

Owning the Body: Migration and Work in Communal Italy (XIII-XIV Century)

Arturo Maria Maiorca
University of Trieste, Trieste, Italy

The theme of possession and ownership has deep roots in the Middle Ages due to several factors. Two are primarily: the spread of large-scale landed property and the relationship of personal dependence that developed between the local lord and his subjects. This vision, embraced by Karl Marx and the historians who followed his teachings, however, is incomplete as it reduces a broad phenomenon to a dichotomy that is effective, but very narrow. Rather than limiting the focus solely to the peasant and noble world, it seems more interesting to broaden the research to property and ownership within the urban context. The Italian communal context is instrumental to this research. In Italian cities, in fact, a unique union between property and labor was created, dictated by both the urban and economic development of the various communities. Economic factors pushed large numbers of peasants to move to urban centers, both to escape the power of the lords and to find new job opportunities, but conditions in the cities were not always better. The labor market, in fact, was particularly closed, managed by members of the Guilds, who discouraged these new individuals from establishing their own businesses, so they could continue to exploit them as employees, sometimes even claiming their ownership. This work, therefore, seeks to explore the relationships between migration and ownership that developed in Italian communal society between the 13th and 14th centuries.

Keywords: migration, work, Marxism, liberalism, Middle Ages

Introduction

During the 13th century the city of Perugia experienced an enormous demographic increase generated by the renewed economic development of the Umbrian commune. After the period of conflict with Frederick II, during which Perugia sided with the pontiff, the city, aided by its alliance with Rome, found itself playing an important political role in Umbria, becoming its leading economic and productive center (Grundman, 1992, pp. 81-97). This guaranteed Perugia a steady tax revenue with which it could ensure internal stability and control of its contado, as well as the ability to mobilize a sizeable body of soldiers, also attracting condottieri and captains of fortune of considerable renown. For these reasons, as well as for the historic alliance, several popes, in moments of crisis or when travelling through Umbria, sought to go to Perugia or to some other city under its control. There are several examples of popes who took refuge in Perugia: For instance, Innocent III in 1216, who died in the city and whose successor, Honorius III, was elected by the following conclave; Clement IV was likewise elected in Perugia in 1265. In 1286 it was the turn of Honorius IV, and in 1294 the election of Celestine V, while in 1304 Benedict XI went there fleeing the Roman revolt instigated by the Colonna family, but died

there a few months later, opening the conclave that would elect Clement V, marking the beginning of the Avignon period of the Papacy.

Perugia's economic development, however, also led to an increase in the number of people who decided to move to the city and settle within it, driven by the greater job opportunities it offered compared with the contado. In Perugia in particular, this helped the rise of wool manufacturing, which became the city's main productive and export sector, favoring the circulation of men, goods and money; indeed:

...the increase in monetary circulation, which appears even more notable in the cities than in the countryside; the conclusion, by the communes, of treaties designed to facilitate commercial operations through the adoption of special procedures for resolving disputes, etc.; or even the enrichment of artisans and merchants, perceptible as early as the twelfth century, so that even in backward towns, such as those of southern Lazio, one finds blacksmiths, *negociatores*, and carpenters purchasing large parcels of land, a phenomenon that becomes very clear in the thirteenth century, when land registers and account books become available, making it possible to assess the level and sometimes even the nature of these fortunes. (Maire Vigueur, 1987, pp. 139-140)

The arrival of large masses of peasants in the city caused internal changes in Perugia: While economic development generated an attraction toward the city, increasing the workforce and thus production, and giving a strong boost to the development of crafts and trade (Maire Vigueur, 1987, pp. 139-140), it also brought about changes at the political level with the assertion of the *popolo* over the magnates; indeed:

In Perugia, as in almost all of the northern and central Italian cities, the most important conflict was the struggle between the *magnati*, the nobles and the knights, and the *popolani*, the common citizens who were organized first as a military society, and lateral politically as the *popolo* party. The earliest documentation of violent conflict between the two parties in Perugia refers to civil wars of 1214, 1223-1226, and 1228 when the knights were briefly exiled. The *popolo* regimes of the early thirteenth century were short-lived, but at mid-century a permanent popular government was established. Political divisions, however, continued to disrupt the city. In 1260 a series of laws was passed against the magnates, and some of the leading magnate families was exiled. Similarly in the 1290's there was another series of anti-magnate laws, and violence erupted again in 1303 followed by yet another temporary exiling the nobles. (Blanshei, 1976, p. 7)

