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Daniel Waley

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MEDIAEVAL ORVIETO

Prince Consort Prize Essay

1950

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ORVIETO

General View from the South

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MEDIAEVAL ORVIETO

The
Political History of an Italian City-State
1157–1334

BY

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AND POLITICAL SCIENCE



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TO
MY WIFE

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Daniel Waley

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	<i>page</i> xiii
CHAPTER I The Commune's Origins and the first Extension of its Rule (1157–98)	I
II Further Expansion and an Internal Crisis (1198–1216)	12
III Consolidation: the Last Years of the Sienese Alliance (1216–29)	22
IV The First Sienese War (1229–40)	27
V A Decade of Imperial Ascendancy (1240–50)	31
VI The Second Sienese War and the Emergence of the Popolo (1250–60)	34
VII A Second Period of Ghibelline Predominance (1260–6)	43
VIII The Angevin Domination (1266–80)	48
IX Ranieri della Greca's Popolo (1280–92)	53
X Internal Unity and a Strong Foreign Policy (1292–1303)	59
XI The Defeat of the Ghibellines (1303–13)	84
XII The Rule of the Five (1313–15)	93
XIII The Popolo of Poncello Orsini (1315–22)	99
XIV The Nobles in Control (1322–32)	112
XV The Crisis and Manno Monaldeschi's Coup d'État (1332–4)	126
EPILOGUE: Orvieto in the Age of the Tyrants	140

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Daniel Waley

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

APPENDICES

I The Councils	<i>page</i> 145
II The Government of the Contado	149
III The Origins of the Monaldeschi and Filippeschi	152
IV The Career of Cardinal Theoderic	156
V The Arti	158

BIBLIOGRAPHY	159
--------------	-----

INDEX	165
-------	-----

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATES

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| I Orvieto. General View from the South | <i>frontispiece</i> |
| II The Palazzo del Popolo, Orvieto (mainly thirteenth century) | <i>facing page 54</i> |
| III The Piazza del Duomo in the fourteenth century
From the frescoes by Ugolino di Prete Ilario in the Duomo | 114 |
| IV Orvieto in the fourteenth century
From the same frescoes | 124 |

MAP

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Orvieto and its Sphere of Influence | <i>facing page xiv</i> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

Available for download at www.cambridge.org/9781107621725

- I The Monaldeschi
- II The Filippeschi
- III The Family of Cardinal Theodoric

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Frontmatter

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Daniel Waley

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE

THE history of Orvieto was suggested to me as a topic for research by the late Dr C. W. Previt -Orton and my debt of gratitude to him is very great. I should like to thank Mr John Saltmarsh for valuable suggestions concerning the presentation of this work. I am indebted most of all to my wife, who has aided me constantly with wise advice and criticism.

My thanks are due to the authorities of the archives in which I have worked and particularly to those of the Archivio Comunale, the Archivio Vescovile and the Biblioteca Comunale at Orvieto. Professore Arch. Renato Bonelli and Signorina Elena Bonelli have been most kind in obtaining photographs for me.

Part of Chapter X has appeared in the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4th. series, Vol. xxxii (1950) and I am grateful to the Council of the Society for permission to reproduce it here.

I wish to acknowledge gratefully the financial assistance I have received from King's College and from the Ministry of Education (through a Further Education and Training grant), which has enabled me to undertake this work.

The four plates are from photographs by the Ditta Raffaelli-Armoni-Moretti, Orvieto, and are reproduced by their permission.

D.W.

LONDON

October 1950

ABBREVIATIONS

(See also BIBLIOGRAPHY, p. 159)

ARCHIVES

- ACO = Archivio Comunale, Orvieto.
 AVO = Archivio Vescovile, Orvieto.
 Arch. Vat. = Archivio del Vaticano.
 ASS = Archivio di Stato, Siena.
 ASF = Archivio di Stato, Florence.
 ACT = Archivio Comunale, Todi.
 ACP = Archivio Comunale, Perugia.

DOCUMENTS IN ARCHIVIO COMUNALE, ORVIETO

- Rif. = Riformagioni (minutes of Council meetings).
 Lib. Don. = Liber Donationum.
 Lib. Cond. = Liber Condemnationum (records of cases tried in the Potestà's Court).

