

UNIONS OF INTEREST:
FLORENTINE MARRIAGE TIES AND
BUSINESS NETWORKS IN THE KINGDOM OF
HUNGARY DURING THE REIGN OF
SIGISMUND OF LUXEMBURG

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In the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, it was usual for Florentines to make marriage alliances within their own social strata, even in their own neighbourhood.¹ While several studies have drawn attention to endogamous marriage ties that existed among Florentine merchant families, little has been said about exogamous marriages with outsiders to the Florentine merchant society.² There has also been less analysis of the effects of the matrilineal extension of Florentine merchant families on the composition of business networks, which might explain why several Florentine merchant brothers formed endogamous marriages while others were sought to marry woman outside their social strata or business network. The importance of *parentado*, as an extension of the agnatic *consorteria*, is well-reflected in several cases of Florentine merchant families who found trustworthy allies in the families of their in-laws enhancing their business, social and political life.³ The studies of Maria Elisa Soldani on the presence of Florentine and other Tuscan merchants in the territory of Kingdom of Aragon reveal the inseparable connections between marriage patterns and the social integration of those families

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² Klapisch, “Parenti, amici, vicini,” 953–982; Herlihy, *Les Toscans*, 393–419; Molho, *Marriage Alliance*, 299–348.

³ Kent, *The Rise of the Medici*, 49–61.

2 *Marriage in Premodern Europe*

who were engaged in long distance trade between Tuscany and the Crown of Aragon.⁴ Similar to Florentines in the Kingdom of Aragon, Florentine merchants seeking to integrate into the local society of the Kingdom of Hungary very often used their marriages to obtain social advantages, such as a new *parentado*, local rights or citizenship.

This essay focuses on exogamous ties that developed between Florentines and subjects of the Hungarian crown and Florentine settlement in the Kingdom. It will also reconstruct the relationship between endogamous marriages patterns among Florentine merchant families and their participation in long distance trade with the Kingdom of Hungary during the reign of Sigismund of Luxemburg (1387–1437). The time with which this essay is concerned, the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, coincides with the late republican period in Florence, dominated by the oligarchic regime, extending from the Ciompi Revolt until 1434, when Cosimo de' Medici returned to the city.

The principal hypothesis that emerges from this case study on Florentine merchant families and their business networks is that close cooperation between male relatives, in both the social and economic spheres, was crucial to a family's success and that commuting was integral to the life of international merchants. Therefore, it was essential for families interested in long distance trade that somebody from the *parentado* took on the role of mediator between the two regions where they engaged in business. In the case of families employed in the royal administration or in the import-export business of luxury goods and raw materials, thus was even more necessary, since they needed to work in close cooperation with local inhabitants. Thus Florentines who chose a subject of the Hungarian crown as a wife were able through their connections with the local society, to extend their business opportunities and obtain a certain social status in the kingdom. At the same time, other male members of the family kept their residence in Florence and cultivated their social and business connections in their home city. This kind of close cooperation among brothers and other male relatives can be observed within several Florentine merchant families who were operating outside of their homeland⁵

⁴ Soldani, "A Firenze mercanti, cavalieri nella Signoria dei re d'Aragona," 583, 602; Soldani, "Da accettanti a setanti," 220, 226–229.

⁵ See the example of the Strozzi brothers. Crabb, *The Strozzi of Florence*, 127.

This essay is organised in two parts. First, I will examine the social endogamy found among Florentine merchant families engaged in long distance trade with the Kingdom of Hungary. Second, I will analyse the exogamous ties that developed between Florentines and subjects of the Hungarian crown.

Many Florentines residing in the Kingdom of Hungary or commuting between the two lands, imported and exported both luxury goods and raw materials. Florentines, through their business channels, served to connect Buda and Florence. They were international merchant families, with generations of experience in long distance trade; their ancestors had been owners or employees of merchant banking companies in Florence. These included silk manufacturers and wool entrepreneurs who also, at the same time, influential politicians in the Florentine Signoria. The majority operated, through their agents, in the Kingdom of Hungary, while a few others opened branches or independent companies in Buda. The agents of such merchant companies travelled continuously between the two states, for business purposes, while their primary residence and their families remained in Florence. There was, however, an even smaller group of merchants who obtained offices and settled permanently in the Kingdom of Hungary. The merchants who were primarily transient tended to form marriage alliances with other Florentine merchant families, whereas expatriate Florentine merchants chose to marry members of the Hungarian crown. It was not unusual, however, for both patterns of spousal selection to occur within the same nuclear family.

The example of Pippo Spano and his family, the Scolari, reveals the difficulties in making generalisations about a collective family strategy, since the Scolari employed aspects of both endogamy and exogamy, despite the fact that both Pippo and his brother, Matteo, spent a considerable amount of time in the Hungary beginning in the early 1390s. One can hypothesise that this began when they were in their mid-twenties, as they started working for a number of different employers in the kingdom. Their father, Stefano, had died around 1390, about the time they reached adulthood.⁶ Since they lacked considerable property in Florence, they remained in Hungary. In 1399, Pippo and Matteo entered the king's service and became officers at the royal gold mines, in Körmöc.⁷ That same year, Pippo (1368/69–1426) married into a local family. His spouse, Borbála Ozorai, was from an estate neighbouring

⁶ ASF, Estimo 209, fol. 124v.

