training in classical literature, yet denied him the opportunity to apply classical sensitivities. He was more likely than the members of any other class to be cognizant of his city's historical and political position in the wider world, and had easy access to documents ranging from a copy of Juvenal in the cathedral chapter library to collections of wills and ancient civic statutes.

Recent studies of later medieval urban chronicles and literature in praise of cities point out the importance of the notary as shaper of civic consciousness.⁴⁷ Much has been made of the parallel that the clearly humanistic Leonardo Bruni made between Florence's battle with Milan around 1400 and Athens' struggle against the Greeks, but over a century earlier a similar comparison was drawn between Florence's contemporary struggle with the emperor and Ghibellines and ancient Rome's battle with the Germanic barbarians.⁴⁸ Many such themes that would be trumpeted later in the secure atmosphere of Medicean Florence were whispered in the first flush of Florentine independence. As ecclesiastical annals gave way to universal histories, which made room for royal paeans and *gestae* of noblemen at home and abroad, so developed the urban chronicles, which often emerged as competitors to monastic annals or defenses against noble claims. Like contemporary urban descriptions,⁴⁹ these are secular and devoid of the miraculous and often even the ecclesiastical. Some writers consciously used the ancient Roman historians Sallust and Livy as models; the first of whom was the Paduan notary Albertino Mussato,⁵⁰ around 1315. Recent history could also inform the writing of tragedy, as in the very revival of that form in the Senecan drama, again by Mussato, the *Ecerinide* (or *Ecerinis*), on the horrors of the tyranny of Ezzelino da Romana.⁵¹ For these works Mussato was crowned with laurel by the Arts faculty at the University of Padua in December of 1315, a full generation before Petrarch was crowned in Rome.

Yet, Mussato was himself a second-generation early (pre-, proto-) humanist. He was part of a circle of like-minded men, mostly notaries, that formed around Lovato Lovati, yet another notary, and generally recognized as the earliest of these early humanists.⁵² Lovati was son of a notary, born

about 1237. Though not trained as a lawyer, he was made a judge in Padua in 1291, and died in 1309 as one of the city's leading citizens. His earliest classicizing efforts appear to come in two letters of 1268. Like all of his letters, these are in verse, perhaps a reaction to the stultifying epistolary prose required by his profession. Poetry was typically the main dish of the grammar curriculum, and metrical line endings were required in the *ars dictaminis* element known as the *cursus*. Some combination of these two very medieval influences doubtless also affected his parsing of Seneca and his own experiments with metrical composition. In his work one finds well-worn classical bits from Virgil, the epistles and sermons of Horace, Ovid, Statius, Persius, Juvenal and Lucan, and novel elements of Horace's verses, Seneca's tragedies, Ovid's *Ibis*, and Martial, and echoes of Tibullus, Propertius, Lucretius, Valerius Flaccus, the *Silvae* of Statius, and previously unknown Catullus.⁵³

Thirteen years Lovati's junior, and a foreign member of his circle, the Inquisitional notary Benvenuto Campesani of Vicenza discovered a text of Catullus, whose influence is seen in his epigrams of circa 1310, and wrote of the "resurrectione Catulli poete veronensis."⁵⁴ Lovati himself showed his pre-Petrarchan interest in Roman antiquities and texts when what was supposed to be the body of the ancient Antenore was unearthed in a Roman sarcophagus. Lovati wrote an epitaph for the hero and went in search of all references to him in ancient texts, including Ovid, Horace, Seneca, Servius, Livy, and, of course, Virgil.⁵⁵ For his various efforts Petrarch later praised Lovati as the main light of his time.⁵⁶

Building on his contacts with Lovati, Albertino Mussato, born of a humble family in 1261, would go much further. He began by copying texts for Padua's law students, rose through the college of notaries, was made a knight and a member of the town's Consiglio Maggiore. He is recognized as having revived the forms of the eclogue, elegy, soliloquy and classical tragedy, and is credited with the earliest attempts to classicize prose, a feat not even attempted by Lovati. J.K. Hyde notes Mussato's role not only as a private scholar, but as a prototype of the so-called civic humanist as well: the first republican philosopher/ statesman since Cicero.⁵⁷ His experiences shaped his writing, and politics shaped his life. Several of his surviving works, certainly the *Ecerinide*, reflect the importance of the theme of the "liberty of Padua,"⁵⁸ and the most important ones he wrote after having reached the pinnacle of Paduan society post-1310, perhaps as a matter of *noblesse oblige*. His *Historia augusta* on Henry of Luxembourg is said not to hold together very well, and the *De gestis Henrici setto Caesaris*--the earliest attempt to classicize prose with Sallust and Livy as models--quickly loses its focus on

the emperor and degenerates into local history.⁵⁹ Mussato also wrote 18 letters that survive, mostly to members of his literary circle, and an ethical work on old age when he was, "already an old man, deprived of glory, alone and abandoned."⁶⁰ Indeed, his life experiences shaped his writing.