PUBLICATIONS

- ASI = *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Florence.
 ASRSP = *Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria*, Rome.
 BRDSPU = *Bollettino della Reale Deputazione di Storia Patria per l'Umbria*, Perugia.
 MGH = *Monumenta Germaniae Historica (Scriptores)*, Hanover, 1820–88.
 P.L. = *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, Series I (Latin), Paris, 1844–64.
 RIS, O.S. = *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, ed. L. A. Muratori, Milan, 1723–51.
 RIS, N.S. = Ditto, ed. G. Carducci and V. Fiorini, Città di Castello, 1900–.

INTRODUCTION

ORVIETO is a small town in central Italy, celebrated for its cathedral and its wine. It is situated almost exactly half-way between Rome and Florence. Perched on an isolated mass of volcanic rock, it dominates the bridge where the road between these two cities crosses the river Paglia. Just above this point the Paglia has been joined by the Chiana, and five miles to the east the two flow into the Tiber; the bridge is not a very long one, but it is the longest on the Val di Chiana-Arezzo route from Rome to Florence. The corresponding bridge on the Rome-Siena road lies a dozen miles west of Orvieto, below the town of Acquapendente. Orvieto is a mile from the bridge as the crow flies, and is more than six hundred feet above it. The town dominates each of its approaches, to the north the valley of the Paglia and the junction with the Chiana, to the south the road to Bolsena and Rome.

Orvieto's own impregnability sets the seal on its strategic importance. From every side it can only be reached by ascending a rocky slope that is at first steep and finally almost sheer. The site has been inhabited since early times, and excavations suggest that it was among the most important of Etruscan towns. It was a fortress which required few man-made defences, and history records no successful assault on it against a united garrison since Belisarius drove out the Goths in the sixth century.

Of the town's history in the early Middle Ages almost nothing is known, but from the twelfth century until the fourteenth it was an independent republic within the States of the Church, and thereafter it fell under the sway of a succession of tyrants, some of them local, others from neighbouring towns, others papal Vicars; it continued to form part of the Patrimony of St Peter until the unification of Italy in 1860. The chapters following are a study of Orvieto's history as a commune, or democratic city-state, from 1157, when the papacy recognized the town's self-governing

INTRODUCTION

status, until 1334, the year in which power was assumed by its first Signore, or tyrant, Ermanno Monaldeschi.

The sources for the political history of the town in this period contain serious gaps, but sufficient material is available to make it worth while undertaking what has not previously been attempted, a full-length historical study of the commune.¹ The municipal archive is rich in diplomatic documents, especially from the thirteenth century onwards, and where evidence is lacking from these sources it is often provided by the episcopal archive, which is particularly informative about the last decade of the twelfth century. Chroniclers do much to reveal the events that underlie the bare terms of treaties and submissions, especially in the thirteenth century and later. Incomparably the most valuable source for the commune's history, however, are the minutes of Council meetings, or 'Riformagioni', which are extant with very few breaks from 1295. Thirty-six volumes, of an average length of five hundred pages each, contain the Council minutes for the years 1295–1334, and thanks to them it becomes possible to glimpse between the lines something of the reality of Orvieto's political scene. Like a procession moving forward out of the shadows into a sunlit patch, the town's history shows gradually more clearly throughout the thirteenth century and near its end is suddenly fully illuminated. This study is concerned with the commune in its prime rather than with its ill-documented origins and growth.

Most of the valuable diplomatic documents in the Orvieto archive are printed or summarized in Fumi's *Codice Diplomatico della Città d'Orvieto*, and the same scholar edited several Orvietan chronicles under the title *Ephemerides Urbevetae* in the new edition of Muratori's *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*. The value of the *Codice Diplomatico* is unfortunately greatly impaired by the hundreds of careless—but occasionally important—errors contained in it.² The volume is nevertheless indispensable to the student of

¹ The only works that deal generally with the history of the commune in the Middle Ages are Fumi's fragmentary and popular *Orvieto. Note storiche e biografiche* and Rondoni's short review of the *Codice Diplomatico* in the *ASI*.