⁷ Körmöc today belongs to Slovakia and is known as Kremnica.

the castle where Pippo served as an officer. The Ozorai (*De Ozora* in Latin) family was not of baronial rank; however, Borbála's father, András, was a nobleman, with a considerable estate and without any male heirs. Pippo Scolari was fortunate to gain royal permission, along with his new wife, to inherit the estate at Ozora. From that time onwards, Pippo no longer known as *Pippo gallicus filius Stephani de Florentia* but, as early as in a document dated 1400, after the inheritance became legal, as *Pippo de Ozora*.⁸ With this legal act, the Florentine foreigner joined the nobility of the Hungarian crown, obtaining both a noble estate and rank, probably through his marriage. His brother, Matteo (1370/71–1426), also remained on in the kingdom, following Pippo into the administration of gold mines. Given their fortune, we might expect that both the Scolari brothers were settled permanently in their new home. On the contrary: within a few years of his brother's marriage, Matteo chose to marry a Florentine woman from a magnate family with Ghibelline loyalties like the Scolari (fig. 7.1).

One explanation for the differences in social behaviour within the same merchant family could be that neither Pippo nor Matteo entirely abandoned their mercantile activity after becoming Sigismund's *familiares*.⁹ Since Pippo chose a noblewoman for wife he was able, through his connection with the nobility, to establish economic ties with other Hungarian noblemen, as well as to serve the king as administrator of different mines. It was through the Scolari brothers' business connections that raw materials from these mines reached Italy. Matteo exchanged the raw materials for luxury goods such as exotic animals and high quality textiles and imported these into the kingdom. Therefore Matteo maintained his permanent residence in Florence in order to control the market, while Pippo did the same in Buda, and in other regions of the kingdom through his agents. This is one of many examples of Florentine brothers from merchant families that illustrate close cooperation among male relatives designed to promote the family's collective success.

Activities in the import-export business of luxury goods and raw materials no doubt accounted for the Scolari's new alliance with the Infangati, neighbours of the Scolari in Florence after 1405, when Matteo moved into the prestigious neighbourhood of Borgo degli Albizi and married one of the three daughters, Piera. The Infangati, in particular Matteo Scolari's father-in-law, Catellino di Baldinaccio, and his family were important local bankers

⁸ ZSO, vol. II/I, doc. 406.

⁹ On their mercantile activity see Prajda, "The Florentine Scolari Family".

in Florence, and Catellino's two sons, Antonio and Baldinaccio, cooperated closely with the Scolari, both in Florence and in Hungary.¹⁰ With Matteo Scolari, now his brother-in-law, Baldinaccio invested in opening a workshop, in Via Vaccareccia, specializing in the wool trade and probably in silk. Baldinaccio himself also spent considerable amount of time in the kingdom and he frequently stayed in the court the bishop, Andrea Scolari, held at Várád. Baldinaccio remained there, even after the bishop's death, in 1426, not returning to Florence until at least 1433.¹¹ Probably due to his foreign sojourn which made him unable to recoup all the credits owed to his father, Baldinaccio refused to accept his inheritance from his father, in 1424.¹² His business affairs did not go smoothly, even in the kingdom after the deaths of the Scolari in 1426, since, shortly afterwards, he was imprisoned, probably on account of debts.¹³ At the same time, the strong social as well as economic solidarity between Catellino di Baldinaccio Infangati's offspring and Matteo Scolari's family is demonstrated to by Matteo's donations, which provided a fair living for one of Catellino's three daughters, Caterina, who was a nun in the convent of San Francesco.¹⁴

Like Matteo Scolari's marriage with a Florentine woman, other merchants of Matteo's business network, with an interest in long distance trade with the Kingdom of Hungary, tended to form endogamous marriage ties with other elite Florentine merchant families. The endogamous marriage pattern is also well reflected by the case of the third of Catellino Infangati's

¹⁰ Giovanni and Baldinaccio di Catellino Infangati had a company together at the *Arte del Cambio* in 1359–1363. ASF, *Cambio* 14, fol. 37v. In 1366 Baldinaccio had already died, Giovanni di Catellino and his nephew, Catellino di Baldinaccio, continued the company. ASF, *Cambio* 14, fol. 53r. The matriculation of Baldinaccio di Catellino in 1353 is in ASF, *Cambio* 44, fol. 68r.

¹¹ Baldinaccio was present at the issue of Andrea Scolari's last will in 1426 in Várád. ASF, *Corp. Rel. Sopp.* 78.326, fol. 291r. Baldinaccio did not return back after Andrea Scolari's death in 1426, but remained in the Kingdom of Hungary at least until 1433. ASF, *Catasto* 478, fol. 463r. Várád today belongs to Romania and holds the name: Oradea.

¹² ASF, *Repudie d'eredità* 10, fol. 186v; ASF, *Corp. Rel. Sopp.* 78. 326, fol. 282r.