No survey of pre-Petrarchan humanism may omit the most famous of these early humanist-notaries, the Florentine Brunetto Latini, *magister*⁶¹ of Dante, and truly a transitional figure. He served as official notary of the Florentine commune from 1260-1266, but was exiled, an all too common fate of notable Florentines. His major surviving works are the French *Li Livres dou Tresor* (*Tesoro* as translated into the vernacular Italian) and the Italian *Tesoretto*, composed while in Gallic exile.⁶² They are heavily influenced by the encyclopedic trend present among formal scholars, but the more important *Tesoro* goes well beyond the norm. It includes natural history, but also politics, moral philosophy--in a treatment of the Nichomachean Ethics that George Holmes sees as a precursor to the Renaissance debate over the relative merits of contemplative and practical virtues⁶³-

-history and rhetoric. In fact, Book 3 is a study of Cicero's *De inventione*, the standard Ciceronian work on rhetoric available during the middle ages.⁶⁴ He tried to make all of this learning accessible to the non-Latin-reading public in Tuscany by using the vernacular, and he linked this learning directly to the practical ends of good government:

Cicero says that the most important science relative to governing the city is rhetoric, that is to say, the science of speaking, for if there were no speech there would be no city, nor would there be and establishment of justice and human company...⁶⁵ As for Petrarch later, Latini saw the ideas of Cicero as immediate, speaking to him republican to republican,⁶⁶ though without Petrarch's (or Salutati's or Bruni's) firm sense of chronological distance.⁶⁷ For his efforts the fourteenth-century Florentine chronicler Villani praised Latini as a

great philosopher and a high master of rhetoric, both in speech and the written word. It was he who expounded the *Rhetoric* of Tullius [Cicero], and wrote the good and useful book called the *Tesoro*, and the *Tesoretto*, and the key of the *Tesoro*, and many other books on philosophy and on vices and virtue, and he was the *dittatore* of our commune. He was a worldly man, but we mention him because he was the instigator and master of the process of civilizing the Florentines and making them expert in speaking well and knowing how to guide and govern our repub-

lic according to politics.⁶⁸

Latini would have been gratified reading Villani's words, as he, like Petrarch, appreciated the role the ancients attributed to fame: "Those who are involved in great things are proof that glory gives a second life to a worthy man; that is, that after his death, the renown which remains of his good works makes it seem as if he is still alive." Again citing Horace, he states that "glory prevents the one who is worthy of praise from dying."⁶⁹ In Latini's case, the good works were the cultural products of the notary and the teacher who recognized the relevance and importance of classical wisdom, if not its eloquence, to the late medieval Italian city. While other such good works might echo the Gospel paradigm of Christian virtue, Latini's paradigm is firmly grounded in the pagan poets and philosophers.⁷⁰ Perhaps the culture needed a Petrarch to knit back together the legacies of pagan and Christian antiquity. St. Thomas Aquinas had synthesized the scholastic blend of Christ and the Greek philosopher Aristotle in the confines of the university and cloister, beginning the process of reconciling the cities of God and Man; Petrarch, son of a notary and ex-law student, a cleric in name only (and certainly no saint), concentrated on St. Augustine and Cicero, and the poets and historians of ancient urban Rome, and took them to the streets and courts and studies of his northern Italy, furthering the process on ground so fertile and previously well prepared that his efforts and their effects truly began a new stage in Western culture.

One could treat of many more, notaries from Arezzo, Verona, Vicenza, Treviso and Venice⁷¹--all precursors of Petrarch and of the humanism he would so eloquently press on the world. Theirs was a world of desires and attempts and firsts that developed earliest among the group that George Holmes called "the most characteristic city-state profession, to which so many of the leading Italian writers of the next two centuries were to belong."⁷² While various forms and elements of well-developed Renaissance humanism would come to flourish in the courts of popes, kings and princes throughout Europe, as Donald Kelley reminds us in one of the most recent general formulations of the issue,

it was the needs and aspirations of a secular, commercial, expanding urban society that most directly promoted the arts of communication and, in this connection, literacy, literature, and their attendant cultural attitudes. In a very general sense Renaissance humanism was a form of civic ideology, and it never entirely lost these birthmarks.⁷³

Notes

¹ This Renaissance theme is developed by Giancarlo Maiorino in his *Adam, New Born and Perfect: The Renaissance Promise of Eternity* (Bloomington, 1987).

² Among scholars cited below, Benson prefers 'protohumanism' and Kristeller 'early humanism', while Italians, including Avesani, Gargan and Billanovich, and those who follow them, like Berrigan, use the term 'pre-humanism' when dealing with the same phenomenon. Choice seems a matter of taste rather than interpretation, and Kristeller uses all three terms interchangeably in his "Humanism," *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. by Charles Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (New York, 1990), 127. Outdated but not superseded, the essential study in English of the humanists of the later 13th and early 14th centuries is Roberto Weiss, *The Dawn of Humanism in Italy* (London, 1947); see also Guido Billanovich, *I primi umanisti e le tradizioni dei classici latini* (Fribourg, 1953); B.L. Ullman, "Some Aspects of the Origin of Italian Humanism," in his *Studies in the Italian Renaissance* (Rome, 1973), 27-40. For more recent treatments see Nicholas Mann, "The Origins of Humanism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism* ed. by Jill Kraye (Cambridge, 1996), 1-19; Ronald G. Witt, "The Origins of Italian Humanism: Padua and Florence," *Centennial Review* 34 (1990): 92-108, and appropriate works cited below.

³ For a general introduction to this new personality see Francesco Cardini, "Intellectuals and Culture in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Italy," in *City and Countryside in Late Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Essays Presented to Philip Jones* (London, 1990), 13-30.

