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Introduction¹

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This volume presents texts of a type that is familiar to scholars of Tuscany but is virtually unknown for the Veneto: only one of these works has been edited, and only three have been mentioned in secondary studies.² Few in number, they are all of the *libri di famiglia* that have been uncovered from Verona and Vicenza for the Quattrocento (some extend into the early Cinquecento). They represent, in fact, nearly the entire *corpus* of early *memorie familiari* from the Veneto as a whole: as will be seen, scant examples from Padua and Venice have been located, and none from the other cities of the region. Even so, it has been possible to assemble this number of texts only by applying broad criteria for selection, requiring that texts exhibit the core attributes of *memorie*: detailed domestic and personal entries, especially anagraphic data on the births, marriages and deaths of the writers' families.³ Indeed, because these heterogeneous texts do not entirely fit within the more exacting typologies derived from Florentine examples, the nomenclature here is rather loose by the standards of literary criticism and deliberately avoids several debates over typology and nomenclature: *ricordanza*, *libro di famiglia* and *memoria familiare* are used interchangeably. Both as a source for family and private history (demography, household structure, social relations and *mentalité*), and as a source for the history of language, literature, genre and literacy, *libri di famiglia* have attracted increasing attention in the past few decades. Several dozen texts were edited in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and a few editions appeared after 1945, but systematic study and use of *ricordanze* began only in the 1970s.⁴ A salient feature of that recent interest has been research outside Florence, which was the focus of nearly all older work. Within Tuscany, scholars have examined texts from Arezzo, Lucca, Pisa, Pistoia and Siena.⁵ The canon - expanded to include municipal chronicles

1. The editor expresses a deep debt to Gian Maria Varanini, whose generosity in locating texts and sharing his insights into the issues of editing them have everywhere shaped this volume; he also provided preliminary transcriptions of the Fracastoro, Muronovo and Verità texts. In addition, Patricia Crawford, Edoardo Demo (who graciously allowed me to use his preliminary transcription of the Stoppa memoir), Thomas Izbicki, Gloria Maroso and Alessandra Tugnoli Aprile provided helpful assistance in procuring texts and locating sources, and the Folger Shakespeare Library is to be thanked for its support of the completion of the manuscript.

2. Manfred Repeta's *memoria* was partly transcribed and thoroughly rearranged in *Cronaca di Manfredo Repeta (1464/1489)*, ed. D. Bortolan, Vicenza 1887. Its pseudo-Joachimite prophecy (f. 80v) alone has been cited: G.P. Tognetti, *Venezia e le profezie sulla conversione dei Turchi*, in *Venezia e i Turchi. Scontri e confronti di due civiltà*, Milano 1985, p. 87; and works of Dazzi and Fenigstein cited in notes to Repeta, f. 80v. The Arnaldi text was a minor source for A. Cicchetti and R. Mordenti, *La scrittura dei libri di famiglia*, in *Letteratura italiana*, iii, 2, *La prosa*, Torino 1984), pp. 1141-42, 1148. The Muronovo text is cited in G.P. Marchi, *Giacomino Robazzi e Antonio da Legnago*, « Italia medievale e umanistica », 17 (1974), pp. 499-513; and in G. De Sandre Gasparini, *La parola e le opere. Predicazione di S. Giovanni da Capestrano a Verona*, « Venezie francescane », n.s. vi, 1 (1989), pp. 101-2.

3. Following the definition of Giovanni Ciappelli: « Il connotato essenziale dei testi così denominati è quello di esprimere l'interesse per la famiglia e la preoccupazione per la continuità della memoria familiare »: *Introduzione* to Francesco di Matteo Castellani, *Ricordanze I: Ricordanze A (1436-1459)*, Firenze 1992, p. 46; and see the tidy definition (« scritture diaristiche, plurigenerazionali, familiari ») by R. Mordenti: *Scrittura della memoria e potere di scrittura (secoli XVI-XVII)*. (*Ipotesi sulla scomparsa dei 'libri di famiglia'*), « Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa », ser. iii, vol. xxiii, 2 (1993), pp. 742-43.

4. For historiographic surveys, see F. Pezzarossa, *La memorialistica fiorentina tra Medioevo e Rinascimento: Rassegna di studi e testi*, « Lettere italiane », xxxi, 1 (1979), pp. 96-138; Idem, *La tradizione fiorentina della memorialistica*, in G.M. Anselmi, F. Pezzarossa, L. Avellini, *La 'memoria' dei mercatores. Tendenze ideologiche, ricordanze, artigianato in versi nella Firenze del Quattrocento*, Bologna, 1980, pp. 50-91; Idem, *'Libri di famiglia' e filologia*, « Filologia e critica », xx, 1 (1987), pp. 63-90; A. Cicchetti and R. Mordenti, *I libri di famiglia in Italia*, i, *Filologia e storiografia letteraria*, Roma 1985, chs. ii-iii.

5. V. Torelli, *I 'libri di ricordanze' a Lucca*, in *La famiglia e la vita quotidiana in Europa dal '400 al '600: Fonti e problemi*, Roma 1986, pp. 123-65; D. Balestracci, *Le memorie degli altri*, in *Cultura e società nell'Italia medievale. Studi per Paolo Brezzi*, i, Roma 1988, pp. 41-58; G. Cherubini, *La proprietà fondiaria di un mercante toscano del Trecento (Simo d'Ubertino di Arezzo)*, and *Dal libro di ricordi di un notaio senese del Trecento*, in *Signori contadini*

containing authors' personal and family notices - now encompasses memoirs produced outside Tuscany: from Bologna,⁶ Mantua,⁷ Ferrara,⁸ Perugia,⁹ Orvieto, Viterbo, Rome and elsewhere.¹⁰ Non-Italian examples, particularly those of Limoges,¹¹ must now be considered for comparison. The texts presented here draw the attention of scholars to the Veneto, where a historiography directed to public and institutional studies has overlooked personal and domestic documentation such as *libri di famiglia*.

borghesi: ricerche sulla società italiana del basso Medioevo, Firenze 1974, pp. 313-92, 393-425; W.J. Connell, *Clientelismo e stato territoriale. Il potere fiorentino a Pistoia nel XV secolo*, « Società e storia », 53 (1991), pp. 534, 542; R. Manno Tolu, *Le 'Memorie universali occorrenti antichamente' di Cipriano Bracali (1490-1506)*, « Bulletin storico pistoiese », xc (1988), pp. 3358; and see works cited in Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Libri di famiglia*, i, Appendix, pp. 134, 157-58, 166-67, 170, 171-74, 178-79, 181.

6. F. Pezzarossa, *Alcune osservazioni sulle scritture storiche e di memoria nella Bologna tra Medioevo ed Età moderna*, in *La memoria e la città. Scritture storiche tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna*, ed. C. Bastia and M. Bolognani, Bologna 1995, esp. pp. 506-7; L. Quaquarelli, *Ricordanze familiari e lodi alla città. In margine al censimento dei generi memoriali non cronachistici bolognesi*, in *ibid.*, pp. 528-33; A. Tugnoli Aprili, *I libri di famiglia dei da Sala*, Spoleto 1997; Idem, *Il patrimonio e il lignaggio*, Bologna 1996, p. 13 and ch. 2; Idem, *I libri di ricordanze della famiglia da Sala (note preliminari all'edizione)*, « Schede umanistiche », n.s. 1 (1993), pp. 139-68; R. Salani, *Il libro di famiglia di Cesare Nappi 'notaro, erudito cittadino e delle muse vero alunno'*, « Schede umanistiche », n.s. 1 (1993), pp. 121-28; G. Ortalli, *Notariato e storiografia in Bologna nei secoli XIII-XVI*, in *Notariato medievale bolognese*, ii, Roma 1977, pp. 178-88; L. Frati, *Ricordanze domestiche di notai bolognesi*, « Archivio storico italiano », xli (1908), pp. 371-83; Idem, *Un notaio poeta bolognese del Quattrocento*, « La rassegna nazionale », xxv, 130 (1903), pp. 26-43; R. Greci, *Libri e prestiti di libri in alcune biblioteche private bolognesi del secolo XV*, « La bibliofilia » 85 (1983), esp. pp. 341, 344; Balestracci, *Memorie degli altri*, pp. 49-50; works cited in Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Libri di famiglia*, i, Appendix, pp. 156-57, 163-65, 167-68, 174-76, and in Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura dei libri di famiglia*. The Bolognese priest Gaspare Codibò also inserted family and domestic notices into a general chronicle of the city: *Diario bolognese dal 1471 al 1504*, ed. A. Macchiavelli, Bologna 1915, pp. 31, 45-46, 56, 58, 65, 67, 69, 72-74. Gaspare Nadi's text is strictly speaking a civic diary rather than a *memoria*, but the extensive personal and family material amidst political notices give it a *memoria*-like quality: *Diario bolognese*, ed. C. Ricci and A. Bacchi della Lega, Bologna 1886; reprint Bologna 1981; a similar work is cited in *Repertorio della cronachistica emiliano-romagnola*, ed. B. Andreoli et al., Roma 1991, p. 145.

7. I. Lazzarini, *Gerarchie sociali e spazi urbani a Mantova dal Comune alla Signoria gonzaghesca*, Pisa 1994, pp. 25, 128-30; R. Signorini, *Dalla presa di Brescia (1426) alla Pace di Lodi (1454). Notizie di guerra nelle memorie del mercante mantovano Gianfrancesco Maloselli*, in *Guerre stati e città: Mantova e l'Italia Padana dal secolo XIII al XIX*, Mantova 1988, pp. 187-214.

8. Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Libri di famiglia*, i, Appendix, pp. 186-87. Ugo Caleffini's *Diario* contained at least a notice on the death of his brother, but this (and other family notices?) was omitted from Giuseppe Pardi's summary: *Diario di Ugo Caleffini 1471-1494*, « Monumenti della Deputazione Ferrarese di Storia Patria », 1-3 (1938-40), esp. p. vi.

9. E. Erace, *Geografia e storia dei libri di famiglia: Perugia*, « Schede umanistiche », n.s. 1992/2, pp. 71-93. A brief set of personal notices is printed in R. Abbondanza, *Cronaca pubblica e privata nei notai perugini dei secc. XV-XVI*, in Idem, ed., *Il notariato a Perugia*, Roma 1973, esp. pp. 309-11.

10. Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Libri di famiglia*, i, Appendix, pp. 138, 146, 148, 149-52, 161-62, 168, 174, 185-86, 189-90. For Viterbo see also G. Lombardi, *Cronache e libri di famiglia: il caso di Viterbo*, in *La memoria e la città*, pp. 407-17; Idem, *I ricordi di casa Sacchi (1297-1484)*, Viterbo 1992. For Forlì see *Cronache forlivesi di Andrea Bernardi (Novacula) dal 1476 al 1517*, ed. G. Mazzatinti, Bologna 1896; *Repertorio*, pp. 110-14. The Modenese Jacopino de' Bianchi folded personal and family entries into his general chronicle: *Cronaca modenese*, ed. C. Borghis, *Monumenti di Storia Patria per le Province Modenesi*, Parma 1861, pp. 163, 167, 175, 200, 204, 210, 236-37, 241, 246, 253, 255-56, 260, 262-63. Some early Cinquecento Brescian works likewise combine family and political notices: P. Guerrini, ed., *Le cronache bresciane inedite dei secoli XV-XIX*, ii, Brescia 1927, pp. 54-118.

11. J. Tricard, *La mémoire des Benoist: livre de raison et mémoire familiale au XVe siècle*, in *Temps, Mémoire, Tradition au Moyen Age*, Actes du XIII^e Congrès de la Société des Historiens Médiévistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur Publique, Aix-en-Provence 1983, pp. 11940 (especially notes 7-8); J.-L. Biget and J. Tricard, *Livres de raison et démographie familiale en Limousin au XVe siècle*, in *Annales de démographie historique*, 1981, pp. 321-46; L. Guibert, *Le livre de raison d'Etienne Benoist*, « Bulletin de la Société Archéologique et Historique du Limousin », xxix (1981), pp. 225-318. A Provençal cleric also inscribed some personal notices in his account book: N. Coulet, *Le livre de raison de Guillaume de Rouffilhac (1354-1364)*, in *Genèse et débuts du grand schisme d'Occident*, Paris 1980, esp. pp. 73-74, 82. For an English example, see Ch.N.L. Brooke, *The Medieval Idea of Marriage*, Oxford 1989, pp. 34-38.