Another fundamental element was the territorial expansion of the commune, which followed the routes of the Via Flaminia and the Via Cassia. The first ran from Rome to Narni, where it split into two branches, one running from Terni to Foligno, the other from Carsulae to Bevagna, before rejoining below Spello and continuing on to Rimini. The second ran from Rome to Orvieto and then extended as far as Chiusi, where it split into two branches, one toward Arezzo and the other toward Parma and Piacenza. Perugia's position between these two routes of communication allowed the commune to pursue a policy of expansion that followed both of them, eventually coming to control the main settlements and stopping points, as well as building new roads to facilitate transport and trade (Blanshei, 1976, p. 13). One example is the road linking Perugia to Chiusi and the whole Trasimeno district, one of the most fertile areas of the Perugian contado, so as to allow food supplies to arrive more easily and also to make it easier to intervene in those areas¹, something that was sometimes made necessary by peasants abandoning their lands, which forced the commune to intervene with laws and penalties against those who did so:

Preterea quod cum comuni et populo perusino Clusium debet esse forum, platea camera Communis Perusii, et omnibus pergere, stare et demorari volentibus tutum esse debet. Et propter distantiam loci multa mallefitis conmixtuntur, arma contra formam statutorum deferuntur, exbampniti receotantur, robbarie et homicidia conmixtuntur, de iure petentibus respondere

¹ Archivio di Stato di Perugia, Comune di Perugia, *Statuti*, 1.

recusant, et multa alia enormia et scelerata conmixtuntur, propter que laboratores et coloni discesserunt, et cotidie diminiuntur, occasione quorum possessiones et terrenum Clusii supradicti incultum remanserunt et cotidie remanent. Ad opprimendum et obviandum omnibus et singulis supradictis, statuimus et ordinamus quod capitaneus, vinculo iuramenti et ad penam .cccc. librarum denariorum de suo salario, teneantur et debeat mictere unum ex suis sotiis et uum ex suis notariis et .vi. ex suis berruaris in Clusium perusinum in principio sui regiminis, qui stare et demorari debeant in dicto Clusio continue, et scrutare per totas universitates villarum et castrorum Clusii et per ipsum Clusium pro arma portantibus rimandum et rimari faciendum, exbampmitos et homines male fame et conditionis capiendum; et si aliquod mallefitium conmixteretur, quod absit, adesse debeant ad eundem, capiendum et in fortiam Comunis Perusii deducendum, bona et res eorum deponere ad ludendum ludentes contra formam statutorum, per .viii. dies sine aliquo salario².

This, then, was the situation in Perugia in the 13th century, a city growing both economically and demographically, a situation that was nevertheless destined to change in the following century with the decline of the commune.

This work, therefore, aims to focus on the situation of labor, possession, and ownership within the Italian communal context, taking the case of Perugia as an example. The analysis will first address the definitions given by various historians, both of Marxist and of liberal orientation, over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries. It will then move on to an analysis of the relationships between the contado and the city, with the phenomenon of migration toward the city. Finally, it will focus on how the theme of ownership and labor played out within the Perugian context.

Where Marx and Smith Shook Hands

The question of labor and ownership was, for a long time—at least throughout the 20th century—at the center of historiographical debate. The subject was, naturally, developed along two main lines: the Marxist and the liberal.

The first, starting from the writings of Karl Marx and later drawing on *La société féodale* by Marc Bloch, centers its research mainly on economic factors and on the exploitation of the worker as the principal model of production (Bloch, 1939). This view dominated the study of the economy of the Italian communes thanks to the work of Niccolò Rodolico, in particular *Il Popolo minuto* and *La democrazia fiorentina nel suo tramonto*, from which a profound Marxist outlook emerges, one that also mirrors the historian's own political views (Rodolico, 1899; 1905). To these must be added, from the mid-1950s onward, a series of Soviet historians and scholars who took an interest in Italian questions, such as Victor Rutenburg and Lyubov Aleksandrovna Kotel'nikova, the former interested in revolts, the popolo and popular movements between the 14th and 15th centuries, the latter in economic history, with particular attention to agrarian history (Rutenburg, 1958; Kotel'nikova, 1967). On the other side, meanwhile, is Romolo Broglio d'Ajano, who at the beginning of the 20th century focused his own research precisely on Perugia (Broglio d'Ajano, 1910). Later, also thanks to the school of Rosario Romeo, historians of the stature of Gina Fasoli appeared on the scene, charting a path of study different from that of their Marxist colleagues (Fasoli, 1973).