⁴ The importance of this profession, whose duties at minimum included recording any kind of official private (wills, contracts, acts of conveyance, dowry agreements, etc.) or public (legislation, court decisions, letters, etc.) documents, is nicely summarized in the recent work by Robert I. Burns, S.J., "[t]he notarial career and its products consequently constitute an essential element in the history of the law, government, rhetoric, finance, urbanism, religion, and that ill-defined but comprehensive field called social history. The notary was omnipresent in this society, not only as one of its active creators, but also as its product. He helped shape the merchant society and culture as he represented and mirrored it." *Jews in the Notarial Culture: Latinate Wills in Mediterranean Spain* (Berkeley, 1996), 40.

⁵ See for example Mann, 3-5. Among key works on the Carolingian Renaissance see Erna Patzelt, *Die Karolingische Renaissance* (Graz, 1965); in English see Jacques Broussard, *The Civilization of Charlemagne*, trans. Frances Partridge (New York, 1968); Janet Nelson, "Literacy in Carolingian Government," in her *The Frankish World (750-900)* (London, 1996), 1-36; *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, ed.

by Peter Godman (Norman, 1985), especially the introduction; John J. Contreni, "The Carolingian Renaissance," in *Renaissances Before the Renaissance: Cultural Revivals of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. by Warren Treadgold (Stanford, 1984), 59-74; and his *Carolingian Learning, Masters and Manuscripts* (Aldershot, 1992). On the Twelfth-century Renaissance see C.H. Haskins' classic *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1927); David Knowles, "The Humanism of the Twelfth Century," in his *The Historian and Character and Other Essays* (Cambridge, 1963), 16-30; R.W. Southern's "Medieval Humanism" in his *Medieval Humanism and Other Essays* (Oxford, 1970) 29-60; Christopher Brooke, *The Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (New York, 1970); on the critical side see William A. Nitze's "The So-called Twelfth-century Renaissance," *Speculum* 23 (1948): 464-471; Erwin Panofsky, "Renaissance and Renaissances," in his *Renaissance and Renaissances in Western Art* (Stockholm, 1960), 42-113; for more recent treatments see Stephen C. Ferruolo, "The Twelfth-Century Renaissance," in *Renaissances before the Renaissance*, ed. by Warren Treadgold (Stanford, 1984), 114-143; and Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Languages and Models of Interpretations in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, 1983).

⁶ Joseph Berrigan has referred to prehumanism as a "bridge between two shores" that "rises out of the legal milieu of early fourteenth-century Italy and blends into the work of Petrarch, himself the son of a lawyer [sic]." "The Prehumanism of Benzo of Alessandria," *Traditio* 25 (1969): 250. As do Wieruszowski, Kristeller, Skinner and others, Berrigan gives an important place to the influence of French developments in classicism and the rhetorical arts in sparking the developments discussed below; I have omitted any discussion of this factor 1) because it does not affect my basic argument, and 2) recent formulations seem much weaker than earlier ones, even by the same scholars. Skinner mentions that classicism was "in vogue at the same time in the French Cathedral schools," yet admits that the specific French forms were rejected and attacked by prominent Italians. *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge, 1978), 35-37; while Kristeller softened his earlier insistence on the influence to "we have at least some evidence that the French grammarians and commentators of the Middle Ages influenced their Italian successors." See "Humanism", 128.

⁷ Mann, 14, for example, sees Petrarch as "part of a continuing tradition," and an impetus to it through his widespread reputation as a scholar, his breadth of learning, historical sense, and dedication to the improvement of Latin.

⁸ A good example, in which he also explores the history of the terms *humanismus*, *humanista*, and *studia humanitatis*, is *Renaissance Thought and Its Sources*, ed. by Michael Mooney (New York, 1979), 22. George Holmes proffers a similarly cautious definition derived from Kristeller and the works of Eugenio Garin in his "Humanism in Italy," in *The Impact of Humanism on Western Europe*, ed. by Anthony Goodman and Angus MacKay (New York, 1990), 118. "Humanism means an interest in Latin and Greek literature which sets a high value on the lessons to be drawn

from it."

⁹ For example, Ferruolo, labeling Kristeller's approach 'literary humanism', claims that "it cannot be accepted" because it "does not adequately describe the main traits or summarize the major achievements of the entire period [late-11th to mid-12th centuries]," 121/5. Like others, (See for example, Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual: 1050-1200* (New York, 1972), 10.) he depends upon Richard W. Southern's definition of humanism including a strong sense of the dignity of nature and human nature, humanity as a part of the natural order, and the ultimate intelligibility of nature. Southern, 31.

¹⁰ For example, according to Contreni, 59: "[t]he Carolingian Renaissance formed part of a program of religious renewal that Carolingian political and clerical leaders sponsored and encouraged in the hope that it would lead to the betterment of the Christian people." Referring to the twelfth century Southern, 57, remarked, "[a]t the end of all, the union of natural and supernatural was the culmination of medieval humanism." According to Southern, 58-60, the later Renaissance humanism grew out of the period's disillusionment with the failure of human reason and the faded hope in universal order that left the field to the romantic antiquarians, nitpicking philologists, and individualists who struggled with fate and fortune rather than knowledge of God and nature.