² Many addenda and corrigenda to the *Codice Diplomatico* are incorporated in my article in the *Bollettino dell'Istituto Storico-Artistico Orvietano*, a. IV, fasc. 2 (July–December, 1948) ('Contributo alle Fonti della Storia Medioevale di Orvieto').

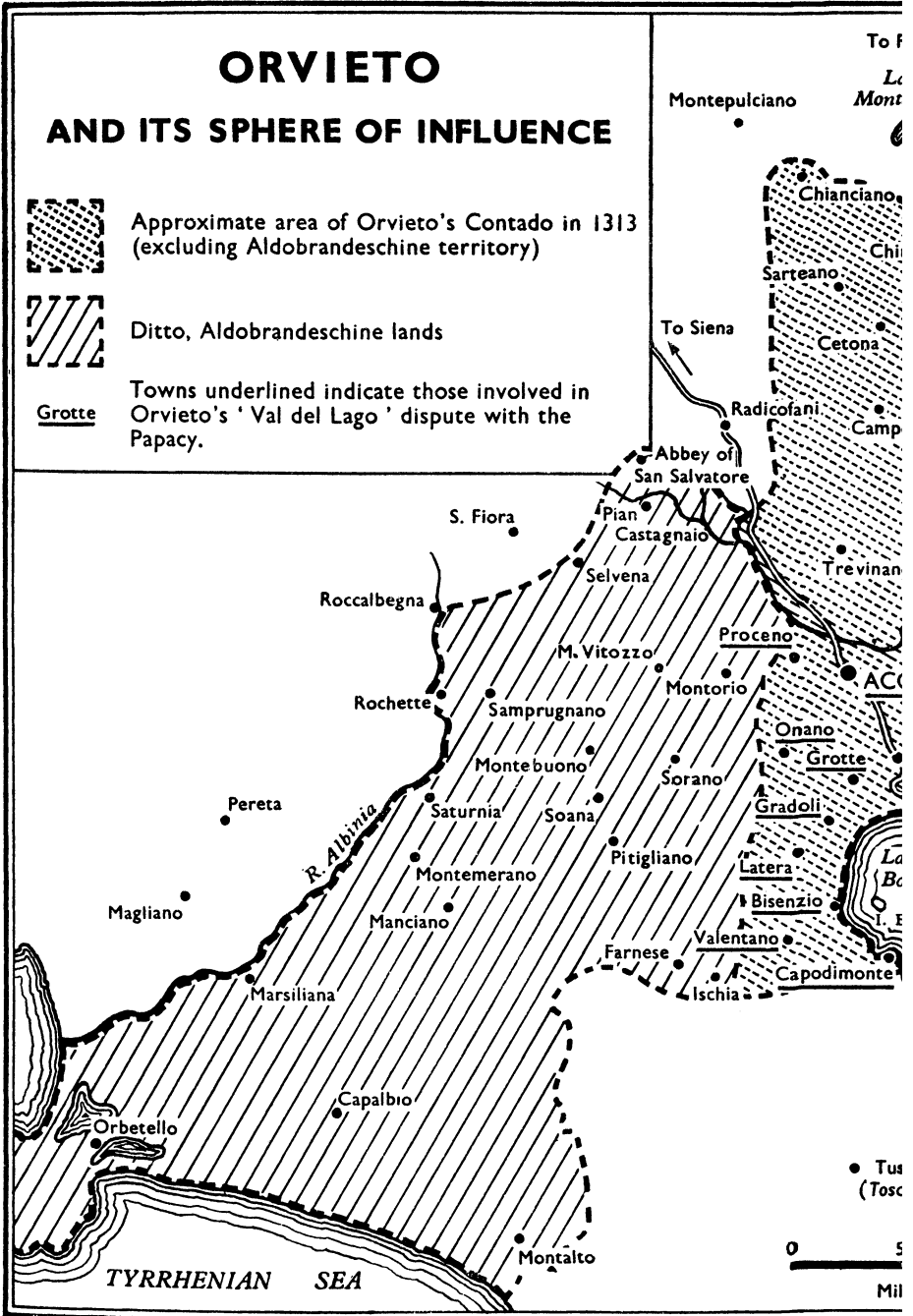
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[More information](#)

INTRODUCTION

Orvieto's history, and without it and the same editor's *Ephemerides*, a history of the commune in the Middle Ages would be the work of a lifetime, instead of one of a few years. Other useful printed sources are the Orvietan continuation of Martin of Troppau's chronicle, the chronicles of Bishop Ranieri and of the Dominican Caccia, and Pardi's summary of the census of 1292. The few secondary works that exist are so unreliable and inadequate that this study is based almost entirely upon primary authorities, printed and in manuscript.