In order to better understand these views it is necessary to look at the reasoning of the historians cited. Starting with Rutenburg, in the preface to the Italian edition he immediately makes clear what his cultural references are, from Armando Saporì to Luzzatto, passing through Leicht, Zerbi, and Fanfani, and arriving, naturally, at the historical notes of Karl Marx (Rutenburg, 1958, p. 4). It becomes clear right away that the ideas of this last thinker underlie his research: Indeed, he states from the outset that to designate the 14th-century wage-

² ASPg, Comune di Perugia, *Statuti*, 12.

earners he will not use the term “proletariat”, as Christian Bec does, but rather the term “proletariato primitivo” or “pre-proletariato”, since it was still “not mature, still young in a social and political sense” (Rutenburg, 1958, p. 6; Bec, 1967). This idea then recurs throughout the text. For example, the explanation given for the growth of popular movements between the 13th and 14th centuries is traced back to the rise of a “class consciousness”, stemming from the disintegration of the feudal system, as far as France and England are concerned (Rutenburg, 1958, pp. 13-14). For Italy, however, the question is different. Following Marxian teaching, Rutenburg notes that the creation of the communes can initially be seen as a victory of the people over the feudal lords, but that subsequently the establishment of an urban economy and the setting up of an oligarchic government betrayed this expectation and the demands of the lower classes. A relationship of servitude toward the inhabitants of the *contado* and toward all the wage-earning workers present in the city is thus established, these being considered “the basest” and deprived of almost all rights (pp. 13-14). Kotel’nikova moves along the same lines, though she pays greater attention than Rutenburg to the history and the agrarian situation in the Italian communes from the 11th to the 14th century. The basic question the author poses is the following: “not a few cities managed to preserve their power up to the fifteenth century, but in the second half of that century a decline in industrial production was felt”, and consequently a decline in the power of the cities (1967, p. 5). The question is soon resolved by the author, who identifies this loss of power with the decline and weakness of the communal capitalist system, which drove development only in the main centers, disadvantaging and harming the smaller ones, as well as with the development of national states such as England and France as opposed to individual communal realities (p. 6). The scholar then focuses on the study of the type of economy, which is never called “feudal economy” but simply “feudalism”, a choice that stems from her study of Marx’s texts. Indeed, this can be seen in the definition given to this term as “a socio-economic formation, made up of an indissoluble complex of economic, social, political and ideological elements” (p. 12). On this basis, she then develops the history of agrarian contracts and of the field laborer during the communal period.

Romolo Broglio d’Ajano, by contrast, holds a different view. A nobleman and university professor, he received a liberal economic education, and this is reflected in his writings. In “*Lotte sociali a Perugia*”, he focuses heavily on the question of the guilds and on the granting, by the commune and by the owners of the workshops, of work to people coming from the countryside. Moral judgments toward the wage-earners also appear, who are considered the “lowest class of *popolani*”—the same happens in the texts of Rutenburg and Kotel’nikova, though in their case such judgments were directed at the owners (Broglio d’Ajano, 1910, p. 338). D’Ajano’s analysis focuses mainly on the wool wage-earners, the most numerous and representative in the city, and on how, from simple day laborers, they managed to organize themselves into a sort of party and union and, for a brief time, negotiate with the city government.

From the *Contado* to the City

The arrival in the city of many people coming from the countryside, as already noted, generated important changes within Perugian politics; the main one was the fall of the government of the Guilds and of the *popolo grasso*, who were defeated by the *Popolo minuto*, supported in masse by the new citizens. Between 1260 and 1340, as emerges from excavations and archaeological research, Perugia experienced strong demographic growth, evidenced by the construction of new houses and new parts of the city, with the widening of the city walls, which still followed the ancient Etruscan course. It was in this period, in fact, that the city’s first boroughs, or *terre nuove*, were born—new areas of the city built to house the new inhabitants. Initially this involved the southern