¹³ Francesco di Vieri Guadagni's report in 1433 on the Infangati brothers' debts mentioned that one of the brothers, Antonio was a bad debtor, meanwhile Baldinaccio was sent to prison in Hungary. ASF, *Catasto* 478, fol.772v; ASF, *Catasto* 57, fol. 911r.

¹⁴ ASF, *Corp. Rel. Sopp.* 78. 326, fol. 267v. See also: ASF, *Notarile* 5814, fol. 28v. However, it was not only important to focus on commercial affairs, but there was also necessary the issue of political alliances to consider: it was thus no coincidence that both families belonged to the magnates and were Ghibellines in Florence.

daughters, who married to Piero di Bernardo della Rena (?–1432), an international merchant and also close neighbour to the Infangati in the Borgo degli Albizi. Catellino's daughter, however, died after only a few years of marriage, leaving behind four children, one of whom, Sandra, was adopted by Matteo Scolari and brought up by Matteo's wife, Piera di Catellino Infangati, in their palace.¹⁵ The good social relations between the two families were certainly consolidated by additional business connections, since Piero also acted a number of times as procurator on behalf of his brother-in-law.¹⁶ The Della Rena family were silk and retail cloth merchants in Florence; Piero was once even nominated as consul in the Por Santa Maria guild.¹⁷ One of his brothers, Gianozzo, set up a money exchange business; two other brothers, Bartolomeo and Baldinaccio, appeared several times with Piero as debtors of the Scolari with whom they shared certain economic interests.¹⁸

The trading company formed by Piero della Rena, as a junior partner with Matteo Scolari, Antonio di Geri Bardi and Tommaso di Domenico Borghini for the long distance trade between the Florentine Republic and the Kingdom of Hungary, was probably operating in close cooperation with one that ran under the name of Tommaso Borghini (c.1381–c.1428/30) and which specialized in silk processing.¹⁹ Tommaso was a silk manufacturer, a member of the silk guild and, between 1410 and 1428, was elected several times as consul for the wool guild. It was probably Tommaso's brother, Jacopo, who started producing high quality textiles in the convent of San Martino.²⁰ Following his death, in 1401, the young Tommaso took over the business, running a warehouse-workshop (*fondaco*) in town. The company that Tommaso and Matteo Scolari formed was probably a good arrangement

¹⁵ However Piero and his first wife had more children from their marriage, only Sandra lived continuously with her aunt. His father, Piero remarried, in the early 1420s, a new wife who was Piero di Corso Adimari's daughter, Caterina. ASF, Catasto 482, fol. 433r; Catasto 484, fol. 544r.

¹⁶ ASF, Repudie 12, fol. 13r. Piero acted also as procurator to Matteo Scolari's behalf. ASF, Monte ser. II. 1806, fol. 144v.

¹⁷ Bartolomeo's matriculation to the Por Santa Maria guild in 1414 see: ASF, Seta 7, fol. 162v; ASF, Lana 246, fol. 15r.

¹⁸ ASF Cambio 65, fol. 67r; ASF, Catasto 35, fols. 1064r, 1067r; Catasto 59, fols. 874v, 647r.

¹⁹ ASF, Catasto 296, fol. 163v. One of Matteo Scolari's last wills refers to the partnership between the four Florentine merchants. ASF, Corp. Rel. 78. 326, fol. 270r.

²⁰ ASF, Lana 325, fol. 39v.

for both parties, especially for Tommaso who, after Matteo's death, in 1426, received the living provided by one of Matteo's estates, because he was a creditor of Matteo's heirs.²¹ The Borghini and the Scolari families continued their cooperation in business even after 1426. The cousins, Filippo, Lorenzo and Giambonino di Rinieri Scolari, Matteo's heirs were in daily contact with Tommaso Borghini's son, Domenico, through letters of business.²² The three brothers and the young Borghini may also have shared an interest in a business in Venice that imported and exported precious metals with the mediation of Domenico's company co-founded in Venice with the Scolari's other important business partner, Agnolo di Zanobi Gaddi.²³ As Tommaso Borghini traded in goods in close cooperation with the Scolari, it is not surprising that he married the daughter of Giovanni Cavalcanti, Lena, another Florentine who was also engaged in long-distance trade in the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary (fig. 7.2).²⁴

The Cavalcanti family, headed at this time by Giovanni di messer Amerigo Cavalcanti, were also closely linked to the Scolari family through the business networks of Giovanni's three sons. Two of them, Gianozzo and Simone, became Pippo Scolari's trusted men.²⁵ Gianozzo was an agent who travelled between Florence and Hungary, working in close cooperation for the Venetian branch of Cosimo de' Medici's company. He was also linked to Gianozzo's family through marriage.²⁶ From 1420 until at least until 1430, a junior partner of the Venetian branch was Gianozzo's other brother-in-law, Andrea di Lipaccio Bardi, who married Gianozzo's third sister, Cecca.²⁷

²¹ ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326, fol. 258r. According to the tax declaration of Pippo, Matteo and Andrea Scolari's heirs, in 1427, the living provided by the estate of Il fornello, located in Santo Stefano a Campi was given to Tommaso Borghini and company in payment for a debt of 900 florins. ASF, Catasto 59, fol. 871r.

²² ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326, fol. 354v.

²³ ASF, Stroziane ser. V. n. 1760, fols. 101v–102r.

²⁴ He married around 1411. ASF, Monte ser. II. 3733, fol. 129r.

²⁵ He was a testimony for Pippo Spano, in Buda. ASF, Stroziane ser. IV, fol. 635r.

²⁶ Pippo Spano had business affairs with Cavalcanti and, with his mediation, with the Medici of Venice. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 321, fols. 98r–99r. According to Filippo di Rinieri Scolari's tax declaration, in 1431, he had accounts to be closed with the Medici company, but, in reality, with Gianozzo Cavalcanti. ASF, Catasto 296, fol. 160r. Lorenzo de' Medici's wife was Giovanni Cavalcanti's other daughter, Ginevra.

²⁷ De Roover, *Medici Bank*, 393; ASF, Monte ser. II. 2416, fol. 207v; MAP, filza 153.2, fols. 4r–5r. For the marriage between Cecca and Illarione, see: ASF, Monte ser. II. 3733,

Further evidence of overlapping marriage and economic ties can be seen in the marriage between a distant niece of Gianozzo, Caterina di Baldinaccio di messer Salice Cavalcanti and the factor of Andrea di Filippo Scolari, Jacopo di Geppo da Monterinaldi.²⁸ The Cavalcanti and Da Monterinaldi families worked in close cooperation with the Scolari and with other merchants operating in the kingdom since Jacopo and his brother, Bernardo, served Andrea Scolari as his factor in the city of Florence.²⁹

Members of neither the Cavalcanti or the Borghini families had ever settled in Hungary nor took an active part in the royal administration, whereas other Florentine families appear to have been of double-rooted and developed further economic connections in the kingdom by reason of the offices held by the king's commission. Among the Cavalcanti, Gianozzo di Giovanni was bound by marriage ties also to another expatriate Florentine merchant family, the Buondelmonti; the mother of Giovanni di Andrea Buondelmonti was probably Gianozzo's aunt.³⁰ After Pippo Spano's death, in 1426, Giovanni Buondelmonti, the archbishop of Kalocsa in the Kingdom of Hungary, became the most influential member of the Florentine community. He received his office thanks to the benevolence of Pippo, who was one of his kinsmen. We can thus infer that Giovanni Buondelmonti and his brothers Lorenzo and Simone, who occasionally sojourned in their brother's court, were the Scolari's trusted agents and active participants in the trading that saw goods move between the two states.

One of the brothers, Lorenzo di Andrea Buondelmonti, also married another Florentine, Cecca di Filippo del Bene, with whom he shared a

fol. 130v.

²⁸ They married around 1408. ASF, Monte ser. II. 3733, fol. 213v.

²⁹ Baldinaccio's name appears in Francesco di Vieri Guadagni's account that made for Matteo Scolari's heirs. ASF, MAP filza 150, doc. 17, fol.19r. Jacopo di Geppo da Monterinaldi was mentioned several time, in business letters addressed to Andrea Scolari, as the one who handled the bishop's business affairs in Florence. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326, fols. 335r, 327r. Jacopo da Monterinaldi and his brother Bernardo as Andrea Scolari's factors in Florence entered into the possession of the living provided by Andrea Scolari's extensive estate when after the bishop's death in 1426, his heirs remained debtors of the brothers with a considerable amount of money. According to Jacopo da Monterinaldi's tax declaration, he took the estate of Vicchiomaggio. ASF, Catasto 81, fol. 495r.

³⁰ They were in Bács (Bač, Serbia) with the archbishop Buondelmonti who is a close relative to Gianozzo. "erano a Baccia chol arciveschovo de Buondelmonti che parente stretto di Gianozzo" ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.321, fol. 98v.

common ancestry.³¹ This branch of the prestigious international merchant family, the Del Bene, had already settled in the Kingdom of Hungary. Filippo di Giovanni del Bene was employed by Pippo Spano, to administer the salt mines, and he also held offices in Florence.³² His son, Jacopo, followed Filippo's path at the salt mines, cooperating in this capacity with Pippo Spano's heirs and nephews, Lorenzo and Filippo di Rinieri Scolari, while, at the same time, he followed the pattern of travelling back and forth between the two places.³³

Like Filippo del Bene, many other Florentines who had been settled for years in the kingdom were employed directly by King Sigismund or Pippo Spano in the administration of the mines and the mints. The number of Florentine merchants resident in Hungary, who received a certain interest in administration, collection and in import-export of precious metals, was as impressive in the case of Hungary as it was in the Iberian Peninsula, in Germany and in England during the same period.³⁴

Similar to the Del Bene, members of the Zati family were also employed in the royal administration. The Zati were international merchants who maintained company branches in various places in the Italian Peninsula, including Florence and Venice.³⁵ The companies were owned by Amerigo Zati's sons, Giuliano, Simone, Niccolò and Uberto, who already had connections with Hungary through the business contacts of their maternal family, the Bardi.³⁶ The Zati company in Venice specialized in the import and export of wool, precious metals, precious stones, spices and other luxury goods. All of the companies founded by the Zati brothers played an intermediary role between Florentine merchants operating in Hungary and

³¹ ASE, Monte II. 3733, fol. 165r. Ghetta di Francesco del Bene and Banchello di messer Manente Buondelmonti were married in the 1330s. ASE, Del Bene 27, fol. 8v.

