

**Brunetto Latini's *Politica*: A Political Rewriting
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Brunetto Latini's *Politica*: A Political Rewriting of Giovanni da Viterbo's *De Regimine Civitatum*

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It is generally accepted that the final section of Brunetto Latini's *Li Livres dou Tresor*, known as his *Politica*, is largely based upon Giovanni da Viterbo's *De regimine civitatum*. Notwithstanding this agreement on the derivative relationship between both texts, Latini's *Politica* continues to puzzle scholars. Based upon a historically informed textual comparison and analysis this article argues that the amount of intervention by Brunetto Latini – and its coherence in direction – is highly instructive on the originality of Latini's rewriting and indicative of its purpose. Finally, this article sheds light on the historical factors underlying Latini's decision to select Giovanni da Viterbo's manual as his copy-text.

Middle Ages; 13th Century; Italy; Brunetto Latini's *Li Livres dou Tresor*; Giovanni da Viterbo's *De regimine civitatum*; city magistrate (*podestà*); Charles of Anjou.

1. Brunetto Latini's *Politica*, Giovanni da Viterbo's *De regimine civitatum*, and their textual relationship

Li Livres dou Tresor constitutes the centrepiece of the collected works of Brunetto Latini (c.1220-1293/94)¹. He wrote this encyclopaedia – like the majority of his literary works – during an exile in France (1260-1266/67)², hav-

* This article has been written during a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship held at the Faculty of History of the University of Cambridge (October 2015-September 2018).

¹ The classic work on Brunetto Latini and his literary heritage remains: Sundby, *Della vita e delle opere di Brunetto Latini*. The standard biography is now: Ceva, *Brunetto Latini*. For other biographies: D'Addario, *Latini*; Bolton Holloway, *Twice-Told Tales*; Carmody and Fery-Hue, *Brunetto Latini*; Inglese, *Brunetto Latini*; Mazzoni, *Brunetto Latini*; De Vincentiis, *Le parole di ser Brunetto*. Unless indicated otherwise, references to or citations from the *Tresor* are taken from Beltrami's edition. For an English translation of these references or citations, please consult the translation by Barrette and Baldwin.

² It is generally accepted that Brunetto Latini wrote the first redaction of the *Tresor* during his exile, while a second redaction is said to have been produced shortly thereafter. On the distinction between both redactions, see below, note 49. However, Latini's authorship of the second redaction has been questioned. See, for instance: Beltrami, *Appunti su vicende del Tresor*, p. 311;

ing joined the ranks of the exiled in the wake of the Florentine defeat at the Battle of Montaperti (1260)³. Prior to this unexpected setback Florence had experienced a “golden age” under the *Primo Popolo* (1250-1260)⁴ – a decade of extraordinary demographical, territorial, and economic expansion⁵. Under this popular regime Brunetto Latini had played a significant role in the political machinery of Florence, functioning, amongst others, as a notary-scribe attached to the highest city magistracy (*scriba ancianorum*), the *Anziani* (College of the Elders)⁶. The *Tresor* is divided up into three books⁷. The first book – i.e. the “small change” – lays the theoretical foundations of this medieval encyclopedia, starting with a brief discussion of theological matters (I.6-18) and ending with a bestiary (I.130-200). Its central part consists of a universal history (I.19-93/98)⁸. Continuing the treasure analogy, the second book deals with “precious stones”, that is to say ethics. It consists of a partial translation of Aristotle’s *Nichomachean Ethics* (II.2-49), followed by the traditional panoply of classical and biblical moral precepts (II.50-132). The apex of the *Tresor*, the “gold” of the third book, begins with a discussion of the art of rhetoric (III.1-72) and ends with a treatment of Italian city government. This article focuses precisely on this final section and its thirty-three chapters (III.73-105), carrying the self-explanatory title *Des governemenz des citez*. It is known amongst modern historians as Latini’s *Politica*, a term coined by John Najemy⁹, and it constitutes the apotheosis of the *Tresor*, putting the entire encyclopaedia within a distinctively political framework¹⁰. Unfortunately,

Beltrami, *Per il testo del Tresor*, pp. 968-969. Nevertheless, Jennifer Marshall has claimed that Latini’s authorship of the second redaction is supported by a stylometric analysis: Marshall, *The Manuscript Tradition of Brunetto Latini’s Tresor*, pp. 64-76.

³ The bibliography on this battle is vast. For a discussion of the events: Ceppari Ridolfi, *Montaperti nelle fonti del Duecento*. For a discussion of the myth-making involving this battle: Balestracci, *Montaperti fra storia e mito*.

⁴ The classic work on the history of Florence remains: Robert Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*. Recently, Italian historians have produced a series of monographs covering different stages of Florentine history. See (in ascending chronological order of the period covered): Faini, *Firenze nell’età romanica (1000-1211)*; De Rosa, *Alle origini della repubblica fiorentina*; Diacciati, *Popolani e magnati*; Gualtieri, *Il comune di Firenze tra Due e Trecento*. For an introduction to Florentine history in English: Green, *Florence*. For an in-depth treatment: Najemy, *A History of Florence 1200-1575*.

⁵ See, for instance: Diacciati, *Popolani e magnati*, p. 106; Zorzi, *I rettori di Firenze*, pp. 528-529.

⁶ On the difference between this position and a chancellorship (often wrongly attributed to Brunetto Latini): De Rosa, *Alle origini della repubblica fiorentina*, pp. 217-218. On the characteristics of his notarial capacity, see: Cella, *Il nome di ser Brunetto*, pp. 96-98.

⁷ On the tripartite structure, see especially: Meier, *Enzyklopädischer Ordo*, p. 518; Meier, *Organisation of Knowledge and Encyclopaedic Ordo*, pp. 110 and 113; Meier, *Vom Homo Coelestis zum Homo Faber*, pp. 173-175; Meier, *Cosmos Politicus*, p. 349.

⁸ The difference in chapter numbering (I.93/98) reflects Chabaille’s distinction between a first and second redaction in the *Tresor* tradition. According to this distinction, the historical chapters end in 1260 in the first redaction, while they extend to 1268 in the second redaction. Chabaille, introduction to *Li Livres dou Tresor*, p. xxiii. Compare chapters I.91-93 in the edition by Beltrami (first redaction) to chapters I.90-98 in Carmody’s edition (second redaction).

⁹ Najemy, *Brunetto Latini’s Politica*.

¹⁰ See especially: Meier, *Organisation of Knowledge and Encyclopaedic Ordo*, p. 113.

there is no direct evidence of the primary ownership of the *Tresor*, although the hypothesis of a patron who facilitated the production of a work of these dimensions is more than probable¹¹. This patron is, however, not named in the *Tresor*, but merely referred to as a «biau douz amis» in the prologue – a reference echoed in the introduction to the political section¹². Broadly speaking, two hypotheses have been put forward with respect to the identity of this patron. Both scenarios point to a person living in France. Traditionally, this patron has been sought within the exiled Florentine elite. Carmody even went so far as to attach the name of Davizzo della Tosa to this figure¹³ – however, without convincing later scholarship¹⁴. Alternatively, Charles of Anjou – or someone in his entourage – has been advanced as a candidate¹⁵. Scholars have even argued that both categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Brunetto Latini may have written the *Tresor* for a wealthy Florentine living in exile in France who, in turn, presented it to the French royal court¹⁶. In a variation on this hypothesis of a native French patron, Serge Lusignan has suggested the urban elite of northern France as its intended recipient¹⁷. Not unrelated to this patronage issue, Enrico Artifoni has also pointed out that the scholarly debate on the communal or royal orientation of Brunetto Latini is still in flux. Certain scholars underline the communal character of Brunetto Latini, while other academics stress his links to Charles of Anjou¹⁸.