part of the city, with the parishes of San Savino, Santo Stefano, and San Fiorenzo, while the first borough to arise was Borgo San Pietro, which developed around the Benedictine abbey dedicated to the saint of the same name. Within a few years these were joined by the boroughs of Sant'Antonio, the area of the Conca as far as the street of San Galigano and the monastery of Montemorcino, and then the terra nuova of Santa Susanna just outside Porta Trasimena. By the following century the Frontone, Fontenuova and the borough of Santa Giuliana had also been established (Blanshei, 1976, pp. 21-22). The new walls, begun in 1327 and completed in 1342, thus enclosed a large part of the city, from Porta Sant'Angelo to Porta del Bulagaio, including the new borough of Sant'Antonio as far as the basilica of San Domenico, and including Porta Eburnea as well. A few years later a further widening of the walls took place to enclose the church of San Francesco al Prato and Porta Conca (Nicolini, 1971). The construction of the walls in Perugia, as in the rest of central Italy, came later than in the north, and this is also a symptom of the delay in mobility between the two areas; indeed: "While most northern Italian cities, enlarged their medieval walls in the period 1150-1250, Perugia, like many of the central Italian cities, was somewhat later in its expansion" (Blanshei, 1976, p. 22).

Another element by which to gauge a city's growth is the construction of churches: Indeed, up to the 10th century Perugia had only three main ones, the Temple of Sant'Angelo, San Pietro, San Costanzo and San Prospero. In 964 the construction is attested of the new church of San Pietro and of the Benedictine monastery, built by Pietro Vincioli, a member of a noble family of the contado that was just beginning to take part in city affairs, while some 40 years later a Camaldolese monk founded the church of San Severo on the Colle del Sole. From this point onward there was a flourishing of churches in Perugia, culminating in the convent and church of San Domenico, built on the site of the old church of Santo Stefano in 1304 and completed only in 1457 (Pottini & Ser-Giacomi, 2013). In the same period the design of the cathedral of San Lorenzo began, though its construction would not actually start until 1345, while in 1276 the donation is attested of a piece of land—where the blessed Egidio, a companion of Saint Francis, had lived—by Giacomo di Bonconte Coppoli to the Franciscan order, which would build the convent of Monteripido there. In addition to the presence of the monastic orders and of the Order of Preachers, in 1301 the city's *Studium* was established.

The birth of these new districts of the city created places within it where rather heterogeneous elements resided, coming from various areas of the Perugian contado, but also outsiders, and of varying social standing. It emerges from the land registers, in fact, that those who resided in these areas were not only wage-earners and artisans, but also members of the magnate class and the nobility, some of whom moved to the city from their landholdings in the countryside. The best tool, however, for analyzing the population present in the contado is the survey of the grain tax, which records the distribution of the population in rural centers, dividing the contado into five parts, each corresponding to a district. For the year 1282, 1,896 hearths are attested for Porta San Pietro; 782 for Porta Eburnea; 3,357 for Porta Santa Susanna; 1,147 for Porta Sole and 2,330 for Porta Sant'Angelo, for a total of 9,512 hearths (Mira, 1955). To obtain an estimate of the total population of the contado, it is necessary to multiply the total by a coefficient of 7.6, giving a total of 72,291 inhabitants of the contado, while for the city the estimate for 1285 is 30,000 inhabitants, for an overall figure of 100,000 inhabitants between contado and city.

By 1313, on the other hand, the count of hearths in the contado had decreased by around three thousand compared with the end of the 13th century, though this does not mean that all of this population had disappeared; in reality, at this point the legislation did not take widows into account, nor nobles and priests, in the registration, nor did it consider people who had moved to the city, which at the time of the survey had seen an increase of about 1,500 hearths (Blanshei, 1976, pp. 37-38). A considerable increase for Perugia at a time when the popular

regime had by now overcome the difficulties of the conflict with the magnates and had definitively established itself, pursuing a policy of drawing people from the contado into the city so as to meet the demands of the labor market and to fill the gaps caused by almost 20 years of internal strife within the city itself.