Historians have not neglected the Italian city-states, but they have studied Venice and Genoa and the great republics of Tuscany and Lombardy, while the independent communes of the Papal States have attracted little attention. Consequently the history of central Italian politics in the Middle Ages is almost unknown in one of its aspects, while an equally important side of papal administration has likewise been overlooked.

After 1157, when Adrian IV visited Orvieto and reached an agreement clarifying the town's status within the Patrimony, it was constantly affected—sometimes favourably, sometimes unfavourably—by its subordination to the papacy. In the next two hundred years the degree of influence exerted by the popes over the commune varied continually and in these variations is echoed the whole frenzied history of Italy during the period. The relations between the communes of the Patrimony and the popes are fundamental to an understanding of the papacy's more spectacular struggles with the Empire. The wealth and peacefulness of the popes' possessions were one of the chief sources of their strength, while the fluctuations of their fortunes in the greater contest in turn affected the reality of their grip on the Patrimony.

Nothing is more typical of the popes than their policy with regard to the communes of the States of the Church. The first years of the thirteenth century saw Innocent III intervening firmly and successfully in the affairs of Orvieto, and its close saw Boniface VIII scheming ineffectually to achieve the same end. How accurately these episodes mirror in little the actions of these popes in wider spheres! Documents in Orvieto's municipal archive reveal in startling detail a lengthy and characteristic intrigue of

INTRODUCTION

Boniface VIII on behalf of his family, while the whole involved tale of Italy in the intervening century is reflected in the gains and losses in papal power over the commune. Innocent succeeded after the long decades of strife with Barbarossa, and at Orvieto—as in Paris and Westminster—the papacy was again a force to be reckoned with.¹ While Innocent's successors were preoccupied with the struggle against Frederick II, Orvieto could almost forget their existence. After a breathing-space for the papacy a new menace arose in Manfred and later Conradin, and the popes continued to have greater affairs than Orvieto on their hands. They called in foreign aid, and when victory came it was a French one, with its concomitant of French authority and French garrisons in the Patrimony. But the popes were free again to concern themselves with their central Italian possessions, and the close of the century brought a crisis in Orvieto's relations with the papacy which was ended only by the Curia's removal beyond the Alps. Unfortunately the few writers to concern themselves with this fascinating study in the theme of *de facto* and *de jure* have been lawyers rather than historians, and have constantly sought evidence on the former only to dogmatize unhistorically about the latter.²

Economically as well as politically Orvieto is typical of a kind of commune that has been extremely little studied. Historians have in the main been content to investigate the great trading and manufacturing towns, while the smaller communes, those agglomerations of farmers and shopkeepers that were so peculiarly characteristic of Italy, have scarcely been touched upon. There were hundreds of communes throughout Italy of a similar size to Orvieto, though few had so impregnable a site. The town

¹ It was also Innocent who subdivided the States of the Church; thenceforth Orvieto was part of the Patrimony of St Peter in Tuscany, an area administered from Viterbo (later Montefiascone), the boundaries of which were marked approximately by Civita Castellana in the south, Toscanella and Castro in the west, Orvieto and Todi in the north, and Narni in the east.

² *V.* (for example) C. Calisse, 'La Costituzione del Patrimonio di S. Pietro in Tuscia' and the works of Ermini cited in the Bibliography. These writers summon evidence from widely separated periods to reach—quite inaccurate—conclusions about the 'rights' of the papacy in the Patrimony. None of the books dealing with single towns of the Patrimony—even such reputable works as Guardabassi's on Perugia, Ceci's on Todi, and Pinzi's on Viterbo—treats the subject at all adequately.