This short introduction to the key characteristics of Latini's *Tresor* brings us to the second element of our comparison, Giovanni da Viterbo's *De regimine civitatum*¹⁹. He wrote this manual on the *podestà* office in 1234²⁰.

¹¹ *Contra*: Beltrami, introduction to *Tresor*, p. viii (identifying the generic group of professional *podestà* as its audience); Roux, *Mondes en miniatures*, pp. 50-51 (speaking of a generic dedication to a fictive person).

¹² See: *Tresor*, 4, I.1.4; 788, III.73, 1. See also: *Tresor*, 126, I.93,2; 638, III.1,13.

¹³ Carmody, introduction to *Tresor*, pp. xvii-xviii.

¹⁴ See, for instance: Roux, *Mondes en miniatures*, 50, note 31.

¹⁵ Bolton Holloway, *Twice-Told Tales*, pp. 60-63. Followed by: Najemy, *Brunetto Latini's Politica*, p. 36 (wording his adherence tentatively); Vink, *Brunetto Latini's Livres dou Tresor verbeeld*, p. 287; Welie-Vink, *Was Charles d'Anjou Brunetto Latini's biaux dous amis?*, pp. 319-333. See also: Rao, *L'educazione di un principe d'Oltralpe*, p. 423 (speaking of the *Tresor* as «una sorta di manuale volto all'educazione al mondo comunale di Carlo e dei suoi fedeli provenzali»).

¹⁶ Welie-Vink, *Was Charles d'Anjou Brunetto Latini's biaux dous amis?*, p. 332.

¹⁷ Lusignan, *Brunet Latin et la pensée politique urbaine*.

¹⁸ Artifoni, *Una politica del dittare*, p. 176.

¹⁹ Notwithstanding an erroneous attribution to Vegetius (383-450), the author of the *De re militari*, in one of the two surviving copies of the *De regimine civitatum* (Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Stroziano 63), and the lack of solid documentation confirming the ascription to Giovanni da Viterbo by the second copyist (Biblioteca Ambrosiana, B.91.sup.), this latter attribution is generally accepted. Except for his name and professional capacity, nothing is, however, known about this historical figure. Despite repeated archival searches no records have been unearthed which independently confirm his presence in Florence. On this figure: Zorzi, *Giovanni da Viterbo*.

²⁰ Scholars have proposed a wide variety of composition dates, ranging from 1228 until 1264 – with isolated, off-target attributions as late as 1270 or 1278. Basically, two groups can be discerned. The first group of academics situates the work during the reign of Frederick II (r. 1220-1250), while the second one selects the period after Frederick's death (d. 1250). Recently, Zorzi's

He was a judge in the retinue of a Florentine *podestà*²¹, generally identified as the primary recipient of the text²². The handbook, complete with oath formulas, model letters and speech modules, consists of 148 chapters, covering the one-year tenure of a *podestà* from the moment of his selection until the day of his departure. This manual was only discovered in the late-nineteenth century. After this discovery, it became rapidly clear that the final section of Latini's *Tresor*, his *Politica*, was not original²³. While Francesco Novati already referred to the existence of «numerosi e stretti rapporti» between both texts in 1888²⁴, Gaetano Salvemini, the first and only editor of Giovanni da Viterbo's manual²⁵, developed this intuition into a comparative table in 1903²⁶. Salvemini also speaks of Latini's *Politica* as «un vera e propria traduzione abbreviata» of the *De regimine civitatum*. Despite a later challenge by Albano Sorbelli to this hypothesis of direct borrowing²⁷, the textual derivation between both texts is now generally accepted²⁸.

2. Textual comparison and analysis

Brunetto Latini did not slavishly copy Giovanni da Viterbo's text. He translated, abbreviated, and modified it. The identification and interpretation of these textual adaptations constitute the focus of this article. The following analysis will, however, not dwell on the shortening carried out by Brunetto

hypothesis, putting forward 1234 as the date of composition, has attracted substantial support. Zorzi, *Giovanni da Viterbo*, pp. 268-269. For the support, see: Artifoni, *L'oratoria politica comunale*, p. 250, note 24; Faini, *Prima di Brunetto*, p. 205, note 70; Maire Vigueur, *L'ufficiale forestiero*, pp. 89-90.

²¹ *De Reg. Civ.*, p. 217 (prologue): «dum potestati Florentie assiderem».

²² Artifoni, *L'oratoria politica comunale*, p. 250; Hertter, *Die Podestätliteratur Italiens*, p. 45; Salvemini, *Il Liber de regimine civitatum*, p. 286. *Contra*: Anton, *Fürstenspiegel des frühen und hohen Mittelalters*, p. 27 (reading this reference as a substitute for a social group).

²³ The *Tresor* also draws on the *Oculus pastoralis* – or at least its first two *divisiones* – a fact already highlighted by Adolfo Mussafia in 1869 and confirmed by its most recent editor, Terence Tunberg, in 1986. On this limited textual relationship: Mussafia, *Sul testo del Tesoro di Brunetto Latini*; Tunberg, introduction to *Oculus pastoralis*, pp. 32, note 1, and 118-121.

²⁴ Novati, *La giovinezza di Coluccio Salutati (1331-1353)*, pp. 82-83, note 3.

²⁵ For a list of later corrections: Salvemini, *Il Liber de regimine civitatum*, p. 289, note 1.

²⁶ Salvemini, *Il Liber de regimine civitatum*, pp. 293-294. Consult also the source apparatus in Carmody's edition of the *Tresor* (pp. 391-422). See also: Ceva, *Brunetto Latini*, p. 184.

²⁷ Sorbelli, *I teorici del reggimento comunale*, pp. 78-79, 99-100, and 106-114. *Contra*, see especially: Artifoni, *I podestà professionali*, pp. 712-713; Zorzi, *Giovanni da Viterbo*, p. 271. For a highly negative evaluation of Sorbelli's study: Franchini, *Trattati "De regimine civitatum"*, p. 320, note 1. For the sake of completeness, it has to be mentioned that Francis Carmody suggested that both works depend on a still older and now lost common prototype. Carmody, introduction to *Tresor*, pp. xxxi-xxxii. *Contra*: Tunberg, introduction to *Oculus pastoralis*, p. 119, note 11.