1. *The Production of memorie familiari in the Veneto*

Despite assiduous archival research, undertaken with the express intent of broadening research into the family memoirs of Italy as a whole, the fact remains that known *ricordanze* are very unevenly distributed in geographic terms. In Cicchetti and Mordenti's preliminary catalogue of published works, which adopted a « very wide and omnivorous definition of the *libro di famiglia* » precisely in order to be able to include works from throughout the peninsula, fully three-quarters are Florentine works.¹² The first soundings of a team that is cataloguing unedited Florentine manuscripts indicate upwards of a thousand Florentine memoirs for the period before 1500.¹³ In contrast, the « appreciable number » of texts located in Arezzo and Lucca do not add up to more than a few dozen, and recent searches underscore the « extreme penury » of Sienese examples (no more than twenty). At a rough guess, the final count will probably not exceed a hundred for extra-Florentine Tuscany as a whole.¹⁴ Above fifty are known from Bologna, the other leading center of production, but no other city or region in Italy, it now appears, produced more than a handful. In Genoa, the Cibo family produced scattered entries, and a few account books briefly mention births, marriages, deaths and the expenses of caring for orphaned relatives: the personal information is minimal, but this is the best private documentation that the city can offer.¹⁵ For Milan only a single *libricino* of this type has been noted, and it is in actuality a diary of the ducal court with a very few family notices.¹⁶ For Naples, in the present state of research, there is nothing that even approaches the genre.¹⁷

Nor can the archives of northeast Italy challenge the Florentine preponderance. In Venice, apart from a few writers who provided bare lists of the births of children, only the *libro di famiglia* of the Freschi family is extant for the period before 1500.¹⁸ Two Friulan examples are known, and the Amaseo family incorporated another into its history of the region.¹⁹ The Bellunese cleric Clemente Miari, like the Amaseo, included copious personal and family notices in a general chronicle.²⁰ A single Paduan text, from Ruggero Cortusi, resembles the Veronese and Vicentine works published here.²¹

12. G. de Rosa, *Prefazione* to Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Libri di famiglia*, i, p. xi and *ivi*, Appendix (quote from Pezzarossa, *Libri di famiglia*, pp. 68-69); also G. Cherubini, *I 'libri di ricordanze' come fonte storica*, in *Civiltà comunale: libro, scrittura, documento*, « Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria », n.s. xxix, 2, Genova 1989, pp. 574-75.

13. G. Ciappelli, *Una famiglia e le sue ricordanze. I Castellani di Firenze nel Tre-Quattrocento*, Firenze 1995, p. 184; Idem, *Libri e letture a Firenze nel XV secolo*, « Il Rinascimento », ser. ii, 29 (1989), note 21.

14. Cherubini, *Libri di ricordanze*, p. 575; Idem, *Dal libro di ricordi*, p. 394; Pezzarossa, *Libri di famiglia*, p. 69.

15. L. Staffetti, ed., *Il libro di ricordi della famiglia Cybo*, « Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria », xxxviii (1908), pp. 3-18 (entries to 1549); scattered family notices in M.L. Balletto, *Il Liber Privatus di Giovanni da Diano (1392-1419)*, in *Documenti sul Quattrocento genovese*, Genova 1966, pp. 106-15; G. Reborà, *Libri di conti di mercanti genovesi nel secolo XV*, « Atti del III convegno internazionale di studi columbiani », Genova 1979, pp. 206-07.

16. A.R. Natale, ed., *I diarii di Cecco Simonetta*, Milano 1962; and see E. Saita, *Ispirandosi a 'La memoria e la città': suggestioni e note riguardo ai modi del ricordo tramandato a Milano nel basso Medioevo*, « Nuova rivista storica », lxxx, 1 (1996), pp. 263, 266. Another possible *memoria*, which I have not seen, is cited in P. Mainoni, *L'attività mercantile e le casate milanesi nel secondo Quattrocento*, in *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro*, ii, Milano 1983, p. 582. Later memoirs are discussed in R. Fiore, *Memorie familiari, ricordanze, genealogie nella Milano deisecoli XVI e XVII*, tesi di laurea, Università degli Studi di Milano, Facoltà di Lettere, aa. 1992-93, rel. prof. Claudio Donati (which I have not seen).

17. Confirmation in D. Defilippis and I. Nuovo, *Tra cronaca e storia: le forme della Memoria nel Mezzogiorno*, in *La memoria e la città*, pp. 420-21.

18. The Freschi *memoria* was incorporated into a Cinquecento compilation: Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana (= Marciana), Ital. vii, 165 (8867). In addition, there is a mid-Cinquecento memoir of the Arborsani family (*ivi*, Ital. vii, 543 [7887]), and a *Memorie lasciate da Francesco Amadi della sua famiglia*, Museo Civico Correr, Cod. Gradenigo 119 [56], also from the mid-Cinquecento but largely an account of the Amadi family ca. 1480; both may incorporate Quattrocento texts. For the writing of memoirs in Venice, see J.S. Grubb, *Memory and identity: why Venetians didn't keep ricordanze*, « Renaissance Studies », viii, 4 (1994), pp. 375-87; Idem, *Elite Citizens*, in *Venice Reconsidered*, (N.Y.), Syracuse University, 2000. Mss. listing births of children are cited below, note 45.

19. Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Libri di famiglia*, i, ch. 8 and Appendix, pp. 127-28, 18889; fragments of another work in V. Joppi, *Testi friuliani: secolo XV*, « Archivio glottologico italiano », iv (1878), pp. 204-5.

20. J. Law, *A clerical chronicler of c. 1400: Clemente Miari of Belluno*, « Renaissance Studies », ii, 2 (1988), pp. 173-84; F. Pellegrini, *Cronaca bellunese inedita del canonico Clemente Miari (MCCCLXXXIII-MCCCCXII)*, « Archivio veneto », 2 (1871), pp. 5-16.

21. Archivio di Stato di Padova (= A.S.Pad.), Archivi Privati, Cortusi-Ruggero 99.

Without question this list is not complete. Some *fondi* in the Veneto have not been explored, many family archives remain unavailable for consultation, and archives outside the region may yet produce memoirs. But the repositories of Verona, Vicenza, Padua and Venice have all been searched in depth, and the yield cannot be judged anything more than meager compared with that of Florence. It does not seem likely that future research will much alter the present impression that the Veneto offers a limited quantity of *libri di famiglie*.

The reasons for the comparative scarcity of known memoirs in the Veneto are bound to be speculative: no one, after all, declared why he did *not* write the history of his lineage and household. Nonetheless, grounding texts in concrete local situations - political, social and literary - can raise the issue above the level of the merely heuristic and suggestive. The Veneto did, for example, favor alternative genres for inscribing personal and family memory, which suggests that people of the Veneto faced disincentives for writing (or preserving) *ricordanze*. When local patterns of memorialization are compared with what is known from Florence, where memorialists were highly forthcoming on their reasons for writing and where the socio-cultural milieu is better studied, we can derive plausible indications why Florentines regularly wrote *ricordanze* and people in the Veneto did not.

Most traditional explanations for unequal regional distribution of *libri di famiglie* are logical enough, but they can only partially stand up to close scrutiny. Cicchetti and Mordenti, for example, have posed a reasonable question: is the uneven distribution of memoirs the result of production or conservation? Were, in fact, family chronicles produced in considerable number outside Florence but then lost?²² Physical survival and archival dispersal might be one key. Florentines were early and systematic in amassing public repositories, and today the city's archives and libraries are unrivalled in the quantity, variety and depth of their holdings. On the other hand, fire claimed the notarial archives of Verona (in 1723) and the municipal archives of Vicenza (in 1509).²³ The *conventi soppressi* records and family archives of Florence are famous for having retained personal papers; those of Verona and Vicenza have been reduced to land documents and a few account books. Verona's once-superb, later dispersed Saibante archive held at least the *memoria* of Bartolomeo Muronovo; some of its manuscripts have surfaced in Paris, Berlin, Milan and Florence, but the whereabouts of the major share is unknown. The wholesale destruction of the papers of Venice's Donà dalle Rose family is famous but possibly not atypical.²⁴ The vagaries of preservation are well known for other parts of Italy as well: the handful of extant account books from Genoa clearly represent a small fraction of those actually produced,²⁵ and the *ricordanze* of the Bolognese builder Gaspare Nadi were apparently only kept because the author was mistaken for a more famous architect.²⁶

There is evidence, in fact, of Veneto memoirs now destroyed or dispersed. Still extant in the Settecento was a « narrativa dell'origine della famiglia Trissina », with « notte come passarono in Vicenza, e suoi accasamenti, et eretioni, e loro discendenza »; today it cannot be located.²⁷ The « cronaca familiare » or « cronachetta » or « memoriale » of the Vicentine Cardino Feramosca was excerpted in the last century, but the original has not been traced.²⁸ In 1876 and 1915 Veronese

22. Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Libri di famiglia*, i, pp. 108, 112-14, 115-17.

23. G. Sancassani, M. Carrara, L. Magagnato, *Il notariato veronese attraverso i secoli*, Verona 1966, p. 19; G. Mantese, *Memorie storiche della chiesa vicentina*, iii, 2, Vicenza 1964, p. 868.

24. J.C. Davis, *A Venetian Family and its Fortune 1500-1900*, Philadelphia 1975, p. 179.

25. Reborà, *Libri di conti*; Balletto, *Liber Privatus*; Idem, *Battista da Luco mercante genovese del secolo XV e il suo cartulario*, Genova 1979, pp. xiii-xvii; J. Heers, ed., *Le livre de comptes de Giovanni Piccamiglio, homme d'affaires génois, 1456-1459*, Paris 1959; R. Goldthwaite, *Private Wealth in Renaissance Florence: A Study of four Families*, Princeton 1968, pp. 6-7.

26. *Diario bolognese*, pp. vii-xvi.

27. Bertoliana, Archivio Trissino, Catastico, Mazzo 1, doc. 9. Archivist Giovanni Dal Lago (communication to the author, 3/1991) thinks that this work is no longer among the uncatalogued *buste* of the archive.

28. Bertoliana, ms. 3379.

scholars noted Andrea Banda's « grosso libro autografo di memorie istoriche sulla propria famiglia », but its present whereabouts is unknown.²⁹ Sometime before 1428, the Venetian Alvise Capello lost « certain books in which he wrote down the ages of his children ». ³⁰ When Venetian patrician youths proved their ages to qualify for early entry onto the Great Council, they often brought forth a *librum patris sui*: possibly a *libro di nascite*, though none survive to support a claim either way.³¹ In 1442 a gloomy Venetian testator referred to « mio libro a le choverte nigro » in which he had noted « hordenatamente tuta la mia povera condizion » since he was a « tristo regazo »; another noble, in 1472, made passing reference to the « molte cose stranie ò sentito eser seguide in vita mia, e però apar nel mio libro ». Both *libri*, apparently, refer to lost *ricordanze*.³² A further hint of widespread keeping of memoirs in Venice comes from the *Memoriale* of Zuan Paolo da Ponte, covering the years 1520-62. This work is so highly developed - totaling five volumes and two thousand pages (another volume has been lost) - that it seems inconceivable that da Ponte invented the genre; surely the *Memoriale* built upon a longstanding tradition.³³

Still, the thesis of different regional patterns of conservation is suggestive rather than definitive. Widespread losses are hardly confined to non Tuscan Italy: Florentines too did not keep everything, and they must have lost a proportion of documentation comparable to that of the Veneto, but they still offer hundreds more *ricordanze*. The fact remains, too, that Veneto holdings have not been altogether decimated: Verona's family archives are copious and well-inventoried, and Vicenza's Archivio di Stato holds the registers of some 400 Quattrocento notaries, yet few examples of *libri di famiglie* have been located in either city. Surely if Venetians and Paduans actually produced a sizable body of memoirs, their cities' rich archives would preserve more than a few examples. Destruction and dispersal do not seem able to account for the regional imbalance in known examples.

More promising is a corollary of the production and preservation question, resting upon a Florentine bureaucratic imperative. There, the public record is replete with denunciations of office-holders and subsequent investigations for insufficient age, illegitimacy or electoral fraud: these gave Florentines a strong impetus to create and preserve *libri di ricordi* to support their defences. After 1429, *ricordanze* were deemed admissible evidence for compilation of the *libri delle età* that demonstrated eligibility for office.³⁴

The *catasto* of 1427 and beyond, requiring declaration of family members and their ages - a tax exemption for offspring offered inducement for full recording - further stimulated regular inscription of anagraphic data to fend off official challenges to *polizze*.³⁵ In the period 1382-1434, generally seen as oligarchic, with access to high office increasingly restricted to ancient families of proven political reliability, a *ricordanza* could press claims to a family's antiquity, constant participation in councils and unimpeachable Guelph credentials. In 1494, access to Florentine councils was restricted to those who could prove an ancestor among the « tre maggiori », giving further impetus to create and hold records of

29. G.B. Giuliani, *Della letteratura veronese al cadere del secolo XV*, Bologna 1876, p. 70; C. Perpolli, *L' 'Actio Panthea' e l'umanesimo veronese*, Accademia di Agricoltura, Scienze e Lettere di Verona, « Atti e memorie », ser. iv, 16 (1916), p. 99.