INTRODUCTION

probably numbered over twenty thousand inhabitants at the end of the thirteenth century. It was thus of a fair size, though only about a quarter as large as Florence.¹

A high proportion of its people were shopkeepers and small artisans (the occasional presence of the Curia tided them over hard periods) and many of these also owned land. Some employed a few labourers, others tilled the soil themselves and tended the animals which usually shared their houses.² Figures unfortunately are available only for the town and the zone immediately adjacent to it, but these show that there were over three thousand persons possessing land in this area. The small number of noble families (twenty-seven in 1322) precludes the possibility of most of these landowners being nobles, and the census of 1292 records the trade of two hundred and fifty of the three thousand landowners. These artisan-smallholders usually owned plots of land valued at between one hundred and five hundred lire (the value of any buildings is specifically excluded), though nine of them had large holdings worth over a thousand lire, while a number had very small plots worth as little as five lire. A petition from some 'debiles et impotentes et populares homines' owning land in the contado suggests that many of Orvieto's small tradesmen also farmed areas beyond the boundaries of the town.³

These land-owning artisans and shopkeepers tended to be a conservative element, and the division of the land among so many lent a stability to the commune that was constantly sapped by divisions among the nobles. From the second half of the thirteenth century, and particularly after 1280, the artisans were engaged in a struggle to increase their own power at the expense of the nobility, but after 1284 that contest never led to fighting, in complete contrast to the quarrels within the nobility. Though popular officers governed the commune officially after 1292, the share of power exerted by them and by the nobles actually

¹ For this figure and the statistics on which the discussion of the ownership of land by shopkeepers is based, *v.* Pardi, *Catasto*, *passim*.

² Many of the mediaeval buildings surviving in Orvieto still house horses and donkeys, but it has recently been made illegal to keep cows in dwellings used by humans.

³ ACO, Rif. 1304, fos. 221–4v. In 1312 (Rif., fo. 264) one hears of a 'popolano' who owns nine pigs at Pitigliano, in the contado.

INTRODUCTION

fluctuated until both were submerged by the dictatorship of one noble. That this process was in the main a peaceable one is largely attributable to the numerous class of wealthy artisans, whose interests and traditions linked them with the nobility rather than with their fellow guild-members. This unreliable element played an important rôle during the period of the Popolo's decadence and the popular organization paid dearly for the heterogeneity of its membership.

It has often been remarked that the Italian city-states were one of the great nursing-grounds of Europe's political maturity, because here for the first time in the modern world all the citizens played their part in the affairs of the community, and thereby acquired both experience in politics and a sense of political responsibility. In this respect the Italian school was more valuable than the Flemish one, since republics governing subordinate towns and great areas of countryside gave a richer experience in diplomacy and external affairs than the communes of the Low Countries whose territory comprised only the city.¹ Certainly the government was not democratic in the modern sense, for even under the popular régime only members of Guilds shared in it; the exclusion of journeymen and apprentices, as well as those who exercised no trade, meant that less than half of the adult male population was concerned in the politics of the commune. Yet the participation of even this restricted element in the town's public affairs marks an important contribution to the political education of Europe.

The politics of the Italian communes are also the earliest politics that we are able to study in their day-to-day transactions over a long period, owing to the survival of the minutes of thirteenth-century Council meetings in many municipal archives. Thanks to these volumes it is possible to visualize the meetings of the city-fathers and to catch something of the 'flavour' of communal politics. There is somehow a two-dimensional character about these figures, for we have no Clarendon or Creevey to tell us what

¹ The area ruled by Orvieto in its heyday was approximately the size of the modern duchy of Luxemburg, i.e. about 1,000 sq. miles. There is of course one notable exception to this generalization about the Flemish towns—the position of Ghent under Jacob van Artevelde.

INTRODUCTION

sort of men they were outside the Council-chamber, but towards the end of the century they begin to acquire more substance; the first chronicle to depict vividly the events and personalities in the government of an Italian commune is that of Dino Compagni, who describes Florence between 1280 and 1312. It is thanks to Compagni, even more than to Dante or Villani, that the history of Florence in these years lives with such extraordinary clarity. The importance of the *Ordinamenti della Giustizia* has been exaggerated through our acquaintance with their originator Giano della Bella, the ‘uomo virile e di grande animo’, who ‘era tanto ardito, che difendeva quelle cose che altri abandonava, e parlava quelle che altri taceva, e tutto in favore della giustizia contro a’ colpevoli’,¹ while the demagogy of the time comes to life in the description of Pecora ‘the mighty butcher’, ‘uomo di poca verità, seguatore di male, lusinghiero . . . grande era di corpo, ardito, e sfacciato, e gran ciarlatore’.²