²⁸ For this acceptance, see, for instance: Artifoni, *Preistorie del bene comune*, p. 81; Beltrami, introduction to *Tresor*, p. xx; Folena, «Parlamenti» podestarili di Giovanni da Viterbo, p. 99; Franchini, *Trattati "De regimine civitatum"*, pp. 336-337; Lusignan, *Brunet Latin et la pensée politique urbaine*, p. 221.

Latini²⁹. It will rather concentrate on his translation efforts and textual modifications. For the present purposes, it is sufficient to note that the reduction in size in absolute numbers – that is to say, an abridgment of the 148 chapters of the *De regimine civitatum* into the 33 chapters of the *Tresor* – is, to a certain degree, misleading since a considerable number of the chapters of the *De regimine civitatum* ended up as paragraphs of a single chapter in the *Tresor*³⁰. On top of the textual omissions discussed below³¹, the remaining reduction is mainly due to the deletion of a number of “technical” chapters – such as the definition section³², certain model letters³³, oaths³⁴, and speeches³⁵ – and the replacement of a significant portion of the code of conduct of the *podestà* by a cross-reference to the second book (on ethics) in the *Tresor* (III.97-98)³⁶. In fact, Latini's translation and textual modifications have a more interesting story to tell. A detailed examination of these textual adaptations will show that the amount of intervention by Brunetto Latini – and its coherence in direction – is highly instructive on the originality of Latini's rewriting and indicative of its purpose.

3. *Crossing the political divide*

For a start, Brunetto Latini took great care to depersonalize and delocalize Giovanni da Viterbo's text. Latini's *Politica* contains, for instance, no reference to the figure of Giovanni da Viterbo, but only to Brunetto Latini. It is also the section in which Brunetto Latini asserts himself the most as *li mestre*³⁷. Likewise, references to the city of Viterbo (see below³⁸) and other cities located in its vicinity (such as Narni³⁹, Todi⁴⁰, Orvieto⁴¹, and Perugia⁴²) have been deleted systematically. Latini's text focuses on Florence, his beloved hometown – a geographical focus that also characterized the contents of

²⁹ On this particular aspect, see: Lusignan, *Brunet Latin et la pensée politique urbaine*, pp. 223-225.

³⁰ Compare, for instance, *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 247-250, LXXX-XCI to *Tresor*, pp. 830-836, III.90-93, or *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 262-265, CXXIV-CXXVI to *Tresor*, pp. 838-842, III.96.

³¹ See below, footnotes 37-42 and 46-49 and the corresponding text.

³² *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 218-220, I-X.

³³ *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 222-225, XIII-XXIII.

³⁴ *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 228-230, XXXVIII-XLIV; 232-233, XLIX-LIII.

³⁵ *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 233-235, LV-LVIII; 270-273, CXXXIII-CXXXV. Amedeo de Vincentiis has suggested that the deletion of model oaths, letters and speeches – i.e. the most technical bits of the political section – is linked to the fact that the French audience of the *Tresor* had no interest in these technicalities and to Latini's general insistence on the need to follow local rules and customs in such matters. De Vincentiis, *Le parole di ser Brunetto*, p. 45.

³⁶ *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 235-246, LIX-LXXX; 255, CIV; 259, CXIV; 275-276, CXXXVIII.

³⁷ Artifoni, *I podestà professionali*, p. 693.

³⁸ See below, footnote 46 and the corresponding text.

³⁹ *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 222, XIII; 222, XIV; 223, XVI; 224, XXI; 225, XXII; 225, XXIII.

⁴⁰ *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 222, XIII; 222, XIV; 223, XVI; 223, XVII.

⁴¹ *De Reg. Civ.*, p. 224, XX.

⁴² *De Reg. Civ.*, p. 223, XV.

Giovanni da Viterbo's text⁴³, despite his references to the other cities listed above. It was, after all, a manual intended primarily for a Florentine *podestà*. Even the description of the relative weight accorded to judges and notaries within the retinue of a *podestà* underwent a fundamental revision in order to reflect the different professional backgrounds of the two authors. While Giovanni da Viterbo stressed the importance of the judge within the retinue⁴⁴, Brunetto Latini did not hesitate to highlight the invaluable role played by notaries. He specified that the notary carried the greatest burden of the retinue and he even claimed that the accuracy of the notary often corrected the errors committed by the judge⁴⁵.

Once the text had been thoroughly depersonalized and delocalized, it still required programmatic changes to complete its political re-orientation, away from its originally pro-imperial position. The *De regimine civitatum* stressed, in fact, the close relationship between the city of Viterbo and the emperor, who is said to have granted it many privileges⁴⁶. Giovanni da Viterbo also defended a dualist interpretation in the "two swords"-debate, a view more favourable to the position of the emperor than its hierocratic alternative⁴⁷. Another pro-imperial statement was to be found in chapter 139, titled *De imperatoris gratia promerenda et conservanda*, which, after a short recapitulation of the different biblical and legal sources underlining the emperor's legitimacy and power as well as a long enumeration of his various epithets, ended with a stark warning addressed to the city magistrate not to raise the anger of the emperor: «sic eius indignatio est ab omnibus evitanda et penitus fugienda ne forte aliquando irascatur vobis imperialis magestas et pereatis vos et civitates quibus preestis»⁴⁸. All these pro-imperial passages have been removed by Brunetto Latini⁴⁹. Furthermore, Latini's portrayal of the imperial Hohenstaufen dynasty in the historical section of the *Tresor* took on a negative tone⁵⁰. This negative portrait became even more pronounced in the later, second redaction of the *Tresor* (at least, if one accepts Latini's authorship of this redaction), which contains biting passages on the figure of Manfred, accusing him of the (attempted) murder of his father, Frederick II, his brother, Conrad IV (1228-1254, r. 1250-1254), and his nephew, Conradin (1252-1268)⁵¹. At the same

⁴³ For an overview of the links in Giovanni da Viterbo's text to the city of Florence: Faini, *Prima di Brunetto*, p. 18 (linking the model oaths to Florentine examples, citing the references to Saint John as city patron in model speeches, connecting model minutes to a Florentine form, highlighting the Florentine custom of copying missives before they are sealed, and referring to the fact that the war speeches are addressed to the Florentine population).

⁴⁴ *De Reg. Civ.*, p. 226, XXV. Compare to: *Tresor*, pp. 806-808, III.79,5-7.

⁴⁵ *Tresor*, p. 808, III.79,8. Compare to: *De Reg. Civ.*, p. 226, XXVI.

⁴⁶ *De Reg. Civ.*, p. 225, XXIII.

⁴⁷ *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 265-266, CXXVII-CXXVIII.

⁴⁸ *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 276-277, CXXXIX.

⁴⁹ See also: Lusignan, *Brunet Latin et la pensée politique urbaine*, pp. 223-224.

⁵⁰ *Tresor*, pp. 124-126, I.93.

⁵¹ See, in Carmody's edition: *Tresor*, pp. 75-81, I.94-98. For the academic debate surrounding the authorship of the second redaction, see above note 1.

time, references to the exiled status of Brunetto Latini in the aftermath of the Battle of Montaperti⁵², or more explicitly pro-Angevin pronouncements, such as the characterization of Charles of Anjou as the Champion of Christ⁵³, or, to the extent that it was an authentic part of the original composition⁵⁴, a letter offering Charles the Roman senatorship⁵⁵, were added to the text.