¹¹ Unfortunately, many scholars confuse notaries with "lawyers" and sometimes "judges" (though notaries could function as judges, as in the case of Lovato Lovati, below). For example, Skinner, 37-8, commits this error, as in his reference to Albertino Mussato as a "lawyer," as does Berrigan, who likewise refers to Mussato, stressing the point that he was "trained in medieval law," and that "the usual prehumanist is a layman and a lawyer"; Ser Petracco, Petrarch's father, is likewise raised in status. See "Prehumanism," 249-250. John Stephens in his *The Italian Renaissance: The Origins of Intellectual and Artistic Change before the Reformation* (New York, 1990) similarly labels Lovato Lovati and Mussato "lawyers." The distinction, though often ignored, is an important one, as should become clear below.

¹² Benjamin Kedar, "The Genoese Notaries of 1382: The anatomy of an urban occupational group," in *The Medieval City*, ed. by H. A. Miskimin, et al. (New Haven, 1977), 78-9.

¹³ On Bologna, Milan, Treviso and Padua see J. K. Hyde, *Padua in the Age of Dante* (New York, 1966), 162; and on Padua's guild of notaries see 154-175. On Florence, George Holmes, *Florence, Rome and the Origins of the Renaissance* (New York, 1986), 73.

¹⁴ Holmes, *Florence*, 73.

¹⁵ Lombard Pavia was an important center of notarial activity, and no doubt influenced Charlemagne's very positive attitudes toward the profession. Brian Stock, 154, notes their importance thereafter (9th century) in cities like Milan, where, along with merchants and artisans, they reconstituted "a stable, urbanized middle

class for the first time since the later empire."

¹⁶ "Notaries," in *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Italy* ed. by Christopher Kleinhenz, et al. (New York, forthcoming).

¹⁷ Stock, 41; Ronald G. Witt, "Medieval Italian Culture and the Origins of Humanism as a Stylistic Ideal," in *Renaissance Humanism: Foundations, Forms and Legacies*, ed. by Albert Rabil (Philadelphia, 1988), II: 39-42; Italy was apparently the only European region in which a lay notariate persisted. See Chris Wickham, *The Mountains and the City: The Tuscan Apennines in the Early Middle Ages* (New York, 1988), 11-12, 18.

¹⁸ This, despite the origins of the Bolognese law school in the notarial training course: Cardini, 24; also Giorgio Sorbelli, *Storia dell'Università di Bologna* (Bologna, 1944), 107, 110, 121. In university towns such as Padua the notarial training was carried out by the *artisti* rather than the *juristi*, or in the Palace of Notaries away from the arts faculty (Bologna); see Girolamo Arnaldi, "Il Primo secolo dello Studio di Padova," in *Storia della Cultura Veneta. 2. Il Trecento* (Vicenza, 1976), 1-18; James R. Banker, "The *Ars dictaminis* and Rhetorical Textbooks at the Bolognese University in the Fourteenth Century," *Medievalia et Humanistica* n.s. 5 (1974): 158. Notaries-in-training numbered among the *laici*, otherwise known to the cultured *clerici* (university scholars and professors) as *idiotae*, *rudes* or *illiterati*. See Cardini, 17; James Banker, "Giovanni di Bonandrea and Civic Values in the Context of the Italian Rhetorical Tradition," *Manuscripta* 18 (1974): 9.

¹⁹ What follows is a synopsis of large sections of his *Medieval Foundations of Renaissance Humanism* (Ithaca, 1977). For a shorter version of his thesis see his "The Medieval Origins of the Renaissance," in *The Renaissance: Essays and Interpretation* (New York, 1982), 33-82.

²⁰ See for example, Witt, "Medieval Italian Culture," 36-7.

²¹ The *popolo* in this instance refers to a formal, legally recognized urban body that generally stood in opposition to the power of church, nobility or wealthy and powerful urban *magnati*.

²² For sound introductions in English see Daniel Waley, *The Italian City-Republics* (New York, 1969); Giovanni Tabacco, *The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy* (New York, 1989), see esp. Chapter 6.

²³ Cardini, 20; see also G.G. Finsore, "Alle origini del documento comunale: i rapporti fra i notai e l'istituzione," *Atti della Società ligure di storia patria* 103 (1989): 99-128; Gina Fasoli, "Giuristi, giudici e notai nell'ordinamento comunale e nella vita civile," *Studi Accursiani* 1 (1963): 27 ff.

²⁴ The notarial school in Bologna mandated five years of preparation in Latin Grammar plus a two-year formal course or apprenticeship, while Pisa required four years of either formal training or apprenticeship, including four years of Latin. Florence and Siena required two and Bergamo only one. See, *inter alia*, Nicoletta Sarti, *Gli*

statuti della Società dei notai di Bologna dell'anno 1336 (Milan, 1988); S. Calleri, *L'Arte dei giudici e notai di Firenze nell'età comunale e nel suo statuto del 1344* (Milan, 1966); Giuliano Catoni, *Statuti senesi dell'Arte dei giudici e notai del secolo XIV* (Rome, 1972); Giuseppe Scarazzini, *Statuti notarili di Bergamo (sec. XIII)* (Rome, 1977). Also Giovanni Faccioli, *Della corporazione dei notai di Verona e il suo codice statuario del 1268* (Verona, 1953); Renato Sòrigo, *Statuta, decreta et ordinamenta Societatis et Collegii notariorum Papie reformata (1255-1274)* (Turin, 1932).

²⁵ A. Anselmi, *Le scuole di notariato in Italia* (Viterbo, 1926).