³² He was also the papal legate in the Kingdom of Hungary, in 1412. ZsO, vol. III, doc. 2692.

³³ Lorenzo di Rinieri Scolari referred to the fact that he shared certain business interests with Jacopo del Bene, during King Sigismund's reign. ASE, MAP filza 16, fol. 35r.

³⁴ Soldani, "A Firenze mercanti, cavalieri nella Signoria dei re d'Aragona," 594; Weissen, "Florentines Kaufleute in Deutschland," Allen, "Italians in English Mints and Exchanges".

³⁵ There were two separate companies under the brothers' name: Uberto Zati and company, probably in Florence, and Giuliano and Niccolò Zati and brothers' company, in Venice. AOI, Estranei 188, fol. 128r.

³⁶ Amerigo Zati's wife was Margherita, the daughter of Giovanni di messer Bindo de Bardi, ASE, Catasto 452, fol. 620r.

their fellow-citizens, who conducted their business at home.³⁷ The brothers also invested money with the company of Simone di Pagolo Carnesecchi and his brothers in Buda and they carried out business transactions with Giambonino di Rinieri Scolari, with the intermediation of Domenico Borghini.³⁸ In addition, they imported wool into the Kingdom of Hungary, sometimes through their business channels and sometimes directly through one of the brothers, Uberto, who accompanied their goods to Buda.³⁹ The Zati were directly bound by marriage ties to the Scolari, since a cousin of the four brothers: Andrea di Francesco di Giovanni Zati (c.1402) married Matteo Scolari's adopted child, Sandra di Piero della Rena (c.1418), around 1433.⁴⁰ Andrea was a merchant in the wool guild, as were his relatives.⁴¹ Although his economic activities remain obscure, there is more information at our disposal

³⁷ Among their business partners, in the 1420s, were Giovanni di maestro Niccolò Falcucci, who was a travelling agent in the kingdom to the Scolari, as well as to other Florentines and Giovanni di Fronte, another experienced merchant, in Hungarian territory, was the Scolari's business partner. For the cooperation between the Zati company and Giovanni Falcucci, see his declaration: ASF, Catasto 52, fol. 1096v. For Giovanni's work as a travelling agent, see his letters to Andrea Scolari, from Szeben, in Transylvania. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326, fols. 277r, 328r, 388r. See Giovanni di Fronte's declaration, in 1427. ASF Catasto 35, fol. 739r.

³⁸ ASF, Catasto 475, fol. 578v; Catasto 477, fol. 573r. The three Carnesecchi brothers had business with the Zati's company, in Venice. ASF, Catasto 55, fol. 791v. Evidence is provided in several letters written by Giambonino di Rinieri Scolari to his brother, Filippo. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326, fols. 354r–355v, 357r–v, 361r–v.

³⁹ There are references in the brothers', Uberto, Giuliano and Niccolò's, tax declaration, in 1433, to the fact that Uberto had brought silk and wool with him to the Kingdom of Hungary. ASF, Catasto 452, fol. 825r.

⁴⁰ In the tax declaration of Piero della Rena's offspring, in 1433, Sandra was still unmarried at the age of fourteen. ASF, Catasto 480, fol. 307r. Even though they had a separate record in the catasto, Sandra lived in the household of Piera, Matteo Scolari's widow, since their father had already died and they were from the previous marriage of their father. ASF, Catasto 481, fol. 462v. In 1427 Francesco di Giovanni Zati lived in the same household with his sons, among whom Andrea and Antonio were in their twenties and unmarried. ASF, Catasto 36, fol. 372r; In 1446, Sandra and Andrea had already been married, probably in 1433, since their eldest child was around fifteen years old. ASF, Catasto 665, fol.264r. As for the relationship between the two Zati branches; according to the tax declaration of Amerigo Zati's wife, she kept the dowry deposit for Francesco Zati's daughter, Checca. ASF, Catasto 452, fol. 620r.

⁴¹ ASF, Lana 25, fol. 2v. Uberto d'Amerigo and his brothers were retail cloth merchants. ASF, Lana 319, fol. 130r.

regarding his brother, Antonio (c.1407). Antonio appeared in the kingdom for the first time, in 1427, as an international merchant acting as intermediary between Florentine merchants in Buda and Venice. Shortly afterwards, he received a royal commission to administer a salt mine and a mint, remaining there and serving the Hungarian kings in various offices.⁴²

Matteo Scolari, probably acknowledging the importance of a marriage within his own social and economic circle, married his natural daughter, Caterina, to another Florentine merchant, close neighbour and family friend. Caterina, therefore, entered into an even more advantageous marriage than did Sandra, with Vieri di Vieri Guadagni's son Francesco, in 1419. The Guadagni had been members of the Cambio and the wool guilds for several generations.⁴³ Vieri di Vieri (c.1426) and his brother, Bernardo, owned several other companies in Florence, including a banking company that was subsequently run by the Cambini family. They opened branches in Florence and Rome and, as moneychangers, they also maintained a table at the Mercato Nuovo. In addition they also had a warehouse-workshop for their wool manufacturing company.⁴⁴ It was the Guadagni bank that provided financial support to Matteo Scolari, investing money in his trading activities and maintaining a constantly open account for the Scolari in their bank.⁴⁵

⁴² Draskóczy, "Olaszok," 126–127.