As a result of these relatively small, but interacting textual modifications by Brunetto Latini, Giovanni da Viterbo's text was able to cross the political divide between Guelfs and Ghibellines – just as the *podestà* office itself served the interests of either party, Guelfs or Ghibellines⁵⁶.

4. *Selling the podestà office*

Brunetto Latini did, however, not only modify the pro-imperial character of Giovanni da Viterbo's text. He also intended to sell an Italian political project to a French audience (an exiled Florentine and/or a native French patron (royal or not) – see above⁵⁷). To this end, he performed a delicate balancing act, affecting the language, form and contents of the *Tresor*.

The *Tresor* is one of the earliest medieval encyclopaedias in the vernacular. Alison Cornish has called it the most important text in Old French written by an Italian⁵⁸. The particularity and novelty of this language choice becomes evident if one takes into account that, contrary to Latini's work as a notary-scribe in medieval Latin⁵⁹, his literary heritage has been written entirely in Old Italian, his native tongue, except for the *Tresor*⁶⁰. In an oft-quoted passage

⁵² The *Tresor* explicitly underlines Latini's status as an exiled person (p. 126, I.93,2), in addition to references to the general condition of exile (for instance, p. 528, II.84,11), or a telling allusion to the fate of Boethius (p. 6, I.1,6).

⁵³ *Tresor*, p. 81, I.98,7 (in Carmody's edition).

⁵⁴ For the academic debate on its authenticity: Ceva, *Brunetto Latini*, p. 161.

⁵⁵ *Tresor*, pp. 800-802, III.77. Charles of Anjou accepted the Roman senatorship in August 1263 in an effort to counter Manfred's attempt to establish himself in the eternal city. Charles resigned from this senatorial office under papal pressure in May 1267, but he was re-elected for a ten-year period in 1268 after his victory at the Battle of Tagliacozzo and the removal of Henry of Castille, the Senator (1230-1303), from the post. He was restored to the office in 1281 by pope Martin IV (c.1210/20-1285, r. 1281-1285), but his senatorship ended in the aftermath of the Sicilian Vespers (1282).

⁵⁶ The bibliography on this dichotomy is extensive. See the following studies: Canaccini, *Restano i termini, mutano i significati: Guelfi e Ghibellini*; Dessì, *Guelfi e ghibellini, prima e dopo la battaglia di Montaperti (1246-1358)*; Faini, *Il convito fiorentino del 1216*. For an analysis of a particular instance in which the copying of the Old Italian translation of the *Tresor*, the *Tesoro*, involved the transposition of the text back to a Ghibelline context: Napolitano, *Adjusting the Mirror: A Political Remake of Brunetto Latini's Li Livres dou Tresor*.

⁵⁷ See above, footnotes 13-17 and the corresponding text.

⁵⁸ Cornish, *Vernacular translation in Dante's Italy*, p. 75.

⁵⁹ On Latini's mastery of Latin and his use of the *stilus altus*: Davis, *Dante's Italy*, p. 167; Luff, *Wissensvermittlung im europäischen Mittelalter*, p. 313; Messelaar, *Le vocabulaire des idées dans le 'Tresor' de Brunet Latin*, p. 17.

⁶⁰ Galderisi, *Le maître et le juge*, p. 26. On Latini's vernacular capabilities: Luff, *Wissensvermittlung im europäischen Mittelalter*, p. 301; Pfister, *Le bilinguisme de Brunetto Latini*. On

of the prologue Brunetto Latini lists the following motives in support of this language preference: his whereabouts in France⁶¹, and the attractiveness and widespread use of Old French⁶². In addition, his language choice fits into a wider balancing act, bringing together French and Italian elements. It constituted a political act in itself⁶³.

From a formal perspective the adoption of an encyclopedic structure was another element designed to please a French audience. In fact, this literary tradition is known to have reached its apogee in thirteenth-century France, as illustrated by the production of Thomas of Cantimpré's *De naturis rerum* (1237-1240), Bartholomeus Anglicus's *De proprietatibus rerum* (c. 1250), or Vincent of Beauvais's *Speculum maius* (1244-1259). In fact, these French examples are said to have inspired Latini's preference for this particular genre⁶⁴.

At the contents level the attentiveness of Brunetto Latini to a French audience is visible in small, but telling details scattered throughout the *Tresor*, such as the rendering of measurements in both French and Italian standards (French league and Italian mile)⁶⁵, the addition of the French equivalent of the designation of an animal species (*Greoche* for the rock partridge, a term referring to the discovery of this gamebird in Greece)⁶⁶, or the invocation of a stay in Paris as an alibi for a murder committed in Rome⁶⁷. The *Tresor* also highlights the commercial interconnectedness between France and Italy, for instance when it discusses the Champagne area⁶⁸. In addition, it draws attention to the Provence as a region known for its excellent cloth manufacturers⁶⁹ – cloth manufacturing being the key domestic economy of Florence and the Provence being one of the key territories governed by Charles of Anjou.

More importantly, this consideration for a French audience is also discernible at a less anecdotal and more structural level. For instance, the central part of the first book, *i.e.* its universal history, contains a sizable excursus on the kings of France. This digression presents the French kings as an uninterrupted concatenation of Merovingian, Carolingian, and Capetian kings⁷⁰

the academic debate as to when and how Latini learned Old French: Pellegrini Sayiner, *From Brunetto Latini to Dante's ser Brunetto*, pp. 30-31, note 51. On the level of Latini's Old French: Perugi, *La parole plus delitable: osservazioni sulla lingua del Tresor*, pp. 493-513. For the hypothesis of the assistance of a native speaker: Galderisi, *Le maître et le juge*, pp. 53-55.

⁶¹ See also: *Tresor*, p. 788, III.71.3.

⁶² *Tresor*, p. 6, I.1.7: «Et se aucun demandoit por quoi ceste livre est escrit en roman selonc le patois de France, puis que nos [so]mes ytalien, je diroie que ce est par .ii. raisons: l'une que nos [so]mes en France, l'autre por ce que la parole est plus delitable et plus comune a touz langaiges». For a discussion of this passage: Galderisi, *Le maître et le juge*, pp. 25-30.

⁶³ On language choice as a political act: Briguglia, *Lo comun di Cicerone e la gentilezza di Egidio Romano*, p. 402.

⁶⁴ Meier, *Cosmos Politicus*.

⁶⁵ *Tresor*, pp. 154, I.109.2; 204-206, I.123.9.

⁶⁶ *Tresor*, p. 272, I.159.1.

⁶⁷ *Tresor*, pp. 748-750, I.59.7-8.

⁶⁸ *Tresor*, p. 304, I.184.7.

⁶⁹ *Tresor*, p. 724, III.52.4.

⁷⁰ *Tresor*, pp. 70-74, I.39; 118-24, I.89-90.