²⁶ Banker, "Ars dictaminis," 153. The essential study is Martin Camargo, *Ars dictaminis, ars dictandis* (Turnhout, 1991). In general see also James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1974), 194-268, and Charles H. Haskins, "The Early Ars dictandi in Italy," in *Studies in Medieval Culture* (Oxford, 1929), 170-192; Skinner, 28-35. On the connection of the ars with early humanism see Ronald Witt, "Medieval ars dictamini and the beginnings of humanism," *Renaissance Quarterly* 35 (1982): 1-35; Robert L. Benson, "Protohumanism and narrative technique in early thirteenth-century Italian 'ars dictaminis,'" in *Boccaccio: secoli di vita* (Ravenna, 1979) 31-51; Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, 24; Paolo Bagni, "Artes dictandi e tecniche letterarie," in *Retorica e poetica tra i secoli XII e XIV: Atti del secondo convegno internazionale di studi dell'Associazione per is Medioevo el'Umanesimo* (Perugia, 1988), 201-220. On specific artis see P.O. Kristeller, "Un' Ars dictaminis di Giovanni del Virgilio," in his *Studies in Renaissance Thought and Letters* (Rome, 1993), III: 487-508, and in the same volume "Matteo de'Libri, Bolognese Notary of the Thirteenth Century, and his ars dictaminis," 443-486; Helene Wieruszowski, "Ars dictaminis in the Age of Dante," in her *Politics and Culture in Medieval Spain and Italy* (Rome, 1971), 359-368, and in the same volume her "A Twelfth-century Ars dictaminis in the Barberini Collection of the Vatican Library," 331-346; A.P. Campbell, "The Perfection of Ars dictaminis in Guido Faba," *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* 39 (1969): 315-321; V. Licitra, "La 'Summa de arte dictandi' di Maestro Goffredo," *Studi medievali* 3rd ser. 7 (1966): 886-891.

²⁷ Banker, "Ars dictaminis," 153-4; the work was *Brevis introductio ad dictamen* by Giovanni di Bonandrea, a Bolognese notary and professor of rhetoric who translated the Ciceronian *Ad Herrenium* in the 1260s and was lecturing on it by 1300. See page 155 and also his "Giovanni di Bonandrea."

²⁸ A point underappreciated by James R. East, who finds remarkable the work of Brunetto Latini in the late thirteenth century that "combines the principles of Ciceronian rhetoric on the art of speaking and the medieval rhetoric of letter writing." See "Brunetto Latini's Rhetoric of Letter Writing," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 54 (1968): 241-246. While Latini did more fully elaborate the combination, both the *De inventione* and *Ad Herrenium* of Cicero had long been known, and the "parts" required of formal letters in the ars clearly paralleled the parts of the classical oration; Hans Baron, "Cicero and the Roman Civic Spirit in the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 22 (1938): 72-97;

Mary Dickey, "Some Commentaries on the *De Inventione* and *Ad Herennium* of the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries," *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 6 (1968): 1-41. In general, see also James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1974).

²⁹ Ronald G. Witt, "Civic Humanism and the Rebirth of the Ciceronian Oration," *MLQ* 51 (1990): 169; and his "Medieval ars," 12-14. He attributes this characteristic to the form's earliest development in Monte Cassino.

³⁰ See Wieruszowski, "Twelfth-century *Ars*," 335; also her more comprehensive "Rhetoric and the Classics in Italian Education of the Thirteenth Century," in her *Politics and Culture in Medieval Spain and Italy Storia e letteratura* 121 (Rome, 1971), 589-628; Charles T. Davis, "Education in Dante's Florence," *Speculum* 40 (1965): 415-435; and in general Gehl's excellent study of Florentine primary education, *A Moral Art* (Ithaca, 1993).

³¹ John P. McGovern, "The Documentary Language of Medieval Business, AD 1150-1250," *The Classical Journal* 67 (1972): 239, sees development of thirteenth-century humanism as reaction to poor Latin; as late as the mid-fourteenth century Tuscan notary and later chancellor Coluccio Salutati complained of having to "unlearn" his classical letters in order to perform his epistolary duties as Chancellor of Lucca. See also Ronald C. Witt, "Coluccio Salutati, Chancellor and Citizen of Lucca," *Traditio* 25 (1969): 191-216.

³² In general see Gianfranco Orlandelli, "Genesi dell' 'ars notariae' nel secolo XIII," *Studia Mediaevalia* 3 ser. 6 (1965): 329-366. See also *Formularium florentinum artis notariae* (1220-1242) (Milan, 1943); Lino Sighinolfi, "Salutatie e la sua *Ars notariae*," *Studi e memorie per la storia dell'Università di Bologna* 4 (1920): 67-149; Cardini, 20-1.

³³ On Rolandino see A. Palmieri, *Rolandino Passagieri* (Bologna, 1933); A. Era, *Di Rolandino Passagieri e della sua 'Summa artis notariae'* (Bologna, 1934).

³⁴ Aldo Scaglione, "The Classics in Medieval Education," in *The Classics in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Aldo S. Bernardo and Saul Levin (Binghamton, 1990), 355. There is, however, no mention of the use of Rolandino in Florentine schools in Gehl's study.