⁴³ Membership of the Guadagni in the Cambio guild: Bernardo and Vieri di Vieri, Francesco, Simone, Migliore and Malatesta di Vieri di Vieri. ASF, Cambio 12, fols. 74r, 79r, 95r–97r. Membership in the Wool guild: Bernardo di Vieri di Migliore, Filippo and Francesco di Vieri di Vieri. ASF, Lana 25, fols. 8r, 17r; Vieri di Vieri member of the Calimala guild. ASF, Calimala 6, fol. 8r.

⁴⁴ Vieri di Vieri Guadagni during his life founded several companies, a banking company with Andreuolo di Niccolò Sacchetti and Fruosino di Luca da Panzano in Firenze. ASF, Catasto 29, vol. 1, fol. 8r; ASF, Guadagni 14.10, fol. 1r. For the *fondaco* see: ASF, Lana 318, fols. 45v, 76r, 52r; ASF, Catasto 478, fol. 280v.

⁴⁵ In 1427, an open account was kept, under the Scolari brothers' name: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326, fol. 242r. There was also an account between Matteo Scolari's heirs and the heirs of Vieri di Vieri Guadagni, Niccolò Sacchetti and Giovanni del Bellaccio. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326, fol. 259v. Francesco di Vieri di Vieri Guadagni was the one who kept a current account under Matteo Scolari's name, after his death, in 1426. ASF, MAP filza 150, fol. 17r. Two deposits of considerable size, 2000 florins and 6038 florins, were made under the names of Matteo Scolari and Vieri di Vieri Guadagni. ASF, Monte ser. II. 1806, fol. 148r.

Vieri di Vieri and Matteo were not only business partners but also neighbours and friends, since they lived on the same street in Borgo degli Albizi.⁴⁶

The examples of several Florentine merchants, operating in the kingdom, during Sigismund of Luxemburg's reign, reveal that international merchants tended to forge marriage alliances with each other in order to strengthen their economic relationships. The Scolari, Guadagni, Della Rena and Infangati families were not only neighbours and relatives through the female line, but they were also important business partners. Their unions provide evidence of the intergenerational cooperation that was prevalent among Florentine families operating in Hungary, on both the social and the economic level.

In spite of the fruitful cooperation between Florentine merchant families linked together by matrilineal ties, not all profitable unions were shaped by endogamous relationships between business partners. Other marriages were also arranged by men intending to settle in Hungary who sought to marry into local families who did not participate in long distance trade but rather owned a noble title or belonged to the restricted group of citizens, in towns close to the royal mines, mints or important market places. As Pippo Spano's case demonstrates, a few of Florentine expatriate administrators were fortunate to arrange to marry into local families and these new familial ties influenced their economic success.

Similar to the Scolari, the Melanesi, one of the royal administrator families was a family of double roots, bound both to Florentine and Hungarian societies by their marriages. The Melanesi were originally from Prato, but they had obtained citizenship in Florence in the middle of the fourteenth century and took an active part in long distance trade.⁴⁷ The Melanesi brothers, Tommaso and Simone, appeared in the Kingdom of Hungary as Florentine merchants and opened an independent company in Buda.⁴⁸ There they engaged in the import-export business of textiles and copper between the Italian Peninsula and the Kingdom of Hungary, cooperating with several

⁴⁶ In 1423, Vieri di Vieri helped Matteo to recoup his stolen goods. ASF, MAP filza 98, fol. 29r.

⁴⁷ See the correspondence of Jacopo del Bene and Luigi Melanesi. ASF, Del Bene, 49, fol. 11r.

⁴⁸ Tommaso was a senior partner of a merchant company, the partners were all Florentine merchants interested in the trade of wool and silk: Tommaso and Simone Corsi, Tommaso Davizi and Lodovico di ser Viviano Viviani. ASF, Catasto 29. 654r; Catasto 447. 528r.