30. J. Easton Law, *Age qualifications and the Venetian constitution: the case of the Capello family*, « Papers of the British School at Rome », 39 (1971), pp. 129, 136.

31. A.S.Ven., Avogaria di Comun 177, is the earliest *prove d'età* register, dating from 1430; others from the Quattrocento are 169-74, 178-79. See in general S. Chojnacki, *Political Adulthood in Fifteenth-Century Venice*, « American Historical Review », 91, 4 (1986), pp. 801-7.

32. B. Cecchetti, *La donna nel Medioevo a Venezia*, « Archivio veneto », 31 (1886), pp. 46-47.

33. M. Muraro, *Il memoriale di Zuan Paolo da Ponte*, « Archivio veneto », ser. v, 44-45 (1949), pp. 77-88. For an example of mid-Cinquecento « biographical notes », see R. Palmer, *Nicolò Massa, his family and his fortune*, « Medical History », 25 (1981), p. 385.

34. A. Zorzi, *I fiorentini e gli abusi pubblici nel primo Quattrocento: concorrenza, abusi, illegalità*, « Quaderni storici », 66 (1987), pp. 732-38; F. Pezzarossa, *Introduzione* to Ugolino di Niccolò Martelli, *Ricordanze dal 1433 al 1483*, Roma 1989, p. 48.

35. Pezzarossa, *Introduzione*, pp. 48-49; V. Branca, *Introduzione* to *Mercanti scrittori. Ricordi nella Firenze tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, Milano 1986, pp. xviii-xix.

careers.³⁶ Florentine (and Lucchese) tribunals accepted memoirs as evidence in lawsuits; on the other side of the coin, Sienese *libri di ricordi* may not have been kept because they had no standing in courts.³⁷

While Veneto heads of household also felt administrative pressure to compile anagraphic information, they may have felt less pressure to preserve those records. To be sure, the Veronese and Paduan fiscal systems equally demanded the submission of *polizze* that noted the ages of family members. But since there were no fiscal rewards for full and accurate reporting of children, and the commune had no fiscal advantage in disputing family data in the *polizze*, heads of household had little incentive to retain written evidence. Further, Veneto *estimi* were frequent - compiled at nine-year intervals in Verona in the Quattrocento, at seven-year intervals in Padua³⁸ - which reduced the long-term incentive for anagraphic documentation. Once the *estimo*'s cycle was complete and a new *estimo* drawn up, there was no need to preserve old records.

Nor was proof of age for political participation much of a stimulus for recording births. Vicentine statutes set a strict threshold of eighteen years for council membership, for example, but they also allowed hereditary transmission of council seats, which made a mockery of age limits: Silvestro Arnaldi was enrolled in the Great Council at the age of five. His family had kept a *libro di ricordanza*, but hardly to prove that he had met the threshold for political eligibility. In Venice, the paternal *libri* that proved the legitimacy and sufficient ages of aspiring candidates in the *prove d'età* may have been akin to *libri di famiglia* but, again, these records had only ephemeral value after the government began to keep systematic records of noble births in the early fifteenth century.³⁹ Once its sons were inscribed on the official rolls, a family had little incentive to preserve its own anagraphic record.

A further argument for Florentine predominance proceeds from an assumption of greater Florentine practical literacy. The city's merchants, engaged in far-flung and complex business interests, kept close accounts of business affairs; as regular recorders of transactions, they naturally moved into the inscription of family affairs, particularly as these had implications for family economies (marriages, dowries, inheritances, deaths); once the family had to come to occupy a major share of their attention, they moved into inscription of ancillary material relating to the family (genealogies, moral precepts, political careers, etc.).⁴⁰ Reinforcing this accounting habit was a litany of Florentine texts, from Paolo da Certaldo, Giovanni Morelli, Leon Battista Alberti and others, which urged the merchant to write down anything that might possibly need recall in the future.⁴¹ Moreover, the theory

36. Pezzarossa, *Memorialistica fiorentina*, pp. 135-36.

37. A. Valori, *Famiglia e memoria. Luca da Panzano dal suo 'Libro di Ricordi': uno studio sulle relazioni familiari nello specchio della scrittura*, « Archivio storico italiano », clii, 2 (1994), pp. 265-66, 269, 279, 281-82; Ciappelli, *Famiglia*, p. 191; Pezzarossa, *Libri di famiglia*, p. 69; Torelli, *Libri di ricordanze*, pp. 144-51; Cherubini, *Libri di ricordanze*, pp. 577-78.

38. A. Ventura, *Nobiltà e popolo nella società veneta del '400 e '500*, Bari 1964, pp. 69-79; A. Tagliaferri, *L'economia veronese secondo gli estimi dal 1409 al 1635*, Milano 1966, p. 20.

39. For *prove d'età* registers, see above, note 31. The Avogadori di Comun after 1414 enrolled candidates for the Barbarella, after 1422 were ordered to register marriages between patrician men and women of « low status » and to investigate the mothers of men who aspired to the Great Council, and after 1430 kept registers of age-proofs of candidates for the Barbarella and positions in the fleet: S. Chojnacki, *Social identity in Renaissance Venice: the second Serrata*, « Renaissance Studies », 8, 4 (1994), esp. pp. 345-48, 351; Idem, *Marriage Legislation and Patrician Society in Fifteenth-Century Venice*, in *Law, Custom, and the Social Fabric in Medieval Europe*, ed. B.S. Bachrach and D. Nicholas, Kalamazoo 1990, p. 167; Idem, *Subaltern Patriarchs: Patrician Bachelors in Renaissance Venice*, in C.A. Lees, ed., *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages*, Minneapolis 1994, pp. 75-76, 81; legislation printed in V. Crescenzi, *Esse de Maiori Consilio: legittimità civile e legittimazione politica nella Repubblica di Venezia (secc. XIII-XVI)*, Roma 1996; 1422 legislation printed in Ch. Verlinden, *L'esclavage dans l'Europe médiévale*, ii, Ghent 1977, p. 683.

40. Pezzarossa, *Introduzione*, esp. pp. 45-47; Valori, *Famiglia e memoria*, pp. 264-65; Branca, *Introduzione to Mercanti scrittori*, pp. xv-xvi; Cherubini, *Libri di ricordanze*, pp. 576-77; Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Libri di famiglia*, i, pp. 115-16; and see works cited below, note 82.

41. Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura dei libri di famiglia*, pp. 1124-26.

goes, the quotidian registration of events was customary further down the social scale in Florence than was the case elsewhere: even artisans kept account books, and many recorded personal material as well.⁴²

This hypothesis may go far to explain why Florentines did generate *ricordanze*, but is less convincing in demonstrating why non-Florentines did not. It would be hard to demonstrate that citizens of other trading centers were less habitually literate than their Florentine counterparts. In fact, non-Florentines wrote copiously; they simply chose not to write about themselves and their families. Venetians regularly kept account books in the Quattrocento,⁴³ as did merchants and landowners from the major cities of the Veneto,⁴⁴ but few found reason to commit their families' memories to paper. Several writers in the Veneto, from the Venetian patrician Piero Giustinian to the Feltrine humanist Antonio da Romagno to the minor Veronese merchant Jacopo Guastaverza, did compile bare lists of births and deaths of immediate family members, but they did not opt to flesh these out into true *libri di famiglia*.⁴⁵ What matters for the production of family memoirs seems less the ability and frequency of writing, and more the will to transmit the memory of the lineage. Judging from the distribution of memoirs, Florentines alone possessed the impulse with some regularity, and people in the Veneto did not.

That will has been most commonly explained in terms of the development of lineage self-consciousness in Florence: *libri di famiglia* constructed the biological, moral and public identity of the patriline, supported its claims to eminence, and provided resources for the future instruction and preservation of the line.⁴⁶ At face value, this hypothesis would seem to suffer the same defects as other explanations of Florence's near-monopoly on production of *ricordanze*. Surely Venetian houses were just as proud, and the families of the Veneto equally stood in need of strategies for solidarity and perpetuation. Tangible celebrations of lineage - coats of arms, grand palaces, sumptuous tombs - are found throughout the peninsula; why should literary celebrations of lineage be concentrated in Florence?

42. A. Petrucci, *Pouvoir de l'écriture, pouvoir sur l'écriture dans la Renaissance italienne*, « Annales E.S.C. », 43, 4 (1988), pp. 831-38; Balestracci, *Memorie degli altri*; Idem, *La zappa e la retorica. Memorie familiari di un contadino toscano del Quattrocento*, Firenze 1984; F. Franceschi, *La mémoire des laboratoires à Florence au début du XV^e siècle*, « Annales E.S.C. », xlv, 5 (1990), pp. 1143-68; Cherubini, 'Libri di ricordanze', p. 578; S. Raveggi, *I testi minori*, paper presented to the conference *La memoria e la città*, Bologna-San Marino, 26/3/1993; B. Dini, *Le ricordanze di un rammendatore (1488-1538)*, « Nuova rivista storica », lxxiv, 3-4 (1990), pp. 417-44.

43. For Venetian account books, see A.S.Ven., Miscellanea Gregolin, bb. 14-15; ivi, Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia, ser. 1, Diversorum, b. 958; ivi, Procuratori di San Marco, Citra, 141; ivi, Raccolta Barbarigo-Grimani, 1-17; *Il libro dei conti di Giacomo Badoer*, ed. Umberto Dorini and Tommaso Bertelé, Roma 1956; Marciana, Ital. xi, 45 (7439). The vast fondo of A.S.Ven., Procuratori di San Marco, Commissarie, holds many account books.

44. For Padua see A.S.Pad., Archivi Privati, Selvatico-Manfredi 1558; Zacco 76-77; Negri 179-80; Obizzi 223; ivi, Ospedale di S. Francesco 1058-65, 1084. For Vicenza see A.S.Ver., Archivio Privato, Gianfilippini-Campostrini 791. For Verona see A.S.Ver., Archivi Privati, Allegrì 22/352; Malaspina cclxxii/3026 and cclxxiii/3049; Malaspina Ormaneto 3087; Carlotti 841; Morando 1271; Pompei-Guadagnini 4-5; Dionisi-Piomarta 24, 260, 1718-19, 1725, 1863, 1875. The Guastaverza, Repeta and Fracastoro *memorie* presented in this volume all derive from *catasti*, as does that of Ruggero Cortusi in Padua. The Veronese Ireco Aleardi possessed at least a dozen registers of income, expenses, debts, credits and land transactions: C. Cipolla, *Libri e mobili di casa Aleardi al principio del sec. XV*, « Archivio veneto », 24 (1882), pp. 40-42.

45. A. Carile, *La cronachistica veneziana (secoli XIII-XVI) di fronte alla spartizione della Romania nel 1204*, Firenze 1969, pp. 39-40 (Giustinian); Marciana, Z 469 (1856) (printed in R. Sabbadini, *Antonio da Romagno e Pietro Marcello*, « Nuovo archivio veneto », n.s. 30 (1915), pp. 225-26; fascimile in *Venezia e la peste 1348-1797*, Venezia 1980, p. 83) (da Romagno); Marciana, Lat. x, 359 (3708), f. 39r (Leonardo Sanudo); Verona, Biblioteca Civica, ms. 906, f. 12v (Guastaverza); Vicenza, Bertoliana, ms. 3336, f. 115r (partially printed in G. Fasolo, *Un episodio della guerra di Cambrai: Antonio Trento (1470-1515)*, « Archivio veneto », ser. 5, 13 [1933], pp. 129-30) (Giacomo Trento); R. Avesani, *Verona nel Quattrocento. La civiltà delle lettere*, in *Verona e il suo territorio*, iv, 2, Verona 1985, p. 151 (Leonardo Montagna); P.G. Mometto, *L'azienda agricola Barbarigo a Carpi*, Venezia 1992, pp. 22-23 (Nicolò Barbarigo).