³⁵ On the *ars arengandi* see Skinner, 30-1; A. Wilmart, "L' *Ars arengandi* de Jacques de Dinant avec un Appendice sur ses ouvrages *De dictamine*," in his *Analecta Reginensia: extraits des manuscrits Latins de la Reine Christine conservés au Vatican*, *Studi e testi* 59 (Vatican City, 1933), 113-151. Also worthy of note is the 'podestarial literature', handbooks for the communal and imperial urban chief executive officials known as *podestà*, a genre that set the tone for later 'mirrors of princes'; see Skinner, 33-5; Cardini, 21-3; Fritz Hertter, *Die Podestäliteratur Italiens im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig/Berlin, 1910).

³⁶ Witt makes this point most clearly in his "Medieval Italian Culture," 36-7; P.O. Kristeller in his "Renaissance Humanism and Classical Antiquity," in the same

volume, ascribes to the notary 'veneration' of the document, whether legal or classical.

³⁷ Donald R. Kelley, "Clio and the Lawyers: Forms of historical consciousness in medieval jurisprudence," *Medievalia et Humanistica* n.s. 5 (1974): 34; see also Ronald G. Witt, *Hercules at the Crossroads: The Life, Works and Thought of Coluccio Salutati* (Durham, N.C., 1983), 22. Eugenio Garin, *Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance* (New York, 1965), 7, points out that this relativistic notion is also found in Aristotle's work, and indeed led men eventually to look at antiquity in its light and not merely through their own lenses.

³⁸ Rolandino de' Passagieri's role in Bolognese, Albertino Mussato's in Paduan and Brunetto Latini's in Florentine politics and administration are well known, as is the long string of notaries that served as Florentine Chancellor. Ronald C. Witt claims that "the notary was best-suited for political leadership," citing his command of administrative Latin, familiarity with legislation and negotiation, and uncommitted time with which to pursue communal affairs, though in a metropolis like Florence he would lack the requisite financial power and social status. See "Coluccio Salutati and the Political Life of the Commune of Buggiano," *Rinascimento* 2nd ser. 6 (1966): 52-3. See also the comments of Cardini, 14.

³⁹ Cardini, 19; Hyde, *Padua*, 158.

⁴⁰ Hyde in his study of Padua notes this matter of status and reflects that it made the likes of the Lovati/Mussato circle insecure and defensive, attached neither to the chivalric nor legal cultures; they found their niche among the ancients, a true urban elite (See his *Padua*, 299-400). Gehl, 231, however, in discussing the fourteenth century states that notaries could claim "an elevated place in Florentine society," a distinct possibility in a city without a university or its culture.

⁴¹ Bishop, 14. See also Paolo Viti, "Ser Petracco, padre del Petrarca, notaio dell'età di Dante," *Studi Petrarqueschi* n.s. 2 (1985): 1-14. Another good example is the Paduan notary/poet/historian Zambono d'Andrea (d. 1316), a draper's son who had two brothers and four sons who were notaries. See Hyde, *Padua*, 163; Guido Billanovich, "Il prehumanesimo padovano," in *Storia della cultura veneta*. 2. *Il Trecento* (Vicenza, 1976), 41.

⁴² Hyde, *Padua*, 158; in his *Society*, 100, 167, he cites the example of the Bolognese Rolandino de' Passagieri and his leadership of the *popolo* revolt in the 1280s. On the other hand, Cardini, 14, notes of late thirteenth-century Florence that "no matter what their socio-economic location," notaries sided with the higher status magnates; Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (New York, 1979), 211, likewise notes that the notaries were likely to be conservative supporters of the regime, though his focus is also Florence.

⁴³ See Banker, "Giovanni di Bonandrea," 11 for a discussion of the role of Giovanni di Bonandrea in shaping the bourgeois self-image by stressing the "earned quality"-*habitus*, from Cicero—of those who earned their "distinction through their own industry and minds" as opposed to those qualities conferred either by birth or the

Church.

⁴⁴ Aside from the physicians, lawyers and judges, of course.

⁴⁵ Kristeller, "Humanism," 127, writes of these men, "In their institutions as well as their intellectual interests [they] felt more akin to classical antiquity than to the imperial, ecclesiastical and feudal culture of the rest of Europe and of their own immediate past." Martines, 196, draws the same conclusion: "[i]n the life of Greek and Roman cities, they found their own cities; in orators and literati, they found themselves; in public men--rulers, statesmen, orators, professional soldiers--they found their friends, acquaintances, patrons and again themselves." Hyde, *Padua*, 300, says specifically of the Lovati/Mussato circle in Padua that because they lacked a noble ethos, these humanists were "at home" with the urban ancients. Of their importance in spawning humanism, Holmes, "Humanism," 120, writes, "[t]he existence of this lay class of men who knew some of the classics but were not involved in the study of theology or of the philosophical systems of the universities was perhaps the most important predetermining factor which made humanism possible."

⁴⁶ Hyde, *Padua*, 159, 170-4; also his *Society*, 167; on notaries as grammar teachers in Florence see Gehl, 209, 210, 229.