Florentine merchants residing in the region.⁴⁹ Similar to other male members of the family, who were matriculated members of one of the five major guilds of Florence, one of the brothers, Tommaso became a member of the silk guild as *setaiolo*.⁵⁰ Probably the economic ties had bound the family for decades to important families of the Florentine wool industry, led Tommaso to establish marriage ties with the Falucci family. Tommaso's father-in-law was the merchant Luca di messer Niccolò, brother of Giovanni who acted for several years as Andrea Scolari's factor in the Kingdom of Hungary.⁵¹ Giovanni through his business network imported precious metals, including gold and silver, to the Italian Peninsula. As factor, he probably received an interest in those precious metals which came from the mines under Pippo Scolari's control and from other mines administered by Pippo's trusted men, the Bardi family. At the same time, Giovanni Falucci also dealt with precious metals which came from ecclesiastical revenues collected by the Bishop Andrea Scolari. Both of the in-law-families, the Melanesi and the Falucci, probably worked for Pippo Scolari in Hungary, working in the administration of mines while simultaneously conducting their own businesses. Therefore, a marriage tie between the Melanesi and the Falucci families consolidated not only their relationship among each other, but also their connections to the influential Scolari family. This strategy seems to have been successful since both of the Melanesi brothers acted several times as witnessed to notarial documents and executors of testaments by members of the Scolari family.⁵² Furthermore, after Andrea Scolari's death, in 1426, Tommaso's and Simone's third brother, Giovanni, was made bishop of Várad, an elevation largely attributed to Pippo Scolari's influence.⁵³ In order to accumulate further economic advantages from their foreign sojourn, Simone married into a local family in Buda (fig. 7.3). This act was probably part of a strategy to obtain a citizenship in the city of Buda.⁵⁴ In consequence, Simone received citizenship in 1427 and rented a house in the so-called *Platea Italica*, which was populated mainly by other

⁴⁹ See the correspondence of the Scolari family: ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326, fol. 348r; 354r; 355r; 361r; 366r.

⁵⁰ ASF, Seta 7, fol. 188r.

⁵¹ Petriboni, Di Borgo Rinaldi, *Priorista (1407–1459)*, 177.

⁵² ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326, fol. 291v–292r.

⁵³ ASF, Stroziane I. 229, fol. 56r.

⁵⁴ ASF Catasto 46, fol. 655v. Simone's marriage was also discussed earlier from the point of view of citizenship by Krisztina Arany. Arany, "Siker és kudarc", 949.

merchants of Italian origins. The Menalesi's businesses both, in Buda and in Florence, were flourishing during the years when the three elder Scolari were alive. Later on, when all of the Scolari disappeared — Andrea and Matteo probably died in an epidemic in Váradi and Pippo had suffered from gout for a long time — in the same year, 1426, precipitating an economic crisis that resulted in the Melanesi falling into bankruptcy in Florence. It was probably due, not only to the deaths of the Scolari, but also to the fact that two of the three brothers also died in the subsequent years; Giovanni within a few months after his nomination and Simone sometime between 1429 and 1430.⁵⁵ As a result of this economic crisis in the family, Tommaso and his uncle, Filippo di Filippo were forced to sell everything they owned in the cities of Florence and Prato and, for the outstanding debt, the elderly Filippo was even sent to prison in Prato.⁵⁶ Contributing to this crisis to a considerable extent, the Hungarian king had also confiscated a large amount of cash from the brothers in 1429.⁵⁷ In the same time, contradicting this image of misfortune, is the economic situation of the Melanesi. In the 1430s Tommaso had still been working in the king's service and when he died he was major royal administrator (*comes*) of copper mines.⁵⁸ It is probable that both Simone and Tommaso obtained citizenship in Buda as a result of Simone's marriage. Tommaso was able to remain in Buda and preserve his rights as a citizen, even after his brother's death. It is also highly likely that the same happened in the Scolari's case, given that the brothers not only held offices together and jointly owned property, but also Matteo had become a nobleman of the Hungarian crown by reason of Pippo's marriage and by royal donation.

The example of another administrative family, the Mannini, also reveals the close connections that could exist between settlement and marriage. The father, Salvestro di Giovanni, and his brothers were international merchants and members of the Calimala guild in Florence and they had forged connections in the Kingdom of Hungary by the 1420s, cooperating with Florentines who had already obtained a certain interest there in the long

⁵⁵ According to Baldassare di Luigi Melanesi, the heirs of Simone Melanesi and his brother Tommaso, they lost all of their substance in Hungary with the death of the bishop, their brother. "anno perduto ongni loro sustanza in Ungheria per la morte del veschovo loro fratello" ASE, Catasto 380, fol. 269r.

⁵⁶ ASE, Catasto 466, fol. 394r; 445, fol. 82v.

⁵⁷ ASE, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326, fol. 370r–v.

⁵⁸ Draskóczy, "Kamarai jövedelem és urbura a 15.század első felében," 152–153.

distance trade.⁵⁹ Salvestro's son Papi settled permanently in the Kingdom of Hungary, commissioned by Pippo Scolari to administer salt mines in the 1420s.⁶⁰ Papi's other male relatives, his brother or first cousin, Angelo, became an officer at the salt mines at Dés in Transylvania in the 1420s, and married into a local family (fig. 7.4).⁶¹ Severally of the Mannini cousins — including the sons of Antonio and Salvestro di Giovanni — remained permanently in the Kingdom of Hungary, administering salt mines.⁶² Giovanni di Antonio also worked in the royal administration, and he also settled in Transylvania in the 1440s, marrying a Hungarian noblewoman.⁶³ Later on, in the 1450s, members of the family residing in the Kingdom of Hungary received a noble title and their family name became Szentpéterszegi, which came from their most important estate.

Like the Mannini, members of the Baldi family also served as royal administrators, appearing in the Kingdom of Hungary even earlier than the reign of King Sigismund. According to Bonaccorso Pitti's diary, a certain Bartolomeo di Guido Baldi, administrator of the royal mint in Buda, provided him with hospitality in 1376.⁶⁴ It is likely that either his brother or his son (who was the Matteo in charge of the salt mines at Vízakna, in Transylvania) worked in Pippo Spano's service, sometime before 1408.⁶⁵ As a citizen of Szeben, he settled in the Transylvanian town and married into a local family.⁶⁶

However difficult it is to find evidence for the phenomenon, it is highly likely that there were significant differences between expatriate

⁵⁹ His brothers were Luigi and Antonio. ASF, Calimala 6, fols. 4r, 2v. Their fourth brother, Manno, was member of the Silk guild. ASF, Seta 7, fol. 126v. Salvestro made a pilgrimage, in 1411, to St. Patrick's Purgatory, where he met a Hungarian nobleman. "Purgatorio di San Patrizio," 57. For the business connections between the Zati brothers and the Mannini brothers see: ASF, Mercanzia 11778, fol. 14v.

⁶⁰ The bishop had left money for Papi in his last will, probably for his services. ASF, Corp. 78. 326, fol. 260v. , ASF, Catasto 80, fol. 599r.

⁶¹ Draskóczy, "Olaszok," 129–131. Dés today belongs to Romania and holds the name: Dej.

⁶² For the genealogy of the family see: ASF, Catasto 450, fol. 514r–515r.

⁶³ DL 55612. (1457)

⁶⁴ Bonaccorso Pitti, "Ricordi," 367.

⁶⁵ ZsO, vol. II/2, doc. 1613. Vízakna today is found in Romania and holds the name Oca Sibiului.

⁶⁶ ZsO, vol. II/2. doc. 6040, doc. 8080. Szeben today belongs to Romania and holds the name: Sibiu.

and commuting Florentine merchants, which are manifest in patterns of household formation. Contradicting the traditional view, which describes Florentine households as patrilocal, in which brides moved to their in-laws' house after the wedding, expatriate Florentine merchants instead tended to live in the neighbourhood or even in the family house, of their in-laws.⁶⁷ We have already seen through the case of the Melanesi brothers and that of Pippo Spano that grooms were the ones who moved into proximity with their in-law-families and not the brides. Pippo Spano moved to Ozora, to his father-in-law's residence and also his heirs; Filippo and Lorenzo di Rinieri settled with their in-laws, after returning to Florence from a long foreign sojourn.⁶⁸ Also, Simone Melanesi, Matteo Baldi and the Mannini followed the same pattern of settlement, moving into their father-in-laws' neighbourhood. It is also probable that the pattern of household formation shown by the Scolari and Melanesi families, wherein one brother stayed in Florence while the other moved to their adopted home might explain not only the close connection between economic ties with social behaviour but also with practices of inheritance. Management of family properties and inheritance, in Florence, required the presence of an able male member of the family, who was able to recoup the debts owed to his late relative, pay off his own debts and deal with the family's overall financial affairs. Lacking such a family member, resident in Florence, could lead either repudiation or loss of family property, as in the case of Baldinaccio di Catellino Infangati.⁶⁹

Since Hungarian sources regarding the lives and marriages of expatriate Florentine merchants resident in the Kingdom of Hungary are scarce, we might conclude that when Florentine merchants chose as wives subjects of the Hungarian crown, it was because they intended to settle there and integrate into the local community. In the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, marriage was practically the only way open to strangers who wished to integrate rapidly into the local society. Florentine merchants who engaged in long-distance trade tended to form business and social networks among themselves. International merchants married their daughters to

⁶⁷ Kent, *Household and Lineage*

⁶⁸ Filippo Scolari lived with Luigi di Giovanni Aldobrandini's family in the Piazza di Santa Maria Novella and Lorenzo Scolari lived in the parish of the San Jacopo sopr'Arno Church, in the house of Bernardo Sapiti.

⁶⁹ For practices of inheritance and repudiation see: Kuehn, *Heirs, Kin, and Creditors in Renaissance Florence*.

other international merchants. They also practiced endogamy in their living arrangements; in most cases, husbands and wives were not only of Florentine origin, but were also born in the same neighbourhood, or even on the same street. As we have seen, there were only a few cases when exogamic considerations influenced the selection of a spouse among the Florentine merchants in the kingdom. One possible explanation might be that the minority of these long-distance merchants saw, in their host country, the possibility to elevate their social rank and status. Among the majority, the Kingdom of Hungary was viewed as a source of income, a place they would leave behind once their business affairs were concluded.

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Abbreviations

DL = *A középkori Magyarország levéltári forrásainak adatbázisa*, ed. Rácz György Arcanum: Budapest, 2003.

ZsO= *Zsigmond-kori oklevéltár*, 8 vols. (1387–1422) ed. Mályusz Elemér and Borsa Iván and C. Tóth Norbert, Arcanum: Budapest, 1951–2001.

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