– a strategy known to be inspired by the usurpation of power by Hugh Capet (987). The historical section also exploits the popular legend of the Trojan ancestors of the Franks to underline their free character as a people⁷¹. It showcases Clovis as the first Christian king⁷², it stresses the protection offered by “bon” Peppin to the church⁷³, and it culminates in the portrayal of Charlemagne as the *defensor ecclesiae*⁷⁴ – not coincidentally the namesake for that second Charles, Charles of Anjou⁷⁵. Noteworthy is also the comparison of French and Italian dwelling types in a short section of the first book dealing with land cultivation⁷⁶. In this section the fortified towers and stone houses of the Italian cities and the fortifications dotting the Italian countryside are compared to the large and comfortable houses of the French. This difference in building styles is seen as the architectural expression of the diametrical opposition between the spirit of peace, reigning in France⁷⁷, and the constant war and unrest tearing apart the Italian cities. Likewise, the second book of the *Tresor* kicks off with a partial translation of Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*⁷⁸, a fashionably “hot” topic in Parisian circles during the period when Brunetto Latini spent his exile in France⁷⁹. In addition, a close reading of the rhetorical section of the third book of the *Tresor* reveals an interesting adaptation of earlier material to the interests of a French audience⁸⁰. While Latini's *Rettorica* referred to the (dis)advantageous character of a peace treaty between Milan and Cremona to illustrate the deliberative function of rhetoric, the *Tresor* modifies this illustration into a discussion of the pros and cons of a peace treaty between France and England – possibly a reference to the Treaty of Paris entered into between Louis IX of France and Henry III of England (4 December 1259)⁸¹. The loyalty and descent of Charles of Anjou is also underlined in another part of the rhetorical section, namely a text segment in which

⁷¹ *Tresor*, p. 70, I.39,1-3.

⁷² *Tresor*, p. 72, I.39,4.

⁷³ *Tresor*, p. 120, I.89,3.

⁷⁴ *Tresor*, p. 120, I.89,4-6.

⁷⁵ Dunbabin, *Charles I of Anjou*, p. 10. On the unusual character of this name for a Capetian, see: Herde, *Karl I von Anjou*, p. 25.

⁷⁶ *Tresor*, p. 228, I.129,2-3.

⁷⁷ This relative peacefulness was the result of the Treaty of Corbeil (1258) with the Kingdom of Aragon and the Treaty of Paris (1259) with England.

⁷⁸ Brunetto Latini did not use Aristotle's *Politics*, translated from Greek into Latin by William of Moerbeke (c. 1215-c. 1286) around 1260, paraphrased by Albertus Magnus (c. 1206-1280) around 1265, and commented upon (1267-1272) by Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274).

⁷⁹ The exact nature of the link between this part of the *Tresor* (II.2-49) and Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* has been hotly debated – an academic debate that is said to be settled by Gentili. Gentili, *L'uomo aristotelico alle origini della letteratura italiana*. See also: Artifoni, *Preistorie del bene comune*, p. 80. See, however: Beltrami, introduction to *Tresor*, pp. xvii-xviii, note 32. See also: Dotto, *L'etica di Aristotele secondo BNCF II.II.47 (versione di Tresor II.2-49)*, pp. 159-162.

⁸⁰ The rhetorical section of the *Tresor* consists of a revised and expanded version of Latini's *Rettorica*, an incomplete translation into Old Italian of the first seventeen chapters of Cicero's *De inventione*, accompanied by a first-person commentary by Brunetto Latini.

⁸¹ Compare *Rettorica*, p. 61 to *Tresor*, p. 642, III.2,10. See also: Ceva, *Brunetto Latini*, p. 152.

the characteristics which an orator can invoke to support (or not) a statement that a person has done (or not) something are discussed⁸². This deliberate interweaving of French and Italian elements is also an integral part of the last section of the *Tresor*, Latini's *Politica*, which presents involvement in city government as the most noble and highest art and profession⁸³. Insofar as it is authentic (see above⁸⁴), the inclusion of a flattering letter offering Charles of Anjou the Roman senatorship offers a fine illustration of this balancing act⁸⁵. In this section Brunetto Latini also uses typically French designations, such as *bailli* or *prévôt*, to describe Italian offices – a practice which also results in dittologies such as *poesté et prevosté* or *sires et prevost*⁸⁶. Likewise, citizens are referred to as *borjois et subjés*⁸⁷. The use of such lexical repetitions is not only typical of the medieval translations of Latin terms, but it can also be read as an attempt to straddle the conceptual gap between the political realities of the royal and communal world⁸⁸.

For a correct understanding of Latini's *Politica* it is, however, crucial to keep in mind that his main political objective was – and remained – to insist on the necessity to govern an Italian city in accordance with Italian customs⁸⁹ – that is to say, by means of a *podestà*. Brunetto Latini also underlined the need for consultation between the *podestà* and the local elite⁹⁰ – a significant correction, which is not to be found in Giovanni da Viterbo's text, to the basic principle of social isolation normally applicable to a *podestà*⁹¹. In other words, the addition of French elements at the three levels discussed above (language, form, and content) was designed to increase the receptiveness of a French audience to Latini's political message, but it was not intended to change the fundamentally Italian character of this message. However, this focus on city gov-

⁸² See: *Tresor*, p. 724, III.52,4.

⁸³ *Tresor*, p. 790, III.73,1. See also: *Tresor*, pp. 4, I.1,4; 12, I.4,5; 334, II.3,1; 604, II.119,1.

⁸⁴ See above, footnote 54 and the corresponding text.

⁸⁵ *Tresor*, pp. 800-802, III.77.

⁸⁶ *Tresor*, pp. 792, III.73,6; 798, III.76,1; 804, III.78,4; 814, III.82,5.

⁸⁷ *Tresor*, p. 792, III.74,3.

⁸⁸ Rao, *L'educazione cittadina di un principe d'Oltralpe*, pp. 422-423 (pointing out that the inclusion of these institutional references projects an image of compatability between the communal and royal world); Taddei, *Carlo I d'Angiò e le dedizioni dei comuni toscani*, pp. 79-80 (stating that this lexical fluidity ensures that the political message can be understood across institutional boundaries). On Charles' world and its Capetian links, see recently: Pécout, *La construction d'un office*. See also: Lusignan, *Brunet Latin et la pensée politique urbaine*, pp. 225-226 (highlighting the terminological links to the institutional context of the northern French cities).

⁸⁹ The *Tresor* sums it up with a combination of proverbs: «quant tu es a Rome, vive come [a] Rome, car de tels terres [tels] pot.» (*Tresor*, p. 852, III.101,1). See also: *De Reg. Civ.*, p. 277, CXL: «Et ideo cum fueritis rome, romano vivite more». The *Tresor* also stresses the need for the *podestà* to familiarize himself with local circumstances (p. 810, III.80,2) and the need to study local city statutes (p. 820, III.83,1). See also: *Tresor*, p. 4, I.1,4. On the possible link between this cross-reference to local rules and customs and the deletion of the most technical bits in this section, see above note 33.

⁹⁰ *Tresor*, pp. 822-823, III.83,4.

⁹¹ On this principle: Napolitano, *The Professional City Magistrate*, pp. 241-242.

ernment à l'italienne did not blind Brunetto Latini to the existence of different political systems. In contrast to Giovanni da Viterbo, whose text deals exclusively with the Italian *podestà* regime, Brunetto Latini explicitly acknowledges the existence of other political regimes throughout the *Tresor*⁹². In the political section he even introduces three typologies to classify these different systems⁹³. His first typology centres on the elective or non-elective character of the office in question: «li uns furent esleus a droit, et li autre par lor pooir»⁹⁴ – a fundamental distinction that has been interpreted by modern scholarship as the technical-institutional translation of the principle of urban *libertas*⁹⁵. Another classification is based upon the duration of the political office: an office can be hereditary (e.g. a king), for life (e.g. a pope), for the term of a year (e.g. a *podestà*), or the result of an *ad hoc* appointment (e.g. a legate). Within the group of officeholders who complete a one-year term – the exclusive focus of the political section⁹⁶ – Brunetto Latini subsequently makes a marked distinction between French officers and Italian city magistrates. French officers are appointed by a higher authority (such as the king). In addition, their office is said to be sold for the highest price, irrespective of the ability of the officers or the interests of the governed. In contrast, Italian city magistrates are elected by the citizens because they are deemed the most fit to rule the city in the common interest – and Brunetto Latini deliberately develops only the latter category in his subsequent discussion of city government, claiming that the former, French type of officer does not interest him nor his *ami* – although he also makes sure to add that, nonetheless, all officers, irrespective of their type of office, could learn many a good lesson from his treatise⁹⁷.

Finally, a comparison of the treatment of the *podestà* office in the *Tresor* and *De regimine civitatum* warns us against an overly simplistic or historically uninformed interpretation of the observed similarities and discrepancies⁹⁸. Firstly, some parts of the political manual – even if they are identical or similar – acquire an extra layer of meaning when they are set against their proper historical background. For instance, the stress placed on the need for the *podestà* to fully familiarize himself with the local situation, to attentively study – and respect – local city statutes and customs, and to consult the local elite (see above⁹⁹) becomes extra meaningful if the manual is intended for a *podestà* who is recruited not only from another Italian city (as was customary), but from another country with a different political tradition (e.g. France). On the other hand, some of the textual modifications by Brunetto Latini turn

⁹² *Tresor*, pp. 36, I.18,4; 412, II.44,1; 604, II.119,1; 800, III.77,1.

⁹³ *Tresor*, pp. 790-792, III.73,3-6.

⁹⁴ *Tresor*, p. 790, III.73,3.

⁹⁵ Vallerani, *Il comune come mito politico*, p. 187.

⁹⁶ *Tresor*, p. 790, III.73,4.

⁹⁷ *Tresor*, p. 790, III.73,5-6.

⁹⁸ For such a comparison, see also: Lusignan, *Brunet Latin et la pensée politique urbaine*, pp. 226-228 (with a procedural focus).

⁹⁹ See above, footnote 89 and corresponding text.

out to be merely apparent upon closer examination. For instance, Giovanni da Viterbo puts nobility of spirit – i.e. being a *vir bene morigeratus* – at the top of his checklist to determine the suitability of a candidate for the *podestà* office¹⁰⁰, while Brunetto Latini moves this criterion to the second place in his fitness-to-rule test, after the requirement of wisdom and experience, and he almost does a *volte-face* at the end of his discussion of the importance of personal virtue when he adds that a candidate «se il est nobles de cuer et de lignee, certes il en vaut trop miaus en totes choses»¹⁰¹. To fully understand the import of this particular alteration one has, however, to take into account the second book of the *Tresor* in which a similar line of reasoning is developed. Brunetto Latini states – again – that, although one is not born as a *podestà*, good birth – just as wealth and force – does help. At the same time he underlines that lineage in itself is not a guarantee of moral probity¹⁰². The ambiguity of this position is, however, resolved when Brunetto Latini specifies that the identification of nobility of blood as the proper basis of political power is an opinion held by «les [menues]genz», while the wise man realises that nobility of spirit should be its true foundation¹⁰³. Other discrepancies between both texts are – and remain –, however, substantive. Striking is, for instance, the specification in the *Tresor* that the protection of the weak against the depravity of the powerful – a traditional *topos* in this type of literature – should not go so far as to deprive the powerful of their legitimate rights simply because of the tears shed by the weak¹⁰⁴. This remarkable reservation echoes the disappointment felt within a significant part of the Florentine mercantile and financial elite over the *popolo* experience after the disastrous outcome of the Battle at Montaperti (1260) and their gradual integration into the *Parte Guelfa* in its aftermath (see below¹⁰⁵). Telling is also the fact that the elaborate discussion of war matters in the *De regimine civitatum* is significantly shortened in the *Tresor*¹⁰⁶. Moreover, its tone has fundamentally changed, stressing the importance of adhering to the advice of military experts. The lessons of the Montaperti disaster had clearly sunk in.

¹⁰⁰ *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 220-222, XI.

¹⁰¹ *Tresor*, pp. 794-798, III.75.

¹⁰² See, for instance: *Tresor*, pp. 452-454, II.54.7; 592-594, II.114.2-4.

¹⁰³ *Tresor*, p. 386, II.29.4. Compare to: *Tesoretto*, p. 106, vv. 1733-1738 (in which Latini clarifies that he adopts the “nobility of blood” – view expressed in these lines «non per mia maestranza, ma perch’ è sì usanza»). Recently, Brunetto Latini’s views on this particular topic have been scrutinized from a Dantescan perspective. Grimaldi, *La poesia della rettitudine*, esp. pp. 15-19. See also: Borsa, *Le dolci rime di Dante. Nobiltà d’animo e nobiltà dell’anima*; Borsa, *Sub nomine nobilitatis: Dante e Bartolo da Sassoferrato*.

¹⁰⁴ *Tresor*, p. 844, III.97.3.

¹⁰⁵ See below, footnotes 114-115 and corresponding text.

¹⁰⁶ Compare *De Reg. Civ.*, pp. 268-275, CXXXI-CXXXVI to *Tresor*, pp. 848-850, III.100.

5. *Latini's selection of Giovanni da Viterbo's manual as his copy-text*

As already indicated above¹⁰⁷, the question of the patronage of the *Tresor* and, related thereto, the debate on the communal or royal orientation of Brunetto Latini have not yet been settled. In this context the preceding textual comparison and analysis alerts us to the risk of drawing overly hasty conclusions on the relationship between the target audience of a literary work and the political orientation of its author. In addition, it prompts us not to get caught up in a false dichotomy between the communal or royal orientation of an author, admonishing us to leave room for more hybrid scenarios. More precisely, it shows that, even if the *Tresor* was targeted at a French audience (royal or not), Brunetto Latini's political message was – and remained – fundamentally Italian in character. At no stage did he relinquish his insistence on the need to govern an Italian city in accordance with Italian customs and in consultation with the local elite nor did he abandon his preference for the *podestà* office as the most appropriate vehicle to do so. This preference is especially noteworthy given the first-hand experience of Brunetto Latini of a different political regime, the *Primo Popolo* – an oddity already flagged in the past by John Namey¹⁰⁸. This choice becomes, however, less puzzling if one gives credence to the scholarly claims that the composition of Latini's *Politica* is not unrelated to the entry of Charles of Anjou onto the Italian political stage¹⁰⁹, nor to Latini's sympathies for the Angevin cause¹¹⁰. Natural-

¹⁰⁷ See above, footnotes 13-18 and corresponding text.