⁴⁷ Skinner, 31-33. See also J.K. Hyde, "Italian Social Chronicles in the Middle Ages," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 49 (1966): 107-132; Marino Zabbia, "Notariato e memoria storica. Le scritture storiografiche notarile nelle città dell'Italia settentrionale (secc. XII-XIV)," *Bullettino dell'Istituto storico italiano per il Medioevo e Archivio Muratoriano* 97 (1991): 75-122; Girolamo Arnaldi, "Il notaio-cronista e le cronache cittadine in Italia," in *Atti del 1° Congresso internazionale della Società italiana di storia di diritto* (Florence, 1966), 293-309; G. Ortalli, "Notariato e storiografia in Bologna nei secoli XIII-XVI," in *Notariato medievale bolognese* (Rome, 1977), 154-189; Jacques Heers, "Le notaire dans les villes italiennes, témoin de son temps, mémorialiste et chroniqueur," in *Le Chronique et l'histoire au Moyen Age*, ed. by D. Poinion (Paris, 1982), 73-84; Francesco Novati, "Il notaio nella vita e nella letteratura italiana delle origini," in his *Freschi e minii del Dugento* (Milan, 1925), 241-264. Girolamo Arnaldi stresses the role of notaries in the annalistic tradition of the Trevisan Marca (*Studi sui cronisti della Marca Trevigiana nella età di Ezzelino da Romano* (Rome, 1963), 111-113; J.K. Hyde, *Literacy and its Uses: Studies on Late Medieval Italy* (New York, 1993), 46, describes Paduan notaries as annalists of families (See also *Padua*, 286) and briefly traces the evolution of the social chronicle from lists of families kept by the Cremonese notary Favazolo.

⁴⁸ Witt, "Civic Humanism," 182, Wieruszowski, "Arezzo," 459. Note the sustained argument for Bruni's uniqueness in the works of Hans Baron, e.g. *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance* (Princeton, 1966), or in a shortened and revised form, *In Search of Florentine Humanism* (Princeton, 1988), 45-7. On other cities' self-comparison or self-identification with Rome, which go back at least to 1112/3, see Cardini, 16.

⁴⁹ Hyde nicely sums up the importance of Bonvesin della Riva's urban panegyric *De*

magnalibus urbis Mediolani ("On the Greatness of the City of Milan," 1288): "Bonvesin was the first to use the pattern which underlies most of the factual descriptions of the Renaissance period. All that was necessary was ... the more sophisticated rhetoric of the humanists" in *Literacy*, 18. See also his "Medieval Descriptions of Cities," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 48 (1966): 308-340; Waley, 141-47.

⁵⁰ On Mussato see below, and Richard C. Cusimano, "Albertino Mussato and the Politics of Early Trecento Padua: A prehumanist in the transition from commune to signoria," PhD thesis, University of Georgia, 1970; Manlio T. Dazzi, *Il Mussato preumanista (1261-1329): l'ambiente e l'opere* (Vicenza, 1964); Hubert Muller, *Früher Humanismus in Oberitalien: Albertino Mussato* (New York, 1987); also Billanovich, "Prehumanesimo padovano," 52-90.

⁵¹ *Ecerinis*, ed. by L. Padrin Achilles, trans. by Joseph Berrigan (Munich, 1975); *The Tragedy of Ecerinis*, trans. by Robert W. Carruba, et al., (University Park, 1972); the Latin text and a German translation are in Muller.

⁵² Roberto Weiss, "Lovato Lovati (1241-1309)," *Italian Studies* 6 (1951): 3-28; Hyde, *Padua*, 290-5.

⁵³ Billanovich, "Prehumanesimo padovano", 86.

⁵⁴ '[R]esurrection of the Veronese poet Catullus', from Luciano Gargan, "Il prehumanesimo a Vicenza, Treviso e Venezia," in *Storia della cultura veneta. 2. Il Trecento* (Vicenza, 1976), 142. See also Billanovich, "Prehumanesimo padovano," 86; Hyde, *Padua*, 302. On the contemporary interest in Catullus see Rino Avesani, "Il prehumanesimo veronese," in *Storia della cultura veneta. 2. Il Trecento* (Vicenza, 1976), 111.

⁵⁵ Billanovich, "Prehumanesimo padovano," 95-98. Brunetto Latini wrote in his *Trésor* of the visit of Priam jr. and Antenore to Venice and Padua, "where his sepulchre is still today" (I.39.2).

⁵⁶ In his *Rerum memorandum libri*, ed. by Guido Billanovich (Florence, 1945), 84.

⁵⁷ Hyde, *Padua*, 302; see also the University of Georgia dissertation by Richard C. Cusimano, "Albertino Mussato and the Politics of Early Trecento Padua: A prehumanist in the transition from commune to signoria", 1970.

⁵⁸ Girolamo Arnaldi, "I cronisti di Venezia e della Marca Trevigiana," in *Storia della cultura veneta. 2. Il Trecento* (Vicenza, 1976), 274; see also Billanovich's remarks on Mussato's "Dialogue" with a partisan of Cangrande della Scala on the fruits of liberty in "Prehumanesimo padovano, 52. Weiss, 1, noted that by civic decree the *Ecerinis* was to be read aloud publicly before the assembled populace once each year. Skinner, 26-7, 41, sees in the works of Bonvesin, Latini and Mussato strong of a lay, republican ideology based on *libertas*, that began to emerge at this time from scholastic and rhetorical sources, a century earlier than recognized in the earlier studies of Baron, Holmes and Hyde.

⁵⁹ The judgment on the quality of the work is Hyde, *Padua*, 297, 301.

⁶⁰ Billanovich, "Prehumanesimo padovano," 84-5.

⁶¹ Scholarly controversy continues over whether Dante meant that Latini was merely a strong influence or literally his "teacher."

⁶² Since Latini is generally studied in regard to his relationship with Dante's work, specific studies are few. Among the most useful and recent are the introductions to his two main works, *The Book of the Treasure* (*Li Livres dou Tresor*) trans. by Paul Barrette and Spurgeon Baldwin (New York, 1993) [without original text]; *Il Tesoretto* (*The Little Treasure*) trans. by Julia Bolton Holloway (New York, 1981) [with facing texts]. See also Gian Carlo Alessio, "Brunetto Latini e Cicerone e i dettatori," *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 22 (1979) 123-169; Bianca Ceva, *Brunetto Latini, l'uomo e l'opere* (Milan, 1965); Umberto Marchesini, *Brunetto Latini notaio* (Verona, 1890); Helene Wieruszowski, *Brunetto Latini als Lehrer Dantes und der Florentiner* (Rome, 1957); and Thor Sundby's still standard *Della vita e delle opere di Brunetto Latini* trans. by Rodolfo Renier (Florence, 1884). For a full critical bibliography see Julia Bolton Holloway, *Brunetto Latini, an Analytical Bibliography* (Wolfeboro, N.H., 1986).

⁶³ Holmes, *Florence*, 78, 81; Holmes sees the two works as together "so striking as to be the foundation of a new culture."

⁶⁴ Witt, "Medieval Italian Culture," 50-1, claims that this translation of Cicero's ideas was merely a support for Latini's development of *dictamen*, and as such was an evolutionary dead end; Cardini, 29, on the other hand, stresses the importance of such translations at this time as an aid to cultural literacy, with special reference to Latini's work: he did not translate, but "he reinterpreted and rewrote them, repositing them in the light of the cultural, civic, political and spiritual needs of his time."

⁶⁵ Latini, *Book of the Treasure*, 279; III.1.2. Earlier in the same work Latini draws upon Aristotle in concluding, "...the art which teaches how to govern a city is the most important and the sovereign and mistress of all the arts..." (146; II.3.1); and earlier still he wrote "...the science of speaking well and governing people [is] more noble than any other in the world." (1; I.1.4). Compare with the earlier (and contemporary) notion of theology as 'Queen of the sciences'.

⁶⁶ See, for example, Holmes, *Florence*, 79.

⁶⁷ Though as Stock, 12, nicely puts it in another context, "it was men's conception of the past, not the past itself in an objective sense, which largely shaped the nature of the response."

⁶⁸ "...fu gran filosofo, e fu sommo maestro in rettorica, tanto in bene sapere dire come in bene dittare. E fu quegli che spuose la Rettorica di Tullio, e fece il buono e utile libro detto Tesoro, e il Tesoretto, e la chiave del Tesoro, e più altri libri in filosofia, e de' vizi e di virtù, e fu dittatore [early form of chancellor] del nostro commune. Fu mondano uomo, ma di lui avemo fatta menzione, perocchè egli fu cominciatore e maestro in digrossare i Fiorentini, e farli scorti in bene parlare, e in sapere guidare e reggere la nostra repubblica secondo la politica." *Cronica di Giovanni*

commune. Fu mondano uomo, ma di lui avemo fatta menzione, perocch' egli fu cominciato e maestro in digrossare i Fiorentini, e farli scorti in bene parlare, e in sapere guidare e reggere la nostra repubblica secondo la politica." *Cronica di Giovanni Villani a miglior lezione ridotta*, ed. Francesco Gherardi Dragomanni (Florence, 1844; facsim. Frankfurt, 1969), Bk. II, 17; Bk. VIII, 10.

⁶⁹ Latini, *Book of the Treasure*, 261; II.120.1,2. Immediately, however, he provides counterexamples from classical authors who warn against desire for glory.

⁷⁰ This stance may have also hurt his (their) ability to find the requisite patronage, the provision of which made Petrarch's career possible; see Martines, 203-4.

⁷¹ On Arezzo see Helene Wieruszowski, "Arezzo as a Center of Learning and Letters in the Thirteenth Century," in her *Politics and Culture in Medieval Spain and Italy* Storia e letteratura 121 (Rome, 1971), 387-475. On Verona (Benzo d'Alessandria) see Joseph Berrigan, "Verona and the Classicist," *Classical Bulletin* 42 (1965): 1-4; his "Prehumanism of Benzo," 249-263; and his "Benzo d'Alessandria and the Cities of Northern Italy," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 4 (1967): 127-192; Guido Billanovich, "Tra Dante e Petrarca: Umanesimo a Padova e a Verona e umanesimo a Avignone," in *Atti del Congresso internazionale di studi Danteschi* (Florence, 1965) 2: 349-376; Avesani, "Prehumanesimo veronese," 111-141. See also Gargan, "Prehumanesimo a Vicenza," 142-170; Roberto Weiss, "Benvenuto Campesani 1250/5-1323," *Bollettino della Museo civico di Padua* 44 (1955): 129-144; L. Lazzarini, "Francesco Petrarca e il primo umanesimo a Venezia," in *Umanesimo europeo e umanesimo veneziano*, ed. by V. Branca (Florence, 1963), 63-92.

⁷² Holmes, *Florence*, 77.

⁷³ Donald R. Kelley, *Renaissance Humanism* (Boston, 1991), 4.