The move toward the city did not involve only common people, but also great noble families—described by Salvatorelli as “feudal”—who decided to move toward the city center, such as the already mentioned Vincioli family, or the Montemelino, the Arcipreti and the counts of Coccorano, in order to take part in the city’s wealth and politics, initially fighting against the city’s own nobles, descendants of the first priors, before allying with them from the second half of the 14th century onward (Salvatorelli, 1953). There were, of course, exceptions: One is the case of Filippo di Giacomo Bigazzini, count of Coccorano, but *vexillifer populi* of the commune during the first Raspanti regime. He held this office for about 15 years, enjoying important privileges and political power among the *popolo minuto*, becoming the defender of the interests of the people against the Guilds and the better-organized corporations. Other nobles, by contrast, chose to align themselves from the outset with their urban counterparts, integrating into Perugia’s political context, going to live in the city’s various districts, and moving their center of power there from the countryside. An example of this may be the already mentioned Vincioli, who from the 10th century, after the founding by a member of the family of the Benedictine abbey of San Pietro, moved from Agello to Perugia, while still maintaining very close ties with the contado throughout the 12th century, a period in which they became more interested in city politics (Crispoliti, 1648, pp. 87-95; Grohmann, 1981, Vol. I, p. 579). During the 14th century, in fact, the Vincioli clashed with the Oddi, at the time one of the most important noble city families, over control of the Perugian bishopric, forcing John XXII to intervene to put an end to the conflict (Cianini Pierotti, 1995, pp. 44-45). During the period of the Raspanti regime this family was one of the few to remain in the city, but after a series of conspiracies, all foiled by the popolani, they were banished and their holdings in the contado were confiscated by the commune.

From the second half of the 14th century onward, however, the movement from the contado to the city decreases in intensity; this is due to the economic and social crisis that the commune began to experience when the power of the Church returned to central Italy, after years of absence in Avignon. There were various reasons for this crisis: For Maire Vigueur, the crisis of the communal institutions should be placed within the general crisis of the 14th century, that is, within a general situation across the whole of Italy, but one that became more acute in Umbria because it was tied to the re-establishment of papal authority by Cardinal Albornoz (Maire Vigueur, 1987, pp. 176-177). While in the first half of the century the commune committed heavily to internal security, both by building several *castra* in the strategic areas of its territory and by building new settlements, particularly in the areas around Chiusi, to protect the Trasimeno district, and to the south along the border with the commune of Todi (Blanshei, 1976, pp. 37-38). In the second half, the countryside did not fall entirely into decline, but many villages disappeared: The number went from 283 in 1282 to 194 in 1370, a loss of 31%, while the population, according to a fiscal document of 1410, amounted to 14,396 inhabitants, a decrease of 5,000 compared with 1282, a figure equal to 29% of the total population, a sign of the severe crisis the commune was going through (Blanshei, 1976, pp. 39-40).

Ownership and Work

The other political actor that has remained hidden over time is, instead, the greater part of the *popolo minuto* that did not consider itself close to either side, and which, at least in a single case that can easily be dated, comes close to taking power and almost to ousting the magnates from the commune.

The economic expansion the commune had experienced in the first half of the 14th century had greatly enlarged the city's population with a mass of people who flowed into the category of wage-earning workers. Some guilds, in particular that of the Wool trade, had links with other minor guilds for purely work-related reasons, such as, for example, the *Cimatori* (shearers), that of the *Battilana* (wool-beaters), the *Pettinatori* (combers), the *Coltrai* and the *Tintori* (dyers), into which a good part of the newcomers flowed (Salvatorelli, 1953, pp. 95-97; Maire Vigueur, 1987, pp. 146-147). There were several causes behind this movement: The first stemmed from the presence of armed bands that devastated the *contado* and made life difficult for its inhabitants; the second was the backwardness of production methods in some areas of the Perugian countryside, which in turn generated shortages, and hence famines (Grohmann, 1988, p. 65). All this pushed part of the population to move toward the city in search of what they believed would be better working conditions, even though they often ended up working in the workshops or on the urban lands of the very lord whose *contado* estates they had left (Maire Vigueur, 1987, pp. 139-140). As already noted, many of these people found employment in the wool trade which, thanks to the various livestock farms present in Umbria (Maire Vigueur, 1987, pp. 22-25), was the most productive industry, with various branches in the fields of hides and leather, making it the only one capable of exporting the products of the Perugian market outside the region (Maire Vigueur, 1987, p. 140).

The Wool Guild, however, unlike the other major guilds, in which one could not work without being enrolled, did not have the capacity to absorb all workers into the corporation, as happened in Florence, and for this reason there existed various guilds for each trade linked to that of Wool, such as the *Tintori* (dyers) and the *Coltrieri*, who formed a single guild together (Broglia d'Ajano, 1910, p. 339). To these must be added the guilds of the *Cimatori* and the *Purgatari*, and that of the *Battilana*, which included within it weavers, beaters, combers and carders, all trades connected with the wool sector (p. 339).