¹⁰⁸ Namey, *Brunetto Latini's Politica*, p. 35. The portrayal of Brunetto Latini as a prominent supporter of the Florentine *popolo* goes back to the days of Giovanni Villani (c.1275-1348) and it has been perpetuated up to the present day. See, for example: Artifoni, *Repubblicanesimo comunale e democrazia moderna*, p. 27; Artifoni, *Retorica e organizzazione del linguaggio politico nel Duecento italiano*, p. 164. See also: Zorzi, "Fracta est civitas magna in tres partes", pp. 69-70. Silvia Diacciati goes so far as to call Brunetto Latini one of the founders of the popular ideology. Diacciati, *Popolani e magnati*, p. 310.

¹⁰⁹ In a pioneering study of 2006 Paolo Grillo introduced the concept of a «dominio multiforme» to characterize Charles' grip over his Italian territories: Grillo, *Un dominio multiforme*. For an overview of the subsequent research into the Angevin presence in communal Italy, see: Barbero, *L'Italia comunale e le dominazioni angioine*; Milani, *Sulle relazioni politiche e ideologiche tra Carlo I d'Angiò e i comuni italiani*. Gabriele Taddei has recently studied this topic from a – often overlooked – Tuscan perspective. Taddei, *Carlo I d'Angiò e le dedizioni dei comuni toscani*; Taddei, *La coordinazione politica di Carlo I d'Angiò sulle città toscane*. For the claim of a relationship between Latini's composition of the *Tresor* and Charles' entry onto the Italian political stage: De Vincentiis, *Firenze e i signori*, pp. 18-24. See also: Rao, *L'educazione cittadina di un principe d'Oltralpe*; Zorzi, *Le signorie cittadine in Italia (secoli XIII-XV)*, p. 62; Zorzi, "Fracta est civitas magna in tres partes", p. 70. It should be noted, however, that this claim is less stringent than the hypothesis of a *Tresor* composed for Charles of Anjou (as formulated by Bolton Holloway and her followers – see above, footnote 15).

¹¹⁰ In addition to the evidence based upon Latini's professional biography (e.g. him becoming *protonotarius* (1269-1270) of Jean Britaud de Nangis (d. 1278), the Vicar-General of Charles of Anjou), it is noteworthy that two of his sons were in contact with the Angevin court. Bonaccursus Brunetti served as an ambassador to the court of King Robert of Anjou (1278-1343, r. 1309-1343) in 1314, while Perseo was attached to the same court, probably until 1321. On these sons: Becker, *Notes from the Florentine Archives*, pp. 201-202; Bolton Holloway, *Twice-Told Tales*, pp. 131 and 167. On Britaud de Nangis, see also the celebration of his military prowess

ly, this article is not the time nor place to recount these well-known historical circumstances in detail. The establishment of a papal-Angevin alliance in 1263-1264¹¹¹, backed by Florentine money¹¹², and its predilection for the establishment of a strong regime in Florence will, therefore, not be dwelled upon¹¹³, nor will the disappointment within a significant part of the Florentine merchant and financial elite over the *popolo* experience in the aftermath of the Battle at Montaperti¹¹⁴, their gradual integration into the Guelf party, and the installation of a party regime, led by the *Parte Guelfa*, in Florence be discussed at length¹¹⁵. Set against the historical background of the interplay of these factors at the supra-local and local level, the focus of this article remains, however, on the figure of Brunetto Latini and his selection of Giovanni da Viterbo's manual as his copy-text. Although it has proven impossible to re-

during the battle of Tagliacozzo in the second redaction of the *Tresor*: *Tresor*, p. 81, I.98,9 (in Carmody's edition).

¹¹¹ For the difficult and protracted negotiations between the French crown and the papacy, the study by Jordan remains the basic text: Jordan, *Les origines de la domination angevine en Italie*, pp. 420-454. See also: Dunbabin, *Charles I of Anjou*, pp. 131-132; Herde, *Karl I von Anjou*, pp. 40-46.

¹¹² On the small, but telling part played by Brunetto Latini in registering the support of the Florentine financial elite for this papal-Angevin alliance: Cella, *Gli atti rogati da Brunetto Latini in Francia*. See also: Maffia Scariati, *Gli atti rogati da Brunetto Latini in Francia*, pp. 459-461. These instruments were part of a larger series of similar undertakings. See: Raveggi, *Il regime ghibellino*, pp. 53-61 (who mentions undertakings by 181 bankers from 21 major companies). For an indication of the papal pressure involved in securing these undertakings: Jordan, *Les origines de la domination angevine en Italie*, p. 338. On the importance of this backing, given the financial difficulties faced by Charles of Anjou: Jordan, *Les origines de la domination angevine en Italie*, pp. 536-588.

¹¹³ Zorzi, *I rettori di Firenze*, pp. 544-545. The papacy adopted a particularly anti-popular stance. Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, II.1, pp. 841-842; Tarassi, *Il regime guelfo*, pp. 88-89. Charles of Anjou, on the other hand, was more willing to adopt a pragmatic approach. A study by Gabriele Taddei has also shown that Charles preferred to build upon the Hohenstaufen model (including the precedent of the imperial *podestà*) for the organisation of his rule over the Tuscan region. Taddei, *La coordinazione politica di Carlo I d'Angiò sulle città toscane*, pp. 126, 128, and 138. See also: Milani, *Sulle relazioni politiche e ideologiche tra Carlo I d'Angiò e i comuni italiani*, pp. 120-121; Rao, *L'educazione cittadina di un principe d'Oltralpe*, pp. 421-422. On the figure of the imperial *podestà*: Grillo, *Un imperatore per signore?*, pp. 77-100; Guyotjeannin, *I podestà nell'Italia centro-settentrionale (1237-1250)*, pp. 115-128. Although no record of the specific terms of the pact negotiated between Charles of Anjou and the city of Florence survives, it is a fact that Charles became *podestà* of Florence for an initial period of six years on Easter 1267 (17 April), confirmed by a ceremonious entry into the city on 7 May 1267, and later prolonged until 1279. In practice, he was represented by a vicar.

¹¹⁴ Although the decade of the *Primo Popolo* had represented a "golden age" for the city of Florence (see above, footnote 4 and the corresponding text), the popular regime had discredited itself in the eyes of many by its arrogant disregard for the military advice of leading *milites* in the run-up to the Battle of Montaperti. As a result, tactical errors were made and the Florentine army was crushed, despite its overwhelming numerical superiority. Indeed, although other accounts for this debacle (including treason by Ghibelline infiltrators) were also voiced by contemporaries, the foolish demagoguery of the *popolo* was a recurring explanation for this military failure. Raveggi, *Il regimo ghibellino*, pp. 4-6.