46. Pezzarossa, *Introduzione*, p. 48; Ch. Klapisch-Zuber, *Invention du passé familial a Florence (XIV^e-XV^e s.)*, in *Temps, Mémoire, Tradition*, pp. 97-118; Idem and D. Herlihy, *Les toscans et leurs familles: Une étude du catasto florentin de 1427*, Paris 1978, pp. 535-37; Torelli, 'Libri di ricordanze', p. 157; Branca, *Introduzione*, pp. lvi-lvii; Valori, *Famiglia e memoria*, p. 296; F.W. Kent, *Household and Lineage in Renaissance Florence: The Family Life of the Capponi, Ginori and Rucellai*, Princeton 1977, pp. 75-76, 113-15, 272-78.

But the argument does have merit when seen in terms of the relationship of family memorialization to the political and social settings of the cities.⁴⁷ In this regard Florence does seem a different sort of place. Its historians commonly speak of a *ceto dirigente*, an oligarchy, a patriciate. However much scholars are convinced of the existence of a coherent ruling group at any one time, though, they are careful to note that the elite never received formal definition. Quattrocento lists testify to contemporaries' perception of a firm inner circle, and modern prosopography can establish its contours with some precision,⁴⁸ but the fact remains that it lacked explicit criteria for inclusion, at least in political terms.

This situation had profound implications for memorialization. With upper ranks unfixed, no Florentine, no matter how ancient and distinguished his family's past, could find firm identity within a collective leadership. Family pride could not be anchored in a wider network: the patriline alone could serve as the object of memory. The *libro di famiglia*, in consequence, inscribed the unilineal family's resources for assertion and survival. Among them, to be sure, were links with affines, lateral kin, allies, clients and patrons, and these were well-documented. But primary attention was always focused upon the immediate family, because no greater allegiance could long be maintained. The patriline could only rely upon its own record of antiquity and status.⁴⁹

It may indeed have been the case that social mobility was eventually curbed, that Florence had indeed generated a « rigid oligarchy » by the fifteenth century. But that thesis hardly alters the argument. In an increasingly exclusivist society, both insiders and aspirants had to demonstrate the antiquity and traditional loyalty of their families, their good blood and sufficient patrimony, since there was no indelible criterion - such as hereditary nobility or fixed council membership - for inclusion. But each family, whether in power or seeking power, had to make its claims on an individual basis. As a consequence, Florentines wrote single-family, atomized *ricordanze*.

The situation was rather different in the Veneto, both as regards traditions of prominence and as regards traditions for transmitting family memory. In very general terms, northern Italian elites were more stable and formalized, and memorialization emphasized the collective elite rather than the individual family. The patriciate of Venice, most notably, was fixed by the first quarter of the fourteenth century, and scarcely changed its membership thereafter. On the mainland, to be sure, elites were never formalized to that degree. Still, the major cities of the region all moved towards more restricted access to municipal councils. The Trevisan nobility had corporate identity, with statutes and *matricole*, and received a guaranteed share of high civic office.⁵⁰ Vicentine councils were in theory closed after 1311, when statutes reserved seats for those currently holding office, their heirs and assigns; the city kept a sort of « golden book » officially enrolling council members.⁵¹

47. The following argument develops the suggestions of E. Sestan, *La famiglia nella società del Quattrocento*, in *Convegno internazionale indetto nel V centenario di Leon Battista Alberti*, Roma 1974, pp. 236-37; and J.K. Hyde, *Some Uses of Literacy in Venice and Florence in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, « Transactions of the Royal Historical Society », ser. v, 29 (1979), pp. 124-27.

48. A. Molho, *Marriage Alliance in Late Medieval Florence*, Cambridge and London 1994, ch. 5 (and pp. 198-201, 207-8); other lists in R. Bizzocchi, *Struttura familiare e memoria storica*, in *Palazzo Strozzi metà millennio 1489-1989*, Roma 1992, pp. 98-99; Dale Kent, *The Florentine Reggimento in the Fifteenth Century*, « Renaissance Quarterly », xxviii (1975), pp. 576, 590; see also A. Molho, R. Barducci, G. Battista, F. Donnini, *Genealogia e parentado. Memorie del potere nella Firenze tardo medievale. Il caso di Giovanni Rucellai*, « Quaderni storici », 86 (1994), pp. 371-97 (list of 1476).

49. On *ricordi* as responses to social uncertainty and precarity of status, especially useful for new families, see Valori, *Famiglia e memoria*, p. 268. Pandimiglio and Irace seek to connect *libri di famiglia* strictly to the *oligarchia di potere*; the thesis is somewhat belied by the considerable quantity of memoirs produced by lesser folk (cited above, note 42): Pandimiglio, *Libro di famiglia e storia del patriziato fiorentino. Prime ricerche*, in *Palazzo Strozzi*, cit., pp. 138-39; E. Irace, *La memoria formalizzata: dai libri di famiglia alle prove di nobiltà per gli Ordini cavallereschi*, in *La memoria e la città*, p. 77.

50. B. Betto, *Il collegio dei notai, dei giudici, dei medici e dei nobili in Treviso (secc. XIII-XIV)*, Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Venetie, *Miscellanea di studi e memorie* 19, Venezia 1981, ch. iv; L. Pesce, *Vita socio-culturale in diocesi di Treviso nel primo Quattrocento*, Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Venetie, *Miscellanea di studi e memorie* 21, Venezia 1983, ch. iii, 1; Ventura, *Nobiltà e popolo*, ch. iii, 3.

51. J.S. Grubb, *Firstborn of Venice: Vicenza in the Early Renaissance State*, Baltimore and London 1988, pp. 76-79; G.M. Varanini, *Vicenza nel Trecento. Istituzioni, classe dirigente, economia*, in *Storia di Vicenza*, ii, ed. G. Cracco, Vicenza 1988, p. 184; and see *Ius municipale vicentinum*, Venezia 1567, ff. 11r-v.

In Verona, the councils of Fifty and Seventy-two elected each others' members, and the majority of councilors simply moved from one to the other in alternate years.⁵² Paduan statutes of the Trecento had reserved half of upper council seats for nobles; that privilege disappeared under Venetian rule, but a 1430 reform that allowed the council to elect its successor gave municipal government a « netta impronta oligarchica », with a restricted number of case dominating office holding through informal cooperation.⁵³

Throughout the region, too, traditionally prominent families might suffer normal attrition or extinction, but elites as a whole never suffered the brusque disruptions characteristic of Florence. Varanini has noted the « assenza . . . di quelle aspre lotte di fazioni » that embroiled Lombard cities. Changes of regime had relatively mild consequences: the Scaligeri and Carraresi seldom eliminated older elite families except in cases of outright rebellion. Indeed, they preferred to recruit eminent families into their administrations. The old magnate houses of Padua, excluded from power in the heyday of the guild-dominated commune, actually made something of a comeback in the signorial period. The Visconti (after 1387) and the Venetian (after 1404) dominions proved relatively accommodating towards their new subjects and never engaged in mass proscription. Rebels were still treated harshly, but protest soon faded, and in the normal course of events the Venetian Republic ruled through local elites rather than replacing them with centrally-appointed functionaries.⁵⁴ Thus while the political classes of the mainland were consistently permeable, they also displayed substantial continuity of membership.

More to the point, a significant body of memorialistic writing both presupposed and reinforced identifiable political classes. The collective, prosopographic family chronicle was particularly highly developed in Padua. Best known is the *De generatione aliquorum civium Padue tam nobilium quam ignobilium* of Giovanni da Nono (ca. 1318), which listed the origins, chief representatives, palaces and coats of arms of over a hundred of Padua's notable houses. But the *De generatione* is only the most famous of a large body of works with approximately the same format and intention. Da Nono himself quoted from Zambono d'Andrea's chronicle-poem *De domibus insignibus Patavie* (before 1315), which likewise assembled the city's worthies into a group account. Giovanni Francesco Capodilista, drawing up the history of his family around 1434, cited group histories by Giacomo Ardenghi (1168), the chancellor Ziliolo (1196), Antonio d'Alessio (1258) and Lazaro Malrotondi (late fourteenth century), as well as a *De moribus et familiis Patavinorum* and three separate works that shared the title *De domibus Paduanorum*. A text of 1335, later titled (erroneously) the Favafuschi chronicle, celebrated the progenitors, arms and living members of around fifty families. Like the *De generatione* it is known from several versions, and was evidently nearly as popular.⁵⁵

52. G.M. Varanini, *Note sui consigli civici veronesi (secoli XIV-XV)*. In *marginale ad uno studio di J. E. Law*, « Archivio veneto », ser. v, 147 (1979), pp. 5-32; J. Easton Law, *Venice and the 'Closing' of the Veronese Constitution in 1405*, « Studi veneziani », n.s. i (1977), pp. 69-103.

53. Ventura, *Nobiltà e popolo*, pp. 52-92 (quote from p. 60).

54. B.G. Kohl, *Government and society in Renaissance Padua*, « The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies », ii, 2 (1972), pp. 207-11; Ventura, *Nobiltà e popolo*, ch. i; G.M. Varanini, *Comuni cittadini e stato regionale*, Verona 1992, pp. xlvi-xlvii; Idem, *Verona nei primi decenni del Quattrocento: la famiglia Pellegrini e Pisanello*, in *Pisanello*, ed. P. Marini, Milano 1996, pp. 24-29, 31-33; Idem, *La classe dirigente veronese e la congiura di Fregnano della Scala (1354)*, « Studi storici Luigi Simeoni », xxiv (1984), pp. 9-66; Idem, *Gli Scaligeri, il ceto dirigente veronese, l'élite 'internazionale'*, in Idem, ed., *Gli Scaligeri 1277-1387*, Verona 1988, pp. 113-24.

55. G. Fabris, *La cronaca di Giovanni da Nono*, Padova 1940; S. Collodo, *Genealogia e politica in una anonima cronachetta del primo Trecento*, in *Una società in trasformazione: Padova tra XI e XV secolo*, Padova 1990; J.K. Hyde, *Italian Social Chronicles in the Middle Ages*, « Bulletin of the John Rylands Library », 49, 1 (1966), pp. 107-32; Idem, *Padua in the Age of Dante*, Manchester 1966, pp. 6, 57, 64-68, 285-86; G.F. Capodilista, *De viris illustribus familiae Transelgardorum Forzatà et Capitae Listae: Codice BP 954 della Biblioteca Civica di Padova*, ed. Mario Salmi and Mirella Blason Berton, Roma 1972, ff. 4r-5r; V. Lazzarini, *Un antico elenco di fonti storiche padovane*, in *Scritti di paleografia e diplomatica*, second edition, Padova 1969, pp. 284-98.

In the Quattrocento several other such works, generally imitations or paraphrases or translations or reworkings of da Nono, circulated under the names of Giovanni Basile, Antonio Cartolari, Solimano de' Solimani and Pietro Borrromeo.⁵⁶ The authenticity of these authors is doubtful, but that is not the point: the popularity of the type is beyond question. If we tally the number of their manuscripts along with those of the *De generatione* and the pseudo-Favafuschi chronicle, the collective family chronicle is represented by more exemplars than all other sorts of historical writing put together.⁵⁷ Paduans, it will be recalled, scarcely wrote individualized *libri di famiglia*. Preferring the aggregate prosopographical chronicle, they chose collective exaltation of the ruling group rather than separate examination of their own families.

Nor were Paduans alone in a desire to memorialize families *en masse*. Verona and Vicenza produced several lists of notable houses, with cursory notes on origins and juridical-social status; examples date from the early thirteenth century and extend through a short list of Veronese *zentilhomini et optimi zitadini* in 1478 and a longer list of Veronese *nobiles* from the early Cinquecento. The Vicentine Battista Pagliarini, at the end of the Quattrocento, compiled biographies of some 416 extinct and 271 extant families, and his work was highly popular in the next century.⁵⁸

Nearby, the Mantuan Andrea Schivenoglia gathered descriptions of several hundred fellow-citizens, with information on occupations, addresses, wealth and characters, and the Ferrarese Ugo Caleffini provided lists of Ferrarese *gentiluomini*.⁵⁹ The « social chronicle » genre of Padua, in fact, was « paralleled in at least a score of cities » in northern and central Italy.⁶⁰

The other center of collective family memorialization was Venice. Extremely common are the chronicles sometimes given the title of *caxade de Venexia*, which offer brief sketches of all the city's noble clans with information on families' origins, current residence, illustrious representatives and heraldry.⁶¹ These testify to Venetians' tendency to subsume any one family's history into that of the overall ruling group. In turn, that aggregate memorialization reflects a fundamental self-perception of the Venetian patriciate: individual patricians held status and identity only insofar as they participated in a collected aristocracy. Indeed, the noble family scarcely existed apart from the charmed circle of the nobility, and certainly could claim no public standing outside it.

56. Fabris, *Cronaca*, pp. 4-6; R. Fulin, *Appunti di bibliografia storica veneta contenuta nei mss. dell'Ambrosiana*, «Archivio veneto», 5 (1875), p. 428.

57. The most accessible manuscripts include: Padova, Biblioteca del Museo Civico, BP 149, BP 803, BP 860, BP 1151, BP 1591, BP 1860, BP 1239; Padova, Biblioteca Universitaria, mss. 55, 65, 232, 1667, 2257; Marciana, Lat. x, 348 (3260); *ivi*, Lat. x, 69 (3131); *ivi*, Lat. xiv, 284 (4300); *ivi*, Ital. xi, 120 (6931); Padova, Biblioteca del Seminario, ms. 56 (« Cronica . . . mcccxl »).

58. Battista Pagliarini, *Cronicae*, ed. James S. Grubb, « Fonti per la Storia della Terraferma Veneta », 5, Padova 1990, chs. v-vi; his notices are often based on a lost list of 1222 (cf. pp. 50, 330, 333). For Vicenza see also the *Cronaca di Ezzelino* (1213), printed in G. Mantese, *Memorie storiche della chiesa vicentina*, ii, Vicenza 1954, pp. 538-39; fourteenth century lists appended to *Cronaca di Antonio Godi vicentino*, ed. Giovanni Soranzo, Città di Castello 1909, pp. 20-26. For Verona see C. Cipolla, *La relazione di Giorgio Sommariva sullo stato di Verona e del veronese (1478)*, « Nuovo archivio veneto », vi (1893), pp. 176-77, 193-94; Petrus Donatus Advogarius, *De viris illustribus veronensibus*, Verona 148690 (copy in Marciana, Inc. 1015.35). See also the *de viris illustribus* of the Paduan Michele Savonarola: *Libellus de magnificis ornamentis regia civitatis Padue*, ed. Arnaldo Segarizzi, Città di Castello 1902, ch. 3.

59. Lazzarini, *Gerarchie sociali*, pp. 25-26, 110-21, 149-66; Pardi, *Diario di Ugo Caleffini*, pp. 90-94.

60. Hyde, *Italian Social Chronicles*, pp. 123-31 (quote on p. 123).

61. The genre dates back at least to the twelfth century, and probably further back: G. Rosch, *Der venezianische Adel bis zur Schliessung des Grossen Rats: Zur Genese einer Führungsschicht*, Sigmaringen 1989, pp. 17-34; early examples in *Origo civitatum Italie seu Venetiarum (Chronicon Altinate et Chronicon Gradense)*, ed. Roberto Cessi, Roma 1933, pp. xxxxxxi, 46-47, 142-60; *Venetiarum historia vulgo Petro Iustiniano Iustiniani filio adjudicata*, ed. Roberto Cessi and Fanny Bennato, Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, *Monumenti Storici*, n.s. 18, Venezia 1964, pp. 255-76. Quattrocento examples are: Marciana, Ital. vii, 48 (7143), 52 (7604), 186 (7654), 2034 (8834), 2214 (8228), 2559 (12451), 2569 (12461); Marciana, Latin xiv, 9 (4267), ff. 87r-92r; A.S.Ven., Codici Papadopoli 2, 8; *ivi*, *Miscellanea Codici*, *Storia Veneta*, 36, 42/i, 55, 61. There are myriad Cinquecento examples in the Marciana and the A.S.Ven.; and see works cited in Carile, *Cronachistica veneziana* pp. 14-15, 22, 53, 96-97, 99.

Venetian nobles found, then, a strong disincentive to transmit memory in an account of the single family, which would only emphasize the specific experience of the lineage and create a separate place for it: writing a *ricordanza* would distance the family from the all-important collegial matrix.⁶² A few Venetians might have been inclined to write accounts of their immediate families, but none were inclined to preserve them. In any case, as noted above, the government had increasingly taken over the task of keeping records on births and marriages and offices, which reduced any impetus for individual families to compile or preserve records of their own.

Since throughout the Veneto the work of family memorialization was assumed by the group biography or the public record, there was less incentive to write the stories of individual families. It is surely no accident that Padua and Venice, centers of prosopographic family history, produced the fewest *libri di famiglia*. The preference for aggregate over individual accounts is evident in Vicenza as well, to judge by the popularity of Pagliarini's *Cronicae*⁶³ and by the fact that none of the city's great *case* produced memoirs or self-standing histories. Whether or not this pattern is applicable for other cities in the region must remain an open question; it can at least be noted that Verona, where the collective chronicle genre was least developed, produced the lion's share of the Veneto's *ricordanze*.

In Italy at large, it might be similarly suggested that wherever (as in the Veneto) the collective, prosopographical approach to memorialization was dominant, reflecting contemporaries' perception of coherent elites, the production of memoirs was stunted; conversely, wherever (as in Florence) collective memorialization was weaker, reflecting relatively diffuse elites, single-family *ricordanze* were the norm. Putting the thesis in slightly different terms, Alberto Tenenti has suggested that *libri di famiglia* enjoyed a richer tradition where the state was weak (Florence) than where the authority of the state (Venice) or the *signore* (Milan) was stronger.⁶⁴ It is true that efforts to correlate patterns of memorialization with local political-social situations are scarcely underway outside the Veneto and Florence, and it is not certain if this pattern holds true for other regions as well. At best it can be said that where the ranks of elites were fixed in aggregate writing, *ricordanze* are scarce. Siena, where the leading families were grouped into five *monti*, produced only a handful of *libri di famiglie*.⁶⁵ Genoa, where leading families were incorporated into collective *alberghi*, and laws of 1363 and 1413 ordered the vicedoge to compile lists of *alberghi* members, produced but one.⁶⁶ Bolognese ordinances of 1454 ordered the compilation of registers of births, deaths and marriages, and Lucchese law required registration of marriages;⁶⁷ neither city produced many memoirs.

Milan offers a final piece of corroboration. Public rolls of noble houses possessing the exclusive right to place sons on the metropolitan chapter date from 1377 (antecedent *matricole* existed a century before). By the logic of the 1377 *matricola*, that is, Milanese notables founded their claims to eminence upon membership in a corporate aristocracy that was identified in a publicly held document. The antiquity and legitimacy of noble houses was part of the public record and the public memory;⁶⁸ they found little impetus to keep

62. Hyde, *Uses of Literacy*, pp. 124-26; Grubb, *Memory and identity*.

63. G. Zanato, *Ricerche per una edizione critica della cronaca vicentina di G.B. Pagliarini (1415-1506)*, Vicenza 1979, pp. 44-90, citing some twenty-eight manuscripts of 16th-17th centuries.

64. *L'ideologia della famiglia fiorentina nel Quattro e Cinquecento*, in *La famiglia e la vita quotidiana in Europa dal '400 al '600*, Roma 1986, p. 98.

65. D.L. Hicks, *Sienese Society in the Renaissance*, « Comparative Studies in Society and History », ii (1959-60), pp. 413-16; Sestan, *Famiglia*, p. 237.

66. E. Grendi, *Profilo storico degli alberghi genovesi*, in M.E.F.R.E.M., 87, 1 (1975), pp. 241-302; Idem, *Le società dei giovani a Genova fra il 1460 e la riforma del 1528*, « Quaderni storici », 80 (1992), esp. pp. 513-14; A. Pacini, *La tirannia delle fazioni e la repubblica dei ceti. Vita politica e istituzioni a Genova tra Quattrocento e Cinquecento*, « Annali dell'Istituto Italo-Germanico in Trento », 18 (1992), pp. 70-71.

67. F. Brandileone, *L'intervento dello stato nella celebrazione del matrimonio in Italia prima del Concilio di Trento*, in Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, *Rendiconti*, 1910, pp. 324-26.

68. L. Besozzi, *La 'matricola' delle famiglie nobili di Milano e Carlo Borromeo*, « Archivio storico lombardo », ser. xi, 1 (1984), esp. pp. 277, 279, 285; G. Vismara, *Le istituzioni del patriziato*, in *Storia di Milano*, xi, Milano 1958, pp. 226-27; F. Calvi, *Il patriziato milanese*, « Archivio storico lombardo », 1 (1874), pp. 136-37.

their own accounts. The sole Quattrocento Milanese *memoria* derives from a newly -arrived family - the Simonetta were not inscribed in the *matricola* - and, conversely, no traditionally powerful family is known to have left a *ricordanza*.

But perhaps in this regard Florence was not idiosyncratic, merely out of synchronization. By the middle of the Cinquecento, Florentine notables were firmly established as noble, and were inscribed as such in documents such as the *matricole* of neochivalric orders, lists of *casati fiorentini* and proofs of nobility. They were also now equipped with alternative genres for memorialization, such as biography, autobiography, genealogy and history. Precisely at that point, their production of *ricordanze* fell off sharply.⁶⁹

The preference for collective family history in the Veneto did not completely impede compilation of *libri di famiglia*: the texts printed here demonstrate that a few brave souls did oppose the prevailing trend and write *memorie* of themselves and their families. But they are the exceptions that prove the rule. Known *libri di famiglie* derive almost exclusively from writers whose case were not, at the time of writing, participants in local elites. Unable to claim identity and status from membership in an aggregated leadership, their families not mentioned in prosopographic chronicles, these men fell back upon their own lineages and their own memories. The lead example is that of Venice, where the only extant early memoir comes from the Freschi: these were *cittadini orginari*, non-noble and without hope for entry into the nobility. When they achieved semiheditary positions in high magistracies and formed close alliances with patricians, they understandably grew in pride and lineage self-consciousness, but they had to write their own story because neither *caxade* chronicles nor public rolls - reserved for the patriciate - would inscribe memory for them. Their book is as much an acknowledgment of exclusion as a statement of new-found status.

So, too, on the mainland the writers of *ricordanze* were not wholly obscure, but most came from families that were new and/or undistinguished in the past. There are two strong exceptions, to be sure: Verona's Verità family was very old, very rich, and continually occupied the highest civic offices,⁷⁰ and Aventino Fracastoro, ancestor of the memorialist Bernardino, was both a celebrated doctor and a major investor in the silk trade.⁷¹ But the families of the other memorialists were of a rather different sort. Vicenza's Arnaldi had been minor notaries and makers of shoes - they bore the surname *Soleri* well into the Quattrocento - and are not known to have sat on municipal councils with any regularity. The Ferramosca too were notaries and cloth merchants.⁷² At the time Manfredo Repeta composed his *catasto*, the family was resident in the countryside, declining in wealth and numbers, politically a nonentity and socially tainted by the violent crimes of cousins.⁷³ Giacomo Trento, author of a list of *nascite*, was a distinguished jurist and ambassador,

69. Mordenti, *Scrittura della memoria*; Irace, *Memoria formalizzata*; Pandimiglio, *Libro di famiglia*, pp. 145, 151; Bizzocchi, *Strutture familiare*, p. 101.

70. Bartolomeo Verità, for example, was factor and procurator to Beatrice da Coreggio in the mid-Trecento: G. Barbieri, *Economia, finanza e tenore di vita nella Verona scaligera*, in *Gli Scaligeri*, p. 333; M. Lecce, *Mutui commerciali a Verona nel Trecento*, in *Ricerche di storia economica medioevale e moderna*, Verona 1975, pp. 270-71; E. Rossini and M. Mazzaoui, *La lana come materia prima nel veneto sud-occidentale (secc. XIII-XV)*, in *La lana come materia prima*, ed. M. Spallanzani, Firenze 1974, pp. 191-92. He was also a wool-merchant trading with the great Covoni company of Florence, and a Scaligeri official: A. Saporì, *Libro giallo della compagnia dei Covoni*, Milano 1970, pp. 81, 281; Varanini, *Vicenza nel Trecento*, p. 189. In the Quattrocento various Verità were frequently elected to councils and high office: A.S.Ver., Antico Archivio del Comune, regs. 56-68, 139-41, 145-53, 166; Verona, Biblioteca Civica, ms. 894; A. Cartolari, *Famiglie già ascritte al nobile consiglio di Verona*, Verona 1854; reprint Bologna 1969, pp. 269-72.

71. Barbieri, *Economia*, pp. 333-34, 339; F. Scarcella, *Medici e medicina a Verona in età scaligera*, in *Gli Scaligeri*, pp. 522-23; F. Petropoli, *Aventino Fracastoro, medico: la decorazione pittorica della tomba*, in *ibid.*, pp. 545-47; M. Lecce, *Una società per la lavorazione e il commercio della seta a Verona nel Trecento*, in *Ricerche di storia economica*, p. 281. For their elections to councils in the Quattrocento see Verona, Biblioteca Civica, ms. 894; Cartolari, *Famiglie*, pp. 97-99.

72. Repeta, f. 42r; Bertoliana, Gonzati 309 (*matricole* of cloth merchants), 535 (*matricole* of notaries).

73. Pagliarini commented that previous Repeta « praestantiores olim in ea [Vicenza] cives fuere quam nunc et audatiores ac magis locupletes »: *Cronicae*, p. 336. On the misdeeds of his kinsmen, see below, Repeta, ff. 97v, 131v.

but his family had only resided in Vicenza for two generations.⁷⁴ Padua's Ruggero Cortusi, to judge from his book, was a modest rentier and merchant. Verona's Stoppa had just arrived in the city, from the area around Como. The de' Bovi were not *di rilievo* in political or administrative circles.⁷⁵ The Muronovo - notaries in the Trecento⁷⁶ - did not sit on municipal councils in the Quattrocento. Judging from his account book, Jacopo Guastaverza was a minor cloth merchant.⁷⁷ None of these Veronese families appear in the 1478 and Cinquecento lists of noble houses, nor in early lists of notables.⁷⁸

If these writers were distinctly on the lower levels of civic hierarchies, they were moving towards entry into the upper ranks. Andrea Arnaldi, Manfredo Repeta, Bonaventura de' Bovi, Cardino Feramosca and the sons of Alvise Stoppa entered municipal councils, amassed considerable fortunes and married their children into the best old families. Increasingly conscious of their upward mobility and their potential claims to eminence, they were increasingly inclined to self-assertion. Like the Freschi in Venice, they wished (or needed) to fix the memory of the family present and past - but they had not yet entered into the common memory of the collective family chronicle. So they wrote their own accounts, perhaps to provide further credentials for eventual assimilation into the elite.

The subsequent histories of these families gives further weight to the thesis that only those aspiring to - but not yet part of - established Veneto patriciates were likely to leave *memorie*. By the end of the chronological span covered in the *libri di famiglia*, it is evident that the families had acquired prominence, at least in terms of consistent council participation and prominent marriages. They could then, by about the turn of the Cinquecento, share in the collective patrimony of civic memory: the Arnaldi, Repeta and Feramosca, for example, received prominent places in the sixth chapter (« de nobilibus nostrae civitatis familiis ») of Pagliarini's *Cronicae*.⁷⁹ At that point, since they had found firm places in the top group and its aggregate history, they stopped writing the histories of their own families.

The *memorie* end precisely at the moment when writers' families were admitted to the top ranks. They could afford to abandon their bygone concentration on the immediate lineage because they had secured a more prestigious identity within the collectively memorialized patriciate. Emblematic is the Arnaldi *liber*. The first major figure in the line, the modestly-born Andrea, steadily recorded marriages, births and deaths while he made a fortune and secured a hereditary council seat. Brother Tommaso and nephew Gaspare, moderately eminent, continued the memoir, though only sporadically. But son Silvestro only once took up the pen. Retired from trade and the notariate, universally styled *nobilis* and married to a daughter of the mighty da Poiana house - and, not coincidentally, living long enough to see his family given a good place in Pagliarini's compendium of nobility - he could share in the lustre of aristocratic colleagues and chose not to continue the record of his own house.

74. Bertoliana, ms. 3336, f. 115r; Pagliarini, *Cronicae*, p. 339; Fasolo, *Episodio*, p. 129. He appears constantly in municipal records of the later Quattrocento: Bertoliana, Arch. Torre 59, 61-62.

75. Varanini, *Classe dirigente veronese*, p. 46. They were, however, elected to councils with some frequency: Cartolari, *Famiglie*, pp. 33-34.

76. Lecce, *Mutui commerciali*, pp. 275-77.

77. Verona, Biblioteca Comunale, ms. 906; cf. G.M. Varanini, *Le campagne veronesi del '400 fra tradizione e innovazione*, in *Uomini e civiltà agraria in territorio veronese*, Verona 1982, pp. 245-46. One Guastaverza was once elected to councils: Cartolari, *Famiglie*, p. 113.

78. See A. Castagnetti, *La società veronese nel Medioevo*, ii, *Ceti e famiglie dominanti nella prima età comunale*, Verona 1987; and works cited in note 58 above.

79. Pagliarini listed Vicenza's 271 « noble families » in order of descending importance, from the mighty Loschi to the Cogonegri « imae conditionis ». Of the families that produced *ricordanze*, the Ferramosca and Repeta ranked 25th and 26th (91st percentile), the Arnaldi 36th (87th percentile).

2. Form and Content

Veronese and Vicentine *memorie* consistently resemble their Florentine counterparts in a single regard. Their anagraphic entries, especially the lists of *nascite* that offer detailed information on the date and time of birth, the choice of name, the date and place of baptism, and the godparents and attendants, are so similar to those of Tuscany - and Feltre, Padua, Venice, Genoa, Perugia, Bologna, Forlì and west-central France - as to suggest that there circulated uniform models throughout Italy or even Europe as a whole.⁸⁰ In other formal and substantive respects, however, the Veneto texts are at variance with the better-known Florentine examples. If the study of *libri di famiglia* is to be extended from Florence to the peninsula as a whole, the apparent eccentricity of Veneto memoirs demands one of two responses: either these works must be excluded from a narrowly-defined canon, or else the overall typology of the genre must be broadened to encompass the texts of the northeast.

Few of the Veneto texts are found as autonomous, free-standing works.⁸¹ The rest are hybrids, of two sorts. In the first case, family notices intermingle with, and are quantitatively inferior to, records of land and business management. The texts of Manfredo Repeta and Ruggero Cortusi began as inventories of lands divided with kinsmen; they then added personal and family notices as an incidental - albeit growing - afterthought. The Stoppa text is a short preface to a volume of patrimony-related documents; that of the Fracastoro is a postscript to a patrimonial administration book or *catasto*.

This stands at odds with the general perception of the Florentine *libro di famiglia*. Several scholars, for example, have adopted a developmental model starting with the commercial account book of the Dugento. Merchants increasingly noted the circumstances of debts and credits, then the domestic events (marriages and inheritances) that produced movements of money and property. Their successors began to sketch the personalities involved, then with growing frequency recorded political and civil events, moral admonitions and *exempla*, genealogies and anagraphic material. In time, the family material was so large in volume and distinct in content from the original commercial matrix as to warrant a separate register. By the later Trecento, the account book proper and the *libro di famiglia* had acquired distinct concentrations and constituted different genres. The « mature » or « advanced » memoir served primarily as a repository of information about the lineage in its biological, social and moral aspects, and would largely ignore land transactions in favor of a more « literary » treatment of the family.⁸²

That model would relegate the Veneto texts of the Quattrocento - which lump together debts and credits, family notices and land accounts in unspecialized and undifferentiated works - to the level of the « archaic » and « elementary »;⁸³ or perhaps they are not true *libri di famiglie* at all. Perhaps the region was indeed provincial and backwards. But the Veneto texts, deliberately combining the personal and the patrimonial, at least raise the issue of how far the model of the bifurcation of the account book and the true *cronaca domestica* ought to be pushed. There are strong empirical objections to an overly schematic approach.

80. On the formula of *nascite* notices, see Ch. Bec, *Introduction* to Lapo Niccolini, *Libro degli affari proprii di casa*, Paris 1969, p. 24; A. Petrucci, *Introduzione* to *Il libro di ricordanze dei Corsini (1362-1457)*, Roma 1965, p. lxxvii; Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura dei libri di famiglia*, p. 1119.

81. The single exception is that of Bartolomeo de' Bovi. The Arnaldi and Freschi texts survive as autonomous works, but the manuscripts are Cinquecento copies and seem to have been compiled from earlier texts.

82. Ciappelli, *Famiglia*, pp. 183-84; L. Pandimiglio, *Ricordanza e libri di famiglia. Il manifestarsi di una nuova fonte*, « Lettere italiane », xxxix, 1 (1987), pp. 3-19; Idem, *Le origini del libro di famiglia*, in P. Delogu, ed., *Periodi e contenuti nel Medio Evo*, Roma 1988, pp. 190-92; Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura*, pp. 1123-28, 1140, 1144; Pezzarossa, *Memorialistica*, p. 109, 119-20 (though see his criticisms of Branca's evolutionary model on p. 110); Idem, *Introduzione* to Ugolino di Niccolò Martelli, *Ricordanze dal 1433 al 1483*, Roma 1989, p. 50; Branca, *Introduzione*, pp. xiv ff (and cf. xvi on the distinction between *ragion di mercatura* and *ragion di famiglia*); Idem, *Ricordi domestici nel Trecento e nel Quattrocento*, in *Dizionario critico della letteratura italiana*, iii, Torino 1973, p. 189; Charles M. de la Roncière, *Un changeur florentin du Trecento: Lippo di Fede del Sega (1285 env.-1363 env.)*, Paris 1973, pp. 11-14; Petrucci, *Introduzione*, esp. pp. lxii-lxiii; R. Mordenti, *La famiglia e le donne nel Rinascimento fiorentino*, « Quaderni storici », 71 (1989), pp. 638-39; M. Guglielminetti, *Memoria e scrittura*, Torino 1977, p. 253.

83. The terms are used by Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura*, pp. 1150-55; Ch. Bec, *Les marchands écrivains: affaires et humanisme à Florence 1375-1434*, Paris-The Hague 1967, p. 51; de la Roncière, *Changeur florentin*, p. 19.

First, literary historians have concentrated on upper-end works of unusual length, complexity and polish, especially the *ricordi* of Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli, Buonaccorso Pitti, Gregorio Dati, Donato Velluti and Francesco Guicciardini. This selection generates a self-fulfilling definition, since the texts considered are already those distinguished by their « autonomous physiognomy », « more elaborated » narrative⁸⁴ and high degree of literary sophistication. But the typology then limits the field of inquiry to a few self-consciously literary works, and excludes the more mundane texts that constitute the great majority of production. If the focus is shifted to more humble texts, which frequently mingle family notices and moral commentary with accounts of land management, bifurcation might appear less absolute; and the Veneto texts might appear more conventional.

Most Tuscan works, in fact, retained strong residual traces of the account or management book into the Quattrocento and beyond. This was stressed by Philip Jones in an early study of Florentine examples: their content, he noted, was usually heterogeneous, but always «business and financial memoranda are normally present if not predominant in *ricordanze*».⁸⁵ Charles de la Roncière went a step farther, asserting that entries on loans, transactions and patrimony « constituent le partie principal » of memoirs; Anna Benvenuti Papi notes the « disomogenea morfologia dei libri di ricordanze domestiche ».⁸⁶ This is, in fact, the case even for many of the more famous Florentine texts: Niccolini's *Libro degli affari proprii*,⁸⁷ Goro Dati's *Libro segreto*,⁸⁸ Biagio Buonaccorsi's *Ricordi*,⁸⁹ and Alessandra Macchinghi Strozzi's unedited memoir.⁹⁰ Filigno de' Medici's *Libro di memorie* consists largely of extracts of patrimonial documents.⁹¹ A recent editor notes the «prevalenza» of financial records in Francesco Castellani's *Ricordanze*.⁹² This mixed quality is characteristic outside Florence as well, in the texts of the Siense Cristofano Guidino and Simo d'Ubertino d'Arezzo, several Lucchesi, the Bolognese Cesare Nappi and the da Sala, and some French *livres de raison*.⁹³

Moreover, it is widely acknowledged that editors in the Settecento and Ottocento (and several modern editors) severely truncated their manuscripts, giving the misleading impression of self-standing memoirs.⁹⁴ Only rarely have these mutilated texts been re-edited according to more inclusive critical standards, and thus it is usually impossible to know what the older editions left out. In all probability, early editors were concerned less with the routine details of business and land transactions than with the search for data on domestic and political life, and so excised that which did not pertain to family and community. This is certainly the case, for example, when the Repeta text printed here is

84. Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura*, pp. 1144, 1150-55.

85. P.J. Jones, *Florentine Families and Florentine Diaries in the Fourteenth Century*, « Papers of the British School at Rome », 24 (1956), p. 183.

86. de la Roncière, *Changeur florentin*, p. 224; A. Benvenuti Papi, *La famiglia e le donne nel Rinascimento fiorentino*, « Quaderni storici », 71 (1989), p. 647.

87. Cf. Bec's *Introduction*, p. 67; Idem, *Marchands écrivains*, p. 50.

88. His expressed intention was to write both « menzione di nostri fatti » and the « fatti segreti » of his company: ed. Leonida Pandimiglio, « Bolletino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano », 92 (1985), pp. 11, 16 ff.

89. D. Fachard, *Biagio Buonaccorsi: sa vie, son temps, son oeuvre*, Bologna 1976, pp. 171-223.

90. Cherubini, *Libri di ricordanze*, p. 582. See also Martelli's *Ricordanze* (cited in note 34); F. Allegranza, *Un secolo di scrittura: il libro di ricordanze dei Corsini*, « Bulletin dell'Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo e Archivio muratoriano », 92 (1985-86), pp. 223-94; and *Licordanze di Giovanni Chellini di S. Miniato medico mercante e umanista (1425-1457)*, ed. M.T. Sillano, Milano 1984, where there are scarcely a dozen notices in which expenses do not figure.

91. *Libro di memorie di Filigno de' Medici*, ed. Giovanni Biondi de' Medici Tornaquinci, Firenze 1981.

92. Ciappelli, *Introduzione* to Castellani's *Ricordanze I*, p. 39; see also Francesco di Matteo Castellani, *Ricordanze II: Quaternuccio egimale B (1459-1485)*, ed. G. Ciappelli, Firenze 1995.

93. Frati, *Ricordanze domestiche*, p. 372; Cherubini, *Libri di ricordanze*, pp. 579-83; Idem, *Dal libro di ricordi*, pp. 395 ff; Idem, *Proprietà fondiaria*, pp. 313-14; Ortalli, *Notariato e storiografia*, pp. 180-81; Torelli, *Libri di ricordanze*, pp. 123, 131-33, 155; Frati, *Notaio poeta bolognese*, p. 27; Tugnoli Aprile, *Patrimonio*, pp. 13-14 and chs. 2-3; Idem, *Libri di famiglia*; Guibert, *Livre de raison*, pp. 299-312; Coulet, *Livre de raison* The normalcy of patrimonial data is stressed in Mordenti, *Scrittura della memoria*, p. 743.

94. Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Libri di famiglia*, i, ch. 3; D. Solfaroli Camillocci, *Scrivere la propria storia. Memoria familiare e servizio del principe nel 'libro' di Gasparo Venturini di Massa*, « Archivio storico italiano », cliv, 1 (1996), pp. 126-30; Pezzarossa, *Introduzione* to Martelli's *Ricordi*, notes 2, 94; Cherubini, *Dal libro di ricordi*, p. 393; Mordenti, *La famiglia e le donne*, pp. 637-38. This is true of some modern editions as well: Pezzarossa, *Libri di famiglia*, pp. 72-73, 79-81; and cf. the memoirs of Morelli, Pitti and Rucellai (below, notes 97-99).

compared with the abridgment published in 1887. That edition would have us think that the author was exclusively concerned with self and family, when in fact the catasto is (in quantitative terms) primarily patrimonial. At least, the degree to which a published text is complete should be consistently questioned. In particular, it is necessary to know how much mercantile and patrimonial data was omitted, thus presenting an artificial appearance of a free-standing, coherent *libro di famiglia*. Here too, the Veneto texts may yet be judged more typical of the entire production.

In the second type of Veneto memoir, the core of the manuscript is a *zibaldone* or literary miscellany. The Verità made entries to a miscellany of patristic and prophetic texts, Bartolomeo Muronovo to a miscellany of literary and moral texts. This type of material, it should be noted, rarely appears in the editions of Florentine *libri di famiglia*.

As the format of the first set of Veneto memoirs blurs the boundary between the *ricordanza* and the account book, the content of this second set blurs the boundary between the *ricordanza* and the *zibaldone*. It is not hard to see how the *zibaldone* could easily intersect with the *libro di famiglia*, requiring only that a compiler or owner of personally pleasing texts should also claim the liberty of including those pursuant to his family. Giovanni Rucellai and Biagio Buonaccorsi in Florence and Cesare Nappi in Bologna kept both types of work, separately;⁹⁵ Veneto writers chose not to establish separate genres, mixing externally-derived and family-specific material without discrimination between the two genres.

But the distinction between the pure *libro di famiglia* and the pure miscellany should not be too firmly drawn for Florence, either. A decade ago Cicchetti and Mordenti categorized the *libro di famiglia* as a hybrid, halfway between the *libro d'archivio* and the *libro zibaldone*, with points of contact on either side.⁹⁶ Published versions of *libri di famiglia*, however, are usually shorn of what seemed to past editors as extraneous material. To take one example, the manuscript of Bonaccorso Pitti's *Ricordi* also contains medical recipes, astronomical and calendrical texts and formularies of various sorts. These were omitted in editions of the Settecento and 1986.⁹⁷ In the recent abridgment of Giovanni Rucellai's *Zibaldone quaresimale*, Alessandro Perosa imposed tightly-defined criteria for inclusion that dictated the omission of some highly miscellaneous entries and that give the volume an artificially coherent appearance. Moreover, his topical arrangement of the volume, when compared to the nearly random ordering of texts in the manuscript, gives an equally misleading impression of an orderly compilation.⁹⁸ The manuscript of Giovanni Morelli's *Ricordi* contains proverbs and spiritual texts, in Morelli's own hand, that were not included in the printed version.⁹⁹ Attilio Bartoli Langeli's checklist of elements that might be included in *schede* of *libri di famiglie*, including texts drawn from the individual and collective *immaginario* (myths, prophecies and dreams), suggests that we should expect to find such highly variegated material in future examinations of manuscripts.¹⁰⁰

95. Frati, *Notaio poeta bolognese*, pp. 28, 37-38, 40-43; R. Salani, *Il libro di famiglia di Cesare Nappi 'notaro, erudito cittadino e delle muse vero alunno'*, « Schede umanistiche », n.s., 1993/1, pp. 126-28; Ortalli, *Notariato e storiografia*, note 63; Fachard, *Biagio Buonaccorsi*, p. 2. Perosa refers to a lost work by Rucellai, almost certainly a *ricordanza*: *Lo Zibaldone di Giovanni Rucellai*, in *Giovanni Rucellai ed il suo Zibaldone* ii, London 1981, p. 103.

96. Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura*, p. 1138.

97. Pezzarossa, *Libri di famiglia*, p. 82; *Mercanti scrittori*, pp. 345-503.

98. Compare the material printed in the edition with the table of material found in the manuscript: Giovanni Rucellai, *Il Zibaldone quaresimale*, ed. Alessandro Perosa, London 1960, pp. xix-xxvii. Perosa's criteria are declared on pp. xv-xviii; Idem, *Lo Zibaldone*, p. 106 (and pp. 134-39 on the ethical and spiritual passages omitted in the printed version).

99. V. Branca, *Prefazione* and *Nota* to Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, second edition, Firenze 1969, pp. 46-47, 56-57.

100. A. Bartoli Langeli, *Scheda analitica per la rilevazione dei libri di famiglia*, « LDF. Bollettino della ricerca sui libri di famiglia », i, 1 (1989), pp. 14-15; also Mordenti, *Scrittura della memoria*, p. 743.

The proximity of this heterogeneous writing with entries more commonly associated with the « classic » memoir - anagraphic, genealogical and didactic notices, above all - does raise a crucial question, that of the overall purpose of the *libri di famiglia*. Students of the genre stress the imperative of patrilineal conservation: *memorie* provided the genealogical, political and moral resources for future solidarity and survival. They constructed family identity in a variety of ways: through invocation of ancestry, proof of age-old political office (on the right side of factional disputes, of course), examples of good and bad behavior by forebears, stern injunctions on right conduct, reminders of lands and palaces owned, and the like. *Memorie* were, by that account, designed to be kept within the family - several swear descendants to secrecy - and compiled with two related functions in mind: the instruction of successors, and the provision of hard data for eventual tests of social, legal, economic and political standing.¹⁰¹

Against this consensus, Giovanni Cherubini has raised a voice of dissent. He stresses the *libro di famiglia* as « strumento strettamente personale dello scrivente », retaining the personal vision of the compiler, often lacking much awareness of the wider lineage, often passing outside the family (or disregarded within the family); and he asks how much « senso della famiglia e delle tradizioni familiari » these works actually have.¹⁰² His thesis has resonance for the Veneto texts, at least, in terms of accounting for what Vicentines and Veronese did include and what they did not include.

They did, on the one hand, include extensive material that would have had little utility for the family in the future. Prayers, the apocryphal letters of Lentulus and Pontius Pilate, short-term prophecies and wondrous cures (how to expel bedbugs, for example) would not do much to hold the lineage together. Incantations against tempest and plague, or rules for finding Easter and electing the doge, were useful for anyone who chanced to read them, and hardly hold relevance for the writers' family alone. Many of the *zibaldone*-type texts, particularly those with spiritual, calendrical and prophetic concerns, were in general circulation; many others, by the end of the Quattrocento, were copied from published works and belong to a general literary patrimony. They are not lineage-specific, and their inclusion in the *memorie* reflects more the tastes of the compilers than the political and social needs of sons and grandsons.

On the other hand, much in the Florentine texts that was critical for lineage affirmation was not generally included in those of the Veneto. Foremost among this sort of material is the genealogical element.¹⁰³ Only Manfredo Repeta chose to trace his family back to a mythic progenitor, and he did so in a very brief manner. When Bartolomeo dal Bovo traced a previous generation's service to the Scaligeri, he did so not to prove glorious antiquity but to set the context for the family's discovery of an excellent cure for dog bites. The other *libri di famiglie* barely make reference to the writer's father, let alone more remote ancestors. There is no deep past to the Veneto *ricordanze*, hence no historical foundation of biology and deeds upon which the lineage could base its identity, common purpose and future defenses; there is nothing remotely like Donato Velluti's 150 pages of genealogy.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, to a degree seldom found in Florence they inclined towards matters spiritual and supernatural, medical and curious: writers demonstrate a preference for texts that speak to nonpatrilineal purposes. That is not to say that families in the region were disinterested preserving a family memory; rather, they used alternative genres for that

101. Branca, *Introduzione*, pp. xvii, lxi-lviii; Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura*, p. 1134; Torelli, *Libri di ricordanze*; pp. 144-61; Ciappelli, *Famiglia*, esp. pp. 196-98; Morelli, *Ricordi*, pp. 26-27, 85, 176, 202, 284-85; L. Pandimiglio, *Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli e le strutture familiari*, « Archivio storico italiano », cxxxvi (1978), pp. 28 ff; Klapisch-Zuber, *Invention*, pp. 99-102; Valori, *Famiglia e memoria*, p. 262, note 2.

102. Cherubini, *Libri di ricordanze*, pp. 569-72; see also Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura*, pp. 1146-48.

103. Ch. Klapisch-Zuber, *Les généalogies florentines du XIV et du XV siècle*, in *Le modèle familial européen. Normes, déviances, contrôle du pouvoir*, Roma 1986, pp. 101-31; Idem, *Albero genealogico e costruzione della parentela nel Rinascimento*, « Quaderni storici », 86 (1994); pp. 405-20; Idem, *The Genesis of the Family Tree*, in *I Tatti Studies. Essays in the Renaissance*, 4, Firenze 1991, pp. 105-29.

104. Donato Velluti, *La cronica domestica*, ed. I. Del Lungo and G. Volpi, Firenze 1914, pp. 4-153.

purpose. Some kept genealogical trees and registers of notarial instruments.¹⁰⁵ At least four great houses in the region sponsored histories of their lines.¹⁰⁶ But they did not deem narrative *ricordanze* an appropriate place to convey that sort of information.

Florentines commonly began their books with a formulaic *exordium* that invoked God and favorite saints, identified the writer, declared the didactic function of writing - to instruct posterity, to assist the memory of future generations, and so forth - and gave a name to the book.¹⁰⁷ This introduction explicitly located the act of inscription within the overall imperative of preserving the collective memory of the house. Descendants, that is, knew from the outset what they were to learn, and why. Giovanni Rucellai took the process a step further, making regular asides to his *figlioli* to tell them why a given passage was included and what its significance was.¹⁰⁸

This was not the case in the Veneto, where manuscripts generally begin with substantive entries and without explanatory exhortation. Gaspare Arnaldi simply declared his *liber* to be his property, and mentioned the name of his neighborhood. Bonaventura de' Bovi alone gave a title - *Memoriale* - to his text. None of the other writers provided any guidance or context for their works. They wrote and copied, and left it at that. Future generations would have to draw their own lessons.

In Florence, too, we note the persistence of overt moralizing. Proverbs and sage advice provided direct lessons for personal, social, economic and political comportment; accounts of virtuous and wayward forebears gave concrete examples for imitation and avoidance.¹⁰⁹ Thus the family would acquire a moral patrimony to complement the biological and political patrimonies of memoirs, a crucial resource within the overall strategy for the survival of the lineage. The Veneto texts, in contrast, are relatively devoid of prescriptive content. Prayers, hagiography, moral epigrams and scriptural texts might be good for the souls of descendants, in very general terms, but practical and worldly advice is scarce. Exemplary anecdotes are equally rare; only Bonaventura de' Bovi's brief denunciation of his «incorrigible» and thieving son Girolamo would qualify in this regard. Andrea Arnaldi left out any mention of his brother Battista (a compulsive gambler and wastrel, and unable to provide for his wife and children, as we know from other sources), passing up a golden opportunity for monition.

105. A.S.Pad., Archivi Privati, Lion 189; A.S.Ver., Archivetti Privati, Bevilaqua doc. 10 (notebook marked « Privilegi », early Cinquecento), Auricalco doc. 6 (folders on Auricalchi and Verità); *ivi*, Archivi Privati, Malaspina ccvi/2217, Pompei-Maffei 672-76, Pompei-Vari 246/3, Dionisi-Piomarta 437 (later, but with references to earlier compilations, e.g. a « carta antica e tutta lacerata esistente in un rotolo di casa Dionisi dall'anno 1462 » and a « memorie storiche cronologiche de fatti della nobile famiglia Dionisi » covering 1180-1325), Dionisi-Piomarta 438 (the *vetusta Dyonisiorum monumenta*). The Stoppa and Fracastoro memoirs are found amidst such collections. A genealogical tree of 1462 is found in A.S.Ver., Archivi Privati, Pompei-Bartolini 47; reference to an *arbore* of 1493 in A.S.Ver., Archivi Privati, Dionisi-Piomarta 437. Vicenza's Fracanzani preserved correspondence with relatives in Città di Castello, seeking information on « le origine antique et nobile della nostra famiglia »: Bertoliana 2475.

106. A history of the Bazioli family of Padua is found in Marciana, Ital. vi, 356 (5848); for other family histories see Capodilista, *De viris illustribus*; Giovanni Nicolò Faella, *De origine et laudibus Mapheorum*, Roma after 1484 (copy in Marciana, Misc. 1265.11); G.P. Marchi, *La famiglia Rizzoni di Verona e l' 'Origo gentis Rizoniae' di Pietro Donato Avogaro*, « Vita veronese », 19 (1966), pp. 5-12; R. Avesani and B.M. Peebles, *Studies in Pietro Donato Avogaro of Verona*, « Italia medioevale e umanistica », 5 (1962), pp. 1-84.

107. From Velluti's *Cronica domestica*, for example (p. 3): « Con ciò sia cosa che l'uomo desideri di sapere di sua nazione, e de' suoi passati, e come i parentadi sono stati, e beni acquistati, e molte volte perciò si schifino di molti danni e fuggansi di molti errori . . . ». On the proemium see Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura*, pp. 1119-21, 1137; Klapisch-Zuber, *Invention*, pp. 97-98; Branca, *Introduzione*, pp. lxi-lxii; and cf. Dati, *Libro segreto*, pp. 11-12; *Libro di memorie di Filigno de' Medici*, pp. 5-7; Tugnoli Aprile, *Patrimonio*, pp. 109-10; Guibert, *Livre de raison*, p. 250.

108. Rucellai, *Zibaldone quaresimale*, pp. 2, 5, 7-9, 11, 13, 15, 18-19, 39, 42, 103.

109. Cicchetti and Mordenti, *Scrittura*, p. 1145; Branca, *Introduzione*, pp. xxxii, xlvi-xlix. See also Frati, *Notaio poeta bolognese*, pp. 34-40; Guibert, *Livre de raison*, pp. 229, 234, 244, 248-49, 251-53.

None of the Veronese and Vicentine writers, in fact, chose to comment upon the events that they recorded. Their accounts are quite spare, simple entries without elaboration. There is nothing comparable to Giovanni Morelli's sweet musings on the Mugello, his bitter account of mistreatment by relatives, his loving reminiscence of sister Mea's beauty and moral excellence, or his prolonged brooding on the death of two beloved sons. In contrast, writers in the north provided hard information, and revealed little of their opinions regarding place and kin. Buonaccorso Pitti filled page after page with the tales of his travels; in Vicenza, Manfredo Repeta quickly listed the stages of his pilgrimages.

The Veneto texts, finally, were disinclined to transmit a political memory to descendants. Florentines' lists of the family's past priors, *gonfalonieri* and ambassadors, and their demonstrations of participation in the public affairs of the community, find no equivalent in northeast Italy.¹¹⁰ Perhaps this is so because most of the northern families that produced *libri di famiglia* had been politically insignificant in generations past. The Verità were an exception but, even so, Bartolomeo Verità declined to provide any information on the family's illustrious office-holders of the Trecento. Even the recent successes of the newly-emerged families did not pass into the record. Though the dal Bovo, Stoppa, Ferramosca, Repeta, Muronovo and Fracastoro were beginning to hold high positions as their *ricordanze* were being written, we derive that information from public archives rather than the *ricordanze* themselves. At most, Andrea Arnaldi briefly mentioned his own entry onto Vicenza's Great Council, but he did not record his subsequent elections to high magistracies. Manfredo Repeta and Andrea Arnaldi made extensive notes of local and regional events, but indicated nothing of their political allegiances.

Compared to the better-known Florentine accounts, that is, the *libri di famiglie* of the Veneto are laconic, sparse, short, without judgment, undefined in purpose, disinterested in genealogy, seldom overtly didactic, inclined to broad topical horizons and not focused exclusively on the family. Commentary is rare, and introspection nearly absent. Perhaps this has as much to do with language and occupation as with a lesser degree of patrilineal self-consciousness or a reluctance to record innermost thoughts. Many were compiled by notaries or jurists (Arnaldi, Repeta, Trento, Cardino Ferramosca) or government functionaries (Freschi) accustomed to writing within the confines of strict formularies. Often they wrote their *memorie* in a Latin that stood at one remove from daily experience. The merchants and artisans of Tuscany had a freer hand and perhaps, as writing in the *volgare*, had greater facility in recording the details of quotidian and past life.¹¹¹

In short, Veneto writers seem to have been guided by considerations that were not those of the major Florentines. In the present state of research, the two regions present what seem to be opposite sorts of *libri di famiglia*. But research is not far along, and one suspects that future work in Florence - looking beyond Morelli's introspection, Dati's volubility, Velluti's genealogical bent and Pitti's travel narratives to the mid-level texts - will soften schematic definitions and reduce apparent regional differences. Whether or not these Vicentines and Veronese did markedly differ from their counterparts elsewhere must rest with future studies. The present edition should be understood as an early contribution to a newly-broadened, peninsula-wide discussion, offering a new perspective and suggesting comparatives with known Tuscan production.

110. On political notices in *ricordanze*, see G. Ciappelli, *La memoria degli eventi storici nelle ricordanze private fiorentine (secc. XIII-XV)*, in *La memoria e la città*. On *priorista* lists in Firenze, see L. Fabbri, *Alleanza matrimoniale e patriziato nella Firenze del '400*, Firenze 1991, p. 97; L. Borgia, *Note per la conoscenza delle fonti araldiche italiane. Le fonti negli archivi di famiglia: un 'priorista' fiorentina*, «Archivio storico italiano», cli, 3 (1993), pp. 593-642.

111. Cf. Branca, *Introduzione*, p. xliii.

3. *Criteria of the Editions*

The principal guide to transcription has been that supplied by Giampaolo Tognetti.¹¹² The overriding criterion has been to respect the integrity of the manuscript, to be faithful to the intentions of writers, and in general to minimize editorial intervention. At an extreme, this has led to the transcription of passages that are sheer gibberish: incomprehensible to modern readers, they were in some measure meaningful to those who wrote them down, hence hold significance and hence merit publication.

However, it has not always been possible to reproduce the complete text of manuscripts because, in most cases, personal and family entries are surrounded by a vast quantity of material that precludes integral publication. Patrimonial and business records, and the longer literary texts of the *zibaldoni*, have been noted but not reproduced in full. This was regrettable, but the alternative was a volume of unmanageable size: the slim Fracastoro memoir, for example, appears after a full 230 folios of business records. What distinguishes these texts from dozens of *catasti* and account books, and justifies their publication, is precisely their inclusion of personal material (anagraphic, chronicle, spiritual, medical); this has been privileged in editing the present volume, sometimes to the exclusion of the literary and patrimonial. But because this latter material is of value in indicating the setting for family notices, demonstrating the methods of compiling records and suggesting the personal tastes of writers, omitted passages have been noted. Further, commonly available texts (psalms, the Athanasian creed) and printed texts are likewise cited but not transcribed. Readers interested in the surrounding texts will at least find guides for further study. The chief priority has been not to tamper with the arrangement and content of manuscripts. Entries have been transcribed as they are found in codices, even when they were inscribed out of chronological or topical order. Original spelling has been preserved, even when manuscripts presents variants of a given word or sheer errors. Similarly, errors in grammar have not been corrected. Errors due to a *lapsus calami* are transcribed as they appear in the original; however, when these make comprehension difficult they are corrected in the original but noted. In keeping with authors' preferences, the « y » (*Ytalia*, *Hippolytus*) has been kept throughout; so too is the initial « j » of proper names (*Joannes*), though the subsequent « j » has been rendered « i ». The diphthongs « ae » and « oe » are rendered in full when indicated in the text even when their use is excessive by modern and classical standards (*caerae* for *cere*, *coepit* for *cepit*). In keeping with current norms of transcription, « u » and « v » are distinguished according to modern spelling. Some editorial intervention has been required to make the texts presentable in print, especially in the areas of capitalization, word and sentence division, and punctuation. Following Tognetti, the names of persons and places are capitalized, though places are not capitalized in Italian when they appear in adjectival form (*Francesco veronese*). *Sanctus/a* are capitalized when referring to an institution or place (*in monastero Sanctae Clarae*) but not when referring to persons (*in festo sancti Marci*). *Dominus* and *deus* are capitalized when referring to the deity and standing alone (*credo in Dmno*) but not when followed by the proper name (*in domino nostro Iesu Christo*). Holy days are capitalized (*in die Pasque*) but not days of the week or months. Accents are used sparingly, to indicate terminal stress (*andò, fu batezà*); the distinction between acute and grave accents follows modern Italian usage. Prepositions are separated from articles (*de la Schala*) and nouns (*a di*), except when omission or addition of letters clearly indicates that the author intended a compound (*alla volta, dal Buovo*). Punctuation and sentence division are in accordance with modern scansion. Abbreviations have been expanded in full. Authors' lacunae are indicated by ***. Parentheses indicate illegibility or *lacune meccaniche* due to holes in or cropping of the manuscript. Uncertain readings are supplied in parentheses. Square brackets are used to supply obvious omissions of letters when the original would otherwise be incomprehensible.

112. *Criteri per la trascrizione di testi medievali latini e italiani*, « Quaderni della Rassegna degli Archivi di Stato », 51, Roma 1982.

The quantity of data in these texts defies full annotation. It would be impossible to provide full bibliographic references as background to texts, personalities and events. Several of these *memorie* for example, contain the so-called « Letter of Lentulus »; the secondary literature on apocryphal writings and their use as spiritual aides is vast, but it is beyond the mission of this edition to provide full explication of the sources and meanings of these texts. Explicative notes have been kept to a minimum. All scriptural citations are from the Vulgate.

Each text is preceded by an introduction that describes the format of the manuscript, gives a brief summary of its contents and discusses the specific issues involved in editing it. Here too it was not possible to provide a full account of each text and each family; nor did it seem necessary to provide the level of detail required by larger-scale, more literary or more problematic works. In particular the background on writers and their families is minimal; the reader is referred to recent studies of these families, and to the standard *fondi* - municipal council records, family archives, *estimi*, guild matriculations - of archives in Verona and Vicenza.¹¹³

113. In general see J.S. Grubb, *Provincial Families in the Renaissance. Private and Public Life in the Veneto*, Baltimore and London 1996 (forthcoming in Italian translation); and works cited in notes 70-77 above.