Despite this division into various guilds, the production chain remained in the hands of the wool masters, who bought the wool, which then passed to other artisans, while nonetheless remaining their property throughout—so much so that in the event of theft, the workers and the masters of the guild under which the theft had occurred were punished, and were obliged to pay a kind of rental fee for the raw material, without receiving any share of the profit from the finished product (p. 340). Beyond the economic and labor subordination, they were also subordinate from a legal standpoint, since the wool masters were the only ones allowed to take part in the elections of the *Camerlengo* and made use of this to resolve all situations requiring the intervention of the guild's chief magistrate. Moreover, the relationships between the masters and their subordinates, as well as the members of the minor guilds, were regulated by the guild rolls and by the statute of the Wool Guild in a manner disproportionately weighted toward the magnates, cornering the wage-earners (pp. 340-341).

All this led the wool wage-earners to form their own internal organization, although it was recognized neither by the guilds nor by the commune, yet it brought together a great mass of people, almost all residing in the area of *Porta Sant'Angelo*, the district where the main wool-production sites were concentrated (Grohmann, 1981, p. 278). This organization managed to position itself constructively with the commune during the 1380s, taking advantage of a moment of particular weakness in the *Raspanti* regime. With the exile of the *Michelotti*, the stability of the popular regime collapsed, troubled by attacks in the countryside from both the nobles and the *Raspanti*, and to save the situation the Priors relied on the wool wage-earners, who, even resorting to blackmail, obtained approval for various measures and demands in exchange for peace in the city. The idyll, if it can be called that, lasted until a member of the *Arcipreti* incited some popular leaders of the wool wage-earners to march on the palace of the Priors, but they were stopped by the *Raspanti* and their followers, pushing the *popolari* to

draw closer again to the nobles in order to restore stability within the city (Maire Vigueur, 1987, pp. 224-226; 1981, pp. 229-231).

The return of the nobles to the city marked the definitive political decline of the wool wage-earners, who would never again enjoy the political relevance they had achieved in a few months of collaboration with the Raspanti regime. Not even when Biordo Michelotti came to power would the wage-earners regain even a fraction of the power they had once held.

Conclusion

Naturally, not all the city's inhabitants were enrolled in a guild. Many were the dependent, seasonal and day laborers found in Perugia, drawn there by the greater work opportunities compared with the countryside. To this must be added that some guilds required the presence of other collateral guilds and of a larger workforce. In the specific case, the Wool Guild made use of the labor of the Coltrai and Tintori guild, of the Cimatori and Purgatori, and of the Battilana—the largest of the group, which included within it various trades: weavers, beaters, combers, and carders (Broglio d'Ajano, 1910, pp. 339-341). This labor system continued to function until the end of the first half of the 14th century, when, because of famines and plagues, a multitude decided to move from the countryside toward the city in the hope of finding better job opportunities (Grohmann, 1988, p. 65). To this must be added the total control the wool masters exercised over every stage of production and the lack of any protection for workers not enrolled in any guild; what was thereby established was what Victor Rutenburg called “a sort of government within the government”, which would push the wage-earners to form an unrecognized association that nevertheless carried out the same functions as a guild (Rutenburg, 1958, pp. 94-97). Through this decision the wage-earners managed, even if only for a short time, to place themselves almost on equal footing with the communal institutions and with the guild leaders. It was, in fact, the wage-earners who, in 1370, demanded an end to the hostilities with the pope and the exiles. Once the peace treaty was signed by the commune's ambassador in Avignon, Ugolino di Montemarte, the situation seemed to normalize, with peace restored in the city and the return of the nobles, as sanctioned in one of the chapters of the agreement. A few months later, however, the situation once again deteriorated. The Raspanti government, having received news of certain contacts between nobles and wage-earners, decided to confiscate all the weapons of the Beccherini. This decision led the wage-earners to take to the streets on 16 May 1371 and demand a general assembly, which immediately erupted into violence and destruction (pp. 118-121).

Strengthened by this success, the wage-earners experienced their moment of greatest glory, crowned by their participation in the revolt against the abbot of Monmaggiore, in the course of which they stormed the fortress near Porta di San Matteo and burned the bridge of the Sant'Antonio fortress, helping to isolate the abbot (pp. 124-126). By now, however, the political arc of the wage-earners was drawing to a close: After an initial period of collaboration with the popular government, they attempted an insurrection, instigated by a member of the Arcipreti family, which failed and pushed the popular government to draw closer again to the nobles and allow them back into the city (Maiorca, 2024, pp. 64-65). From this moment on, the political experience of the wage-earners can be considered concluded.

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