¹¹⁵ According to Gabriele Taddei, Charles of Anjou did not interfere in the internal workings of the Guelf party, nor in the control of Florence over its hinterland. Taddei, *Carlo I d'Angiò e le dedizioni dei comuni toscani*, pp. 72-73. The French king had power over the city, while the *Parte Guelfa* held power in the city. See also: Davidsohn, *Storia di Firenze*, II.1, pp. 856-857.

construct precisely how Brunetto Latini got hold of Giovanni da Viterbo's text, John Najemy rightly reminds us that manuscripts did circulate at the time and that Brunetto Latini may have known Giovanni da Viterbo either personally or by reputation¹¹⁶. Furthermore, it is well-known that Latini's network extended beyond the strict confines of the Guelf party and that he maintained contacts across party lines – also during his exile¹¹⁷. In any case, the preceding textual comparison and analysis have made it clear that Brunetto Latini not only managed to obtain a copy of Giovanni da Viterbo's text, but also that he systematically replaced the identifying elements of the original context in which Giovanni da Viterbo had composed his text by references more suitable to the new political setting in which Brunetto Latini had to put together his *Tresor*. In addition, Brunetto Latini was politically savvy enough to realize that, under the given circumstances, the *podestà* institution – and not a popular revival – was the most appropriate vehicle to promote and support an overlap of interests between Charles of Anjou, the papacy, and the Florentine Guelfs. To this end, he set out to preserve, to the extent feasible, a degree of internal autonomy for the Florentine commercial and financial elite, while, at the same time, incorporate the city into a supra-local, Angevin framework¹¹⁸. Furthermore, it is not unreasonable to envisage that Charles of Anjou and his entourage would have good reason to lend their ear to such a political message since it could boast imperial precedent and, most importantly, the Florentine elite had bankrolled their Italian adventure¹¹⁹. Finally, the availability of Giovanni da Viterbo's manual on the *podestà* office spared Brunetto Latini the arduous task of having to start from scratch when he set out to write down this political project¹²⁰. Indeed, time pressure – especially in the hectic period between 1263 and 1267 when the papal-Angevin alliance took shape – may have added to the attractiveness of copying an existing text. Nevertheless, this course of action did not prevent Brunetto Latini from putting his considerable rhetorical skills to good use by adroitly rewriting Giovanni da Viterbo's copy-text. He made it fit and serve his own circumstances and political objectives. Finally, even a quick glance at the other surviving representatives

¹¹⁶ Najemy, *Brunetto Latini's Politica*, p. 48, note 15. For a reconstruction of the intellectual environment of Latini (in which he could have come into contact with Giovanni da Viterbo's text), see also: Faini, *Prima di Brunetto*, esp. p. 24. Given the almost non-existent information on the figure of Giovanni da Viterbo (see above, footnote 19 and corresponding text), it is impossible to determine his socio-political position. Therefore, it is not possible to ascertain whether popular connections or sympathies on his part would have facilitated the transfer of his text to Brunetto Latini.

¹¹⁷ The *Favolello*, a letter composed by Latini between 1260 and 1263 and addressed to his Ghibelline friend, Rustico di Filippo, is a case in point.

¹¹⁸ See also: Rao, *L'educazione cittadina di un principe d'Oltralpe*, pp. 422-423.

¹¹⁹ Jordan, *Les origines de la domination angevine en Italie*, p. 556. On the link between the type of political regime imposed by Charles of Anjou and the funding of his Italian campaign: Milani, *Sulle relazioni politiche e ideologiche tra Carlo I d'Angiò e i comuni italiani*, pp. 122-124.

¹²⁰ To the best of my knowledge, a similar political handbook for the *popolo* regime has not survived.

of the so-called *podestà* literature – i.e. the *Oculus pastoralis* (1220s) and Orfino da Lodi's *De regimine et sapientia potestatis* (mid-1240s) – confirms that these texts were less suitable for this purpose. Although Brunetto Latini did some limited borrowing from the *Oculus pastoralis* (see above¹²¹) this thematically-organized speech collection, interwoven with an introduction to the *podestà* institution, lent itself less easily for a comprehensive and systematic treatment of the *podestà* office than the chronologically-structured *De regimine civitatum*, covering the one-year tenure of the *podestà* from start to end. Likewise, the extensive interest in the retinue of the *podestà* (especially the figure of the judge) and its detailed discussion of the living arrangements, living habits, and leisure activities of the *podestà*, two key characteristics of the *De regimine et sapientia potestatis*, made it less suited – assuming even that Brunetto Latini was aware of the very existence of this particular text given its limited transmission history¹²². In the end, this text was essentially a political testament, written in a strongly personal tone by Orfino da Lodi, a judge in the service of the highest imperial circles, for his son, Marco, starting out in a similar career. Furthermore, its verse format would certainly have complicated the copying process.

6. Conclusion

Brunetto Latini wrote *Li Livres dou Tresor* during an exile in France (1260-1266/67). It is generally accepted that the final section of the *Tresor*, known as his *Politica*, is largely based upon Giovanni da Viterbo's *De regimine civitatum*. Notwithstanding this agreement on the derivative relationship between both texts, Latini's *Politica* continues to puzzle scholars, as evidenced by the open question of the patronage of the *Tresor* or the academic debate on the communal or royal orientation of Brunetto Latini. Notwithstanding these uncertainties, a textual comparison of both texts and a historically informed analysis of the resulting textual adaptations has shown that the amount of intervention by Brunetto Latini – and its coherence in direction – is highly instructive on the originality of Latini's rewriting and indicative of its purpose. Firstly, Brunetto Latini took great care to depersonalize and delocalize Giovanni da Viterbo's text, paving the way for programmatic changes facilitating its political re-orientation from a pro-imperial to a papal-Angevin context. As a result of these relatively small, but interacting changes the text was able to cross the political divide between Guelfs and Ghibellines. In addition, Brunetto Latini performed a delicate balancing act, affecting the language, form and contents of the *Tresor*. More precisely, the addition of French elements at these three levels was intended to sell Latini's Italian political project to a

¹²¹ See above, footnote 23.

¹²² Only a single copy of this text, held by the Archivio Capitolare in Monza (6B38, formerly known as b11/71), survives.

French audience (an exiled Florentine and/or a native French patron (royal or not)). More precisely, Brunetto Latini contributed to the design of a hybrid government structure that would satisfy not only the desire for (internal) autonomy of the Florentine population (and especially its commercial and financial elite), but also safeguard the interests of the king by incorporating Florence into a supra-local, Angevin framework. At no stage did Brunetto Latini, however, relinquish his insistence on the need to govern an Italian city in accordance with Italian customs and in consultation with the local elite nor did he abandon his preference for the *podestà* office as the most appropriate vehicle to do so. Finally, Brunetto Latini's selection of Giovanni da Viterbo's manual as his copy-text has been discussed against the historical background of the interplay of a number of factors which were simultaneously at work at the supra-local, local, and personal level at the time of composition of Latini's *Politica*.

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