The politics described by Compagni would certainly differ in feeling from the politics of Orvieto, for they are those of a large town possessing a very important cloth industry, and with a completely different tradition and personality. The real fascination of communal history lies in the distinctive character of each city, the subtle product of the interplay of historical and topographical factors. Institutions might be copied from other cities, but fundamentally it was the men of each city who made it politically as well as architecturally, building up a tradition which gradually conferred upon the town its own personality. When Dante speaks of a town it is immediately apparent that to him it is a character, almost a person, certainly not a ‘place’ in the modern sense. When his Pia says ‘Siena mi fe’, she means that it is Siena with its whole history, its organization and its outlook that has shaped her, not just that she was born at the place called Siena. Again and again the *Divina Commedia* hits off in a phrase the personality of a town. Pistoia is a fit lair for the wild beast Vanni Fucci, Cesena lives

¹ ‘A strong man and one great in spirit; he was so daring that he defended the causes that others abandoned and spoke out about the things that others hushed up, and always on the side of justice against the guilty.’

² ‘A man of little truth, a follower of evil, a flatterer . . . large of body, daring, shameless, and a great talker.’

INTRODUCTION

between tyranny and liberty just as she is situated between the mountains and the plain.¹

Orvieto has no Dino Compagni and the reports of Council meetings, which do provide a picture of the politics of the commune, suffer in comparison both by their formal nature and by being written in Latin. This tends to make them yet more impersonal, for their Latin lacks the spontaneity of the vernacular in which the notaries actually thought. Nor has Dante characterized Orvieto in a line, though he makes a reference to the town in the *Divina Commedia*, when he quotes the Monaldeschi and Filippeschi, the great Guelf and the great Ghibelline family, as typical of the factions that rent every Italian city.²

Yet one can trace some of the ingredients that were important in the formation of Orvieto as an entity. First of all must come its isolated position, its natural impregnability, and its strategic importance; these factors gave the town a status that it would not otherwise have attained and strongly influenced the character of its inhabitants. The social composition of the town, with its big class of artisan-farmers, has already been discussed. As early as the middle of the twelfth century a series of political factors begins to work upon these 'natural' ones. The earliest and perhaps the most important is the town's long connection with the papacy. Orvieto gave hospitality to ten popes between 1156 and 1297, and in the thirty-five years after 1262, when Urban IV came there to seek refuge from Manfred, the town was the seat of the Curia for a total period of ten years. The presence of this enormous colony of ecclesiastics, with their guards and servants, must have had an important economic effect; they provided a market for the town's produce as well as many forms of employment for its inhabitants. But Orvieto was far from being the ideally pro-papal town. From the late twelfth century onwards it had an acrimonious dispute with the papacy over the possession of Acquapendente and the Val del Lago di Bolsena, a fertile area comprising the northern shore of Lake Bolsena and the towns of S. Lorenzo, Grotte,

¹ *Purgatorio*, v., 133–6 ('Siena made me'); *Inferno*, xxiv, 124–6; *ibid.*, xxvii, 52–4.

² 'Vieni a veder Montecchi e Cappelletti,
Monaldi e Filippeschi, uom senza cura:
color già tristi, e costor con sospetti' (*Purgatorio*, vi, 106–8). (See p. 92.)

INTRODUCTION

Gradoli and Latera on the ridge dominating it.¹ Relations between Orvieto and the popes were constantly embittered by this long-drawn-out controversy.

The grain-producing Val di Chiana in the north and the Val del Lago in the south early came within the commune's sphere of influence, but the vast expanses of the Aldobrandeschine contado in the west were the primary field of Orvieto's ambitions and she exercised her greatest powers in their retention. As early as 1216 the city obtained the submission of a huge area stretching from the river Albegna in the north to Montalto in the south and including the valuable port of Orbetello, sixty miles from Orvieto. The attempt to hold and govern this enormous territory was the republic's paramount concern for the rest of its existence.

Dating back almost as far as this submission was the alliance with Florence, which arose from the mutual enmity of the two towns with Siena, Orvieto's northern neighbour and her constant rival for the control of the Aldobrandeschine lands and the fortresses of Chiusi, Sarteano and Chianciano in the Val di Chiana.

One more factor specially characteristic of Orvieto was the domination of each of the great factions by one family. This was particularly true of the Monaldeschi, the town's most powerful family from the early thirteenth century and the undisputed leaders of the Guelfs; the Filippeschi, though they never attained a position approximating to that of the Monaldeschi, were by far the most important of the Ghibelline families.

All the above were elements in Orvieto's special tradition. There are some factors common to the politics of all the communes, factors which were dependent on the general structure of the city-states and their institutions, and can be examined in Orvieto as well as in the more intricate politics of a great town like Florence. The first impression made by a study of the communes is their extraordinary informality. There is a quite special flavour about their dealings that at once appears strange and almost mystifying to those accustomed to the clear-cut distinctions and rules of modern European governments. Each matter with which the Council deals is tackled on its own merits without reference

¹ See Map.

INTRODUCTION

to any theoretical justification for the course of action decided upon. Principles are never stated, instead constitutions and political organs grow up through a series of *ad hoc* solutions to specific problems. As a result of this informality or unselfconsciousness it is very rarely possible to find a clear-cut answer to a question such as ‘What powers had such a political body in such a year?’ The powers actually exerted by that body depended not on any written code but on its own strength and assertiveness at the time—which might either shrink or grow drastically in the following year. In Orvieto, for example, the principal position within the commune was gradually usurped by the officers of the Popolo—the body of non-noble artisans—the process beginning before 1250 and gaining momentum in the 1280s and 1290s, but it was never complete and was never specifically recognized or defined in any constitutional document.

One aspect of this constitutional elasticity was the extraordinarily experimental nature of communal legislation, which made Dante call Florence, ‘thou who makest provisions so fine that the threads thou spinnest in October do not last to mid-November’.¹ Perhaps the most characteristic organ of the commune is the Balia, an *ad hoc* committee usually appointed by Councils to advise on the action to be taken in a specific matter. Whenever a military campaign, an important piece of diplomatic business, or any other negotiation became necessary, a Balia was at once set up to deal with it. The principal advantage of the Balia was that it handled points of detail, thus enabling the Councils to concentrate on the more general aspects of policy. After the Popolo took control it was also valuable as a device whereby the aristocracy, excluded from the other organs of government, could give much-needed advice on military and diplomatic affairs.

Equally characteristic of the city-state was the existence of several ‘States within the State’ or what an Italian scholar has termed the *regime accentuato*. In many ways this is analogous to the Party-State of a Fascist or Communist type, for bodies existing

¹ . . . te che fai tanto sottili
provvedimenti, che a mezzo novembre
non giunge quel che tu d’ottobre fili’
(*Purgatorio*, VI, 142–4.)

INTRODUCTION

within the State and independently of it had their own organization of officers and councils and their powers were extended to include much that in any other type of government would be the business of the State. The existence side by side of a Potestà and a Capitano del Popolo in Orvieto and most other Italian cities from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards is typical both of this régime and of the undefined powers of all communal institutions. The Potestà as the head of the greater, all-embracing body, the commune, was in theory the superior officer, but in practice his powers became almost exclusively judicial, while those of the Capitano were far wider.

At Orvieto the great *imperium in imperio* was the Popolo, the organization of the members of Arti, or guilds. It is not possible to follow in detail the steps whereby the Popolo usurped the powers of the commune, but the process was well under way by the 1280s, when the popular party derived much strength from its opposition to the pro-French policy of the Guelf nobles, and the installation of the régime of the Seven Consuls of the Seven Arti in 1292 marks the fundamental stage in the triumph of the Popolo. But the communal *regime accentuato* differs from the modern party-state in that several party-organizations, instead of one only, existed within the State and performed what would elsewhere be considered as State functions. Thus in Orvieto the Guelf party attained a certain degree of political power, though it never reached the status that it had, for instance, in Florence between 1267 and 1280. It existed quite independently of the Popolo, of which it was not even a rival, for the Guelfs included *popolani*, though they were mainly directed by the nobility.

It is also typical of the city-republic that two conflicting principles appear to have governed the methods of election to offices and councils. One of these was the strictly democratic principle of choice by lot, the other that of indirect election. Each had its advantages, for the former counteracted the tendency for certain individuals to acquire undue power (a danger to which the commune was always alert¹), while the latter ensured some

¹ Its suspicions ought, however, to have been directed against cliques and families rather than individuals (see pp. 120–1).

INTRODUCTION

continuity, since even if the *mediani*, chosen by the first electors, differed from their predecessors it was probable that the secondary election would leave some of the previous office-holders in place.

Within this extraordinarily elastic framework raged the two great struggles of the commune's history, between the Guelf Monaldeschi and the Ghibelline Filippeschi, and between the artisans and the hereditary nobility, who were represented in the last phase by the victors of the former contest, the Monaldeschi.

The division between nobles and Popolo was clear-cut institutionally, but it corresponded with no distinct economic or social dichotomy, and the Popolo's cause suffered constantly from the only tepidly anti-noble sentiments of most of its prominent personalities. Orvieto's social structure, with its lack of big industrialists and its extensive class of landowners, helps to explain this phenomenon, but a recent historian of Florence has observed an analogous situation in that city in the thirteenth century.¹ The Popolo as an institution was an importation, but it drew its strength from the reaction of the bulk of the artisans to the exorbitant power of the nobility. Through the Popolo's opposition to the Guelf nobles, who were in alliance with the hated Angevin garrison and the French popes, its cause acquired a certain ideological content, and as it grew in self-awareness it evolved a programme. The large part it played in the ambitious foreign policy of the last decade of the thirteenth century secured for the Popolo an ever greater share of power, and by the close of the century its officers governed the city. Yet its fight against the temporarily united aristocracy, conducted vigorously between 1303 and 1310, was unsuccessful, and the Popolo seems to have played little part in the decisive victory over the Ghibellines in 1313 or during the first phases of the Guelf régime that followed. From 1316 until 1322 it was engaged in its final struggle under the competent generalship of Poncello Orsini, but its own heterogeneity and the constitutional compulsion to find its leaders outside Orvieto were fatal to the

¹ 'The governing class of the Guelf commune is closely related to that of the First Popolo; in other words, it consists of members of Florence's business and trading world and can virtually be identified with the rulers of the First Popolo, which was substantially, though not formally, Guelf' (N. Ottokar, *Studi Comunali e Fiorentini*, Florence, 1948, p. 81).

INTRODUCTION

Popolo, and it never recovered from its defeat by the Monaldeschi in the latter year.

The Monaldeschi, who had grown up under the commune, were the agents of its destruction. From small beginnings in the twelfth century they steadily increased their power, gaining with every crisis. The expulsion of the heretics in 1199 gave them Rocca Sberna, their first country seat, and probably much else. In the first half of the thirteenth century they forged ahead of every other Orvietan family, producing a number of outstanding men and filling scores of municipal offices. Around 1240 they fell out with their closest rivals, the Filippeschi, probably over some quite trivial question; Villani has often been ridiculed for his attribution of the quarrel between Guelf and Ghibelline in Florence to a personal feud over a broken marriage engagement,¹ but it is old scores such as these which, recalled for decade after decade, build up a tradition of revenge and harden rivalry into hatred. From the 1260s the Monaldeschi threw in their weight with the Angevin cause, which was destined to be the successful one, though it was not generally popular in Orvieto. They exceeded every other family in their devotion to the French, and their complete identification with the Guelf party in Orvieto probably dates from this time. Their feud with the Filippeschi can be traced without interruption from the same period, though it was temporarily laid aside between 1293 and 1303 on behalf of the higher interests of the city. But the Monaldeschi never receded from their leading position within the commune. In 1313 they won the decisive victory over the Filippeschi and less than ten years later they sealed the doom of the Popolo.

That a Monaldeschi tyranny was postponed until 1334 was due only to divisions within the family. The Monaldeschi had come far since Pietro di Cittadino—the great-great-grandfather of Manno, the Signore of 1334—farmed a small patch of land by the Paglia.

¹ G. Villani, *Cronica*, lib. v, cap. 38.