Writing Civic History in London, Cologne and Genoa

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Medieval historical writing was an institutional business.[1] It developed, at first, in the monasteries, cathedral chapters and royal courts of Europe. By the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries it had diffused widely into the towns as men holding office in civil administrations began to write chronicles in large numbers.[2] In Italy, one thinks immediately of the Florentines Dino Compagni and Giovanni Villani; in Germany of the scores of writers who penned town chronicles.[3] Indeed, today's *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte vom 14. bis in 16. Jahrhundert* series comprises thirty-eight volumes, the majority of which contain several chronicles.[4] In the mid-thirteenth century, however, very few men were doing anything comparable elsewhere in Europe. In fact, there were just a handful of cities where any chronicles on a substantial scale were being produced by the townsmen themselves. This study will focus on three of those cities: London, Genoa and Cologne.

Of course, three such different cities in three different countries produced three distinct historical texts. But there was also much alike in all three cities and their respective chronicles, and these parallels can tell us a great deal about the features and circumstances of medieval urban life which drove men to write history. This essay will argue that urban historical writing was fostered only after the establishment of two very practical preconditions: first, the creation of civic political institutions; second, the emergence of a literate, mercantile/commercial culture. Thereafter, it will try to shed a little light on this emergent trend in European history. But first we must turn to the cities and chronicles themselves.

The buds of this new literary genus first blossomed in Genoa. In 1100, a Genoese crusading fleet sailed east. Among the three thousand or so Genoese in this expedition was Caffaro di Rustico di Caschifellone, a nobleman born in 1080. Caffaro enjoyed a distinguished career as a military commander, an

1 C. Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon, 2004), pp. xx–xxi.

2 E. Van Houts, *Local and Regional Chronicles* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), esp. pp. 24–47.

3 Dino Compagni, *Cronica delle Cose Occorrenti ne' Tempi Suoi*, ed. D. Cappi (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medioevo, 2000); *Dino Compagni's Chronicle of Florence,* trans. D.E. Bornstein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986); Giovanni Villani, *Nuova Cronica*, ed. G. Porta, 3 vols. (Parma: Fondazione Pietro Bembo, 1990–91); F.R.H. Du Boulay, 'The German Town Chroniclers', in R.H.C. Davis and J.M. Wallace-Hadrill (eds.), *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to R. W. Southern* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), pp. 445–69.

4 De Boulay, 'German Town Chroniclers', p. 445.

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ambassador, a six-time *consul de comuni* and two-time *consul de placitis.* Yet it is as author that he achieved lasting renown. Caffaro wrote several works, all in Latin: the *Ystoria Captionis Almarie et Turtose*, a short description of an expedition in 1146–48 to capture the Muslim-held cities of Almeria and Tortosa in Spain; the *De Liberatione Civitatum Orientis*, an account of Genoese involvement in the First Crusade; and he may well have had a hand in another text entitled *Brevis Historia Iherosolymitani*. However, his most important production, and the one for which he is most famous, was the *Annali Genovesi* for the years 1099–1163.[5] These annals, originally a *private* undertaking recording the events of the First Crusade, soon grew in scope to become a *public* record of Genoese history. In 1152, Caffaro presented his annals to the consuls and the commune of Genoa. Delighted, they ordered that his text 'be copied by the public scribe and placed in the city archives, so that future generations of Genoese should know of the victories of the city'.[6]

In producing this text, Caffaro was the 'précurseur et modèle' for an almost two-hundred-year period of civic historical writing.[7] For, after Caffaro's death in 1166, the annals, uniquely in Europe, were continued by public officials appointed to the task by the civic authorities. All of these continuators wrote in Latin. With the appointment of Ottobono Scriba in 1174, the 'annals truly became a government record, written by employees of the regime with the purpose of justifying the actions and policies of those in power'.[8] This story

5 These texts are all found together in two manuscripts: the first, a twelfth- and thirteenth-century manuscript considered to be the official version produced for the Genoese archive, Paris, Bib. Nat., MS latin, 10136 (N); a fifteenth-century copy of this is London, BL Add. MS 12031 (B). The critical edition was begun in 1890 by Luigi Tommaso Belgrano, who used N as his base manuscript. Belgrano then worked as co-editor with Cesare Imperiale di Sant'Angelo on the continuations of the annals by Ottobono Scriba, Ogerio Pane and Marchisio Scriba (1174–1224) for the second volume, published in 1901. Thereafter the remaining three volumes of the Genoese annals, 1225–94, were edited by Imperiale di Sant'Angelo, and published in the 1920s, *Annali Genovesi di Caffaro e de' Suoi Continuatori*, Fonti per la Storia d'Italia, vols. 11–14 bis (Rome: Istituto Sordo-Muti, 1890–1929). An English translation of selections taken from Caffaro's works was published as part of the Crusades Texts in Translation Series, *Caffaro, Genoa and the Twelfth-Century Crusades*, trans. M. Hall and J. Philips (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

6 *Annali Genovesi,* i, pp. 3-4.

7 J. Heers, 'Le notaire dans les villes italiennes, témoin de son temps, mémorialiste et chroniqueur', in D. Poirion (ed.), *La chronique et l'histoire au moyen âge: Colloque des 24 et 25 mai 1982* (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1986), pp. 73–84 at 74. For Caffaro, *Annali Genovesi*, i, pp. lxix–xcix; G. Arnaldi, 'Il notaio-cronista e la cronache cittadine in Italia', in *La storia del diritto nel quadro delle scienze storiche* (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1966), pp. 293–309; R. Face, 'Secular History in Twelfth-Century Italy', *Journal of Medieval History*, 6 (1980), 169–84; C. Wickham, 'The Sense of the Past in Italian Communal Narratives', in P. Magdalino (ed.), *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe* (London: Hambledon, 1992), pp. 173–189; J. Dotson, 'The Genoese Civic Annals: Caffaro and his Continuators', in S. Dale, A. Williams Lewin and D.J. Osheim (eds.), *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), pp. 55–85; Hall and Philips, *Caffaro, Genoa and the Twelfth-Century Crusades*, pp. 1–44.

8 Dotson, 'Genoese Civic Annals', p. 62.

of authorised and approved civic historical writing came to an end on 16 July 1294 when Jacopo Doria presented his work to the officials of the commune.[9] Doria had been born into one of Genoa's most prominent families, in 1234. His brothers Oberto and Lamba were both captains of the people and won great military victories; another brother, Niccolo, was an admiral of the Genoese fleet.[10] Jacopo served as *podestà* of Voltri in 1273 and occasionally as an ambassador. He was one of four annalists responsible for composing the chronicle for 1270–79; from 1280–94 the chronicle was his work alone.[11] At the heart of Doria's narrative was the war with Pisa, and he is particularly well-informed about naval affairs – doubtless a result of his familial connections.[12]

Of all the Genoese annalists only Doria inquired into, and took obvious pride, in Genoa's rather modest Roman past.[13] After the collapse of the Western Empire, Genoa had fallen under the successive control of the Ostrogoths, Byzantines, Lombards and Carolingians, before it was devastatingly sacked by Muslim raiders in 934–5.[14] The first reference to communal government in Genoa comes from Caffaro, who wrote that a three-year *compagna* was established in 1099 under the direction of six consuls.[15] It is most likely, however, that, as with contemporary reports of the establishment of London's commune in 1191, this was a *post factum* acknowledgment.[16] There were three general factors which led to the formation of communes across northern and central Italy in the late eleventh century: detached imperial rule, ecclesiastical reform which limited the secular power of bishops, and immigration coupled with economic developments that saw the emergence of social groups without connections to local elites.[17] Genoa was no exception. True, she was under the nominal control of the Holy Roman Emperor in the High Middle Ages, but it was a 'vague and distant' relationship, and there is little evidence of any great imperial interference in the day-to-day life of the city.[18] The concerns of the twelfth-century Genoese, as articulated through their civic chronicles were the crusades, rivalry and war with Pisa, Mediterranean trade, relations with the emperor and other powers,

9 *Annali Genovesi,* v, pp. 174–6.

10 For Doria, *Annali Genovesi,* v, pp. xxix–lxi; S. A. Epstein, *Genoa and the Genoese, 958–1528* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), pp. 164–6.

11 From 1270 to1279 he worked alongside Oberto Stancone, Marchisino di Cassino and Bertolino di Bonifazio, *Annali Genovesi,* iv, pp. 127–187. Doria's sole continuation is *Annali Genovesi,* v, pp. 3–175.

12 For example, *Annali Genovesi,* v, pp. 30–45, 53–7, 62–8, 69–75, 114–18.

13 *Annali Genovesi,* v, pp. 4–6.

14 Epstein, *Genoa,* pp. 12–14.

15 *Annali Genovesi,* i, p. 5.

16 'Caffaro is so matter-of-fact about this compagna that it is impossible to believe that it was the first one. It is also inconceivable that he would have failed to note that this was the first compagna', Epstein, *Genoa,* p. 33. Cf. *Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls Preserved Among the Archives of the Corporation of the City of London at the Guildhall, A.D. 1364–1381,* ed. A.H. Thomas (Cambridge University Press, 1926), pp. xiii–xiv; S. Reynolds, 'The Rulers of London in the Twelfth Century', *History*, 57 (1972), 337–57 at 348–9.

17 D.P. Waley and T. Dean, *The Italian City-Republics*, 4th edn. (Harlow: Longman, 2010), pp. 10–11.

18 Epstein, *Genoa,* p. 71.

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and the development of intramural political and administrative structures.[19] Within twelfth-century Genoa internal feuding, factionalism and violence were recurring themes, although this is not always recorded in the official annals.[20] Much of this violence appears to have been politically motivated, perpetrated by warring elite families based in their fortified towers, but the commoner sort were often caught up in the bloodshed as clan and neighbourhood alliances (*alberghi*) solidified.[21] In response to this recurrent fighting, and following several experiments with different forms of consular government, in 1190, at the time when London's commune was emerging into the historical light, the 'wise men and counsellors of the city' decided to abolish consular rule and elect a *podestà*.[22] Between 1190 and 1216, the Genoese alternated between rule by a *podestà* and a consulate, with neither form of government bringing a satisfactory end to the vicious fighting.[23] External conflicts, in the Genoese agrarian hinterland and those caused by the challenging rule of Emperor Frederick II (1220–50), also begin to figure more prominently in the thirteenth-century Genoese annals. In 1250, however, Frederick died, and the Genoese were able to seal a series of peace agreements with other powers.

The Chronicle of the Mayors and Sheriffs of London was almost certainly the first chronicle of its kind produced in the British Isles.[24] Copied by six different scribes, it runs to over 50,000 words covering the years 1188–1274. In its early stages, the chronicle is little more than a register of London's municipal officers supplemented with occasional notices of variable accuracy.[25] Its accounts of the years 1232–1257 are fuller, although still averaging under 350 words each year.[26] From September 1257 onwards, however, the chronicle explodes into life, and thenceforth the chronicle averages over 2,500 words per year.[27] Indeed, after the death of Matthew Paris in 1259 to its close in 1274, the chronicle is the fullest chronicle from the British Isles to have survived. Moreover, many of its reports are eyewitness testimony, written very close in both space and time to the events which they record.

19 *Annali Genovesi*, i, *passim*; Epstein, *Genoa,* pp. 28–91.
20 Ibid., pp. 52, 75, 80–91.
21 Ibid., p. 86.
22 'Sapientes et consiliarii ciuitatis', *Annali Genovesi,* ii, pp. 36–7.
23 Epstein, *Genoa,* pp. 87–109.
24 The chronicle is found within a single manuscript commonly known as the *Liber de Antiquis Legibus* kept among the records of the City of London Corporation at the London Metropolitan Archives, COL/CS/01/001/001. The first printed edition was prepared by Thomas Stapleton (1806–1849) and was published in 1846 by the Camden Society, *De Antiquis Legibus Liber, Cronica Maiorum et Vicecomitum Londoniarum* (Camden Soc., 1846). Henry Thomas Riley translated the chronicle into English in his *Chronicles of the Mayors and Sheriffs of London A.D. 1188 to A.D. 1274,* ed. and trans. H.T. Riley (Rolls Series, 1863). Neither is satisfactory and I am currently preparing a new edition for publication with the Oxford Medieval Texts series based on my doctoral thesis, I. Stone, 'The Book of Arnold Fitz Thedmar' (King's College London D. Phil. thesis, 2016).
25 *Cron. Maior*., pp. 1–6.
26 *Cron. Maior*., pp. 6–29.
27 *Cron. Maior*., pp. 29–173.

The composer of this remarkable text was Arnold fitz Thedmar.[28] Arnold was born in London in 1201. His mother had been born in London to parents from Cologne; his father hailed from Bremen. Almost nothing is known of Arnold's early life. He probably grew wealthy through trade; certainly, by the time of his death he owned substantial property in London. He held office as an alderman of London, chirographer of the Jewish *archae*, and keeper of the city's charters – access to which must have helped him to write his chronicle. He also appears as 'alderman of the Germans' (which we should probably understand as representative of the German merchants in London). It is likely that Arnold began to take notes in the 1230s. In 1257, he fashioned these into a chronological narrative, and thenceforth he returned frequently to his chronicle to bring it up to date, usually scribing the entries in his own hand. Shortly after laying down his pen, probably in August or September 1274, Arnold died.

Arnold and the Genoese annalists are quite well-known to English-reading audiences, to whom, however, Gottfried Hagen, their thirteenth-century contemporary in Cologne, is virtually unknown.[29] Born sometime around 1230 to Gerhard, a subdeacon, and Blanza, Hagen probably spent his childhood in Xanten. During his youth he acquired the title 'master', so he most likely spent some time in Paris, and perhaps Italy too, but there is no certain evidence of his whereabouts. Hagen's first appearance in the historical record comes in 1262 in a document written in German in his own hand. From 1262 until 1271, Hagen wrote numerous documents, in Latin and German, but unlike Arnold, Caffaro and Doria, Hagen had no independent means and he almost certainly entered minor holy orders to acquire a benefice.[30] On 7 August 1268, in Cologne cathedral, acting as procurator he read out the city's defiant rebuttal of a recently-imposed sentence of bann and interdict. Hagen must have enjoyed a reputation as a jurist of some note to be employed in such a role, one he reprised in 1270. Between 1269 and 1271 he was appointed as city scribe, an office he held until he retired in 1287.[31] By 1291, perhaps before, Hagen was deacon of the diocese of St

[28] For what follows, Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 21–42.

[29] The critical edition of Hagen's chronicle is Gottfried Hagen, *Reimchronik der Stadt Köln,* herausgegeben von K. Gärtner, Andrea Rapp and Désirée Welter; unter mitarbeit von M. Groten; historischer Kommentar von Thomas Bohn, *Publikationen der Gesellschaft für Rheinische Geschicktskunde,* 74 (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2008). Their edition is based on a single fifteenth-century manuscript, Frankfurt, Stadtbibliothek und Universitätsbibliothek, MS Germ. 8 26 (F), compared, where possible, with a s. xiv^{in} fragment, Cologne, Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln, Dauerleihgabe des Düsseldorfer Hauptstaatsarchivs, HS C V 1 (D). For what follows, ibid, pp. ix–xv; M. Groten, 'Gottfried Hagen (ca. 1230–1299)', in *Rheinische Lebensbilder*, 17 (Cologne: Rheinland-Verlag, 1997), pp. 41–56; M. Groten, *Köln im 13. Jahrhundert. Gesellschaftlicher Wandel und Verfassungsentwicklung* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1998), pp. 228–57.

[30] Hagen's election, in 1270, as minister of the church of Klein St Martin led to a lengthy dispute with the abbess of St Maria im Kapitol over the right of presentation to this benefice. Hagen's editors have suggested that he may have composed his chronicle in gratitude for this election, Hagen, *Reimchronik*, p. xiv.

[31] Hagen's chronicle tells us that Hagen was *der stede schriver* who proclaimed the *Sühne* (expiation document), dated 16 April 1271, between Archbishop Engelbert (II) von Falkenberg (1261–74) and the citizens of Cologne Hagen, *Reimchronik,* v. 6283–4.

George. As head of the civic writing office and priest of the highest-ranking parish in Cologne, Hagen had effected a remarkable rise. He died on 4 July 1299.

Hagen's *Reimchronik* was mostly written in 1269–70 with a brief addendum to bring it up to date in April 1271.[32] It comprises 6293 lines of rhymed German of a lower-Rhineish dialect.[33] The *Kaiserchronik*, c. 1150, was the first vernacular *Reimchronik* composed in Germany; followed within a century by an 'avalanche' of similar works.[34] Their emergence has to be seen as part of the same European movement which produced Gaimar's *L'estoire des Engleis* in England and the *Geste de Bretuns* in France.[35] *Reimchroniken* were stylised poems as much as they were chronicles, usually composed for a two-fold reception: private enjoyment and public recitals. Hagen's was no different. In the words of Désirée Welter, his '*Boich van der stede Coelne*, as he himself titled it, is not a chronicle in a proper sense, for it lacks concrete dates and times; leaps of time occur and the skill of depiction is rather dramatic as opposed to narrative'.[36] An example of this is Hagen's report of the 1262 *Sühne* between archbishop and citizens.[37] Hagen must have known its terms since he drafted it. Yet his *Reimchronik's* account of its terms goes far beyond the text of the *Sühne* itself.[38] But Hagen's work represents something new, for, like the prose chronicles produced in London and Genoa, his *Reimchronik* was the first such witness to a civic production. It begins with a hagiographical introduction, 686 lines long (about a tenth of the complete text) which covers three episodes in Cologne's distant imperial past: the city's conversion to Christianity, led by St Maternus; the martyrdoms of St Ursula and her companions; and the Constantine/Silvester legend.[39] The more contemporary section of the chronicle, however, begins with the attack of Archbishop Conrad von Hochstaden (1238–61) on Cologne

32 Hagen writes at the end of his *Reimchronik*, 'Na Godes geburt dusent jair / zweyhundert ind seventzijch dat is wair / meister Godefrit maichde mich allein', Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 6289–91.

33 For Hagen's style, E. Dornfeld, *Untersuchungen zu Gottfried Hagens Reimchronik der Stadt Köln nebst Beiträgen zur mittelripuarischen Grammatik*, *Germanistische Abhandlungen,* xl (Breslau: M. & H. Marcus, 1912); S. Habscheid, *Die Kölner Urkundensprache des 13. Jahrhunderts: Flexionsmorphologische Untersuchungen zu den deutschen Urkunden Gottfried Hagens (1262–1274), Rheinisches Archiv,* cxxxv (Cologne: Böhlau, 1997).

34 D.H. Green, *Medieval Listening and Reading: The Primary Reception of German Literature 800–1300* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 265.

35 Ibid., pp. 169–222, 246.

36 D. Welter, 'Urkundliche Quellen und städtische Chronistik, Entstehung und Wirkung von Gottfried Hagens Reimchronik der Stadt Köln (1270/1)', in *Quelle – Text – Edition, Ergebnisse der österreichisch-deutschen Fachtagung der Arbeitsgemeinschaft für germanistiche Edition in Graz vom 28. Februar bis 3. März 1996*, hrsg. von A. Schwob und E. Streitfeld (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1997), pp. 123–32 at p. 125.

37 Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 2327–2364.

38 Welter, 'Urkundliche Quellen', pp. 126–8. For similar examples, D. Welter, 'Urkundenschreiber und Chronikautor, Die Verwendung von Urkunden in Gottfried Hagens "Reimchronik der Stadt Köln"', in *Urkundensprachen im germanisch-romanischen Grenzgebiet, Beiträge zum Kolloqium am 5/6. Oktober in Trier*, hrsg. von K. Gärtner und Günter Holtus (Trierer Historische Forschungen 35, Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1997), pp. 343–54 at 352–3.

39 Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 1–686.

in 1252, 'the point in time, at which the archbishop seriously began to question the freedom of the city as Gottfried understood it'.[40] Hagen was probably absent from Cologne during most of Conrad's twenty-three year archiepiscopate, as this period is covered in roughly 1,000 verses, or just a sixth of the text; indeed, Hagen's chronicle devotes only three verses to the removal of the mint officials by Conrad in 1259 – a turning-point in relations between city and lord.[41] However, as we have just seen, Hagen was definitely in Cologne from 1262 onwards, something evidenced by his *Reimchronik*: 3,500 verses, well over half of the text, cover the sequence of events from 1261 to 1271 under Engelbert II's rule.[42] In sum, Hagen's *Reimchronik* provides a vivid depiction of the eighteen year struggle between the archbishops and citizens of Cologne and intramural civic unrest.

After the collapse of Roman rule, urban life in Cologne continued in some form under the Franks, with religious life perhaps providing the greatest element of continuity: the cults of SS Ursula, Gereon and Severin were all established in early medieval Cologne.[43] Cologne was a city under both imperial and archiepiscopal control, and in the ninth and tenth centuries a series of royal grants of privileges endorsed the archbishop's power over the citizens. The archbishop had a mint and a market within the city from which he could collect certain tolls; he could demand payments from merchants travelling along the Rhine; he also held political and judicial authority over the citizens. But, much like their fellows in London, the citizens of Cologne claimed freedom from archiepiscopal tolls and the right not to be summoned to a court outside Cologne. However, two events reveal how tenuous archiepiscopal and imperial *de facto* power over the city actually was. In 1074, Cologners attacked the archbishop's official, *der Stadtvogt*, destroyed his chapel and forced the archbishop to flee via a back door; and in 1106 the citizens were able to resist a three-week siege led by the emperor Henry V. Thereafter, for the next century relations between the citizens and their masters were peaceful, and as in the case of Genoa, and perhaps London too, communal self-government in Cologne developed very much in response to the absence of her rulers. Archbishops of Cologne, such as Rainald von Dassel were frequently employed on imperial business and consequently the citizens learned to shift for themselves. In twelfth-century Cologne various unitary, municipal institutions emerged. The council of skivins (*Schöffenkolleg*; Lat. *senatus*) comprising (ideally) twenty-five skivins (*Schöffen*; Lat. *scabini*), who were assessors at court, controlled the civic seal and represented the city on embassies.[44] A social association called the *Richerzeche* formed by the richer and more powerful Cologne citizens, which met at the *Bürgerhaus* (later to

40 Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 687ff; Groten, *Köln,* p. 122.
41 Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 1218–20; Welter, 'Urkundliche Quellen', p. 129.
42 Hagen, *Reimchronik*, p. xi, v. 1614ff.
43 For what follows, P. Strait, *Cologne in the Twelfth Century* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1974), pp. 3–73.
44 Strait, *Cologne*, pp. 61–70; Groten, *Köln,* pp. 2, 123-133; M. Groten, 'Civic Record Keeping in Cologne, 1250-1330', in R. Britnell (ed.), *Pragmatic Literacy, East and West 1200–1330* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1997), pp. 81–88 at 81–2.

become the town hall) in Judengasse; half of its members were skivins, half not, and each year it elected two *Bürgermeister,* the senior of which was a skivin who kept the city's seal, the other junior drawn from the non-scabinal membership.[45] The city council (*Rat;* Lat. *consilium*) first appeared in Cologne, as in other German towns, at the end of the twelfth century; in 1216 it was dissolved, but had reformed by 1229, if not earlier; prior to 1259 no skivins sat on this body.[46] Ward magistrates retained important powers in Cologne's twelve parishes/wards. Cologne's leading families, *Geschlechter* (close to the Latin *genera*, a term used to mean 'families' or lineages') formed a wealthy, elite group who controlled these political and legal institutions.

The first half of the thirteenth century saw new schisms emerge in Cologne. The imperial divisions between the Staufer and the Welf parties following the double election of 1198, the rivalry between Guelfs and Ghibellines under Frederick II, and the dispute between supporters of Richard of Cornwall and King Alfonso of Castile following the double election of 1257/8 all left their mark on the city. Among other factors, the value which the citizens of Cologne placed on their trading connections with England meant that, with some exceptions, they generally supported Otto IV, Frederick II and Richard of Cornwall in these disputes.[47] Archbishop Conrad's decision, therefore, in 1239, to align himself with the pope against Frederick II led to tension between the archbishop and his citizens. But greater strain was placed upon the relationship between the archbishop and the citizens by the general change in imperial politics, as mid-thirteenth-century German prince-electors maintained their own power by electing weak kings, forcing all the great secular princes of Germany to turn their attention inwards.[48] In Cologne, long gone were the days of Rainald von Dassel acting as imperial chancellor, now the archbishop was very much 'more a local prince than an imperial agent' and keener, therefore, to consolidate his power over both the citizens and local counts.[49] Successive archbishops, Engelbert von Berg (1216–25), Henry von Müllenmark (1225–38), Conrad and Engelbert II all clashed with the citizens over rights, privileges and freedoms, which drove the citizens to ally themselves with local nobles against the archbishop. Accords struck between the citizens and their archbishop, in 1252 and 1258 (the *Kleiner Schied* and the *Großer Schied*), attempted to clarify the rights and obligations of both parties and allow us to glimpse the points of tension.[50] For the archbishops the problems were caused by fundamental constitutional issues: Conrad's claim,

45 Strait, *Cologne*, pp. 70–73; Groten, *Köln,* pp. 4–6.

46 Groten, *Köln,* pp. 60–78, 160–3.

47 Otto IV was grandson to Henry II of England, grew up in England and was given a great deal of support in his struggle for the imperial throne by King Richard I and King John. Frederick II was married to Isabella, sister of King Henry III of England and Richard of Cornwall. It is hard to know why, but the leading families of Parfuse, von der Mühlengasse, Rufus and von der Ehrenpforte all supported Philip of Swabia against Otto IV.

48 L. Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity: Authority and Crisis, 1245–1414* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 77–8.

49 Strait, *Cologne,* p. 144.

50 *Urkundenbuch für die Geschichte des Niederrheins,* ed. T.J. Lacomblet, 4 vols. (Düsseldorf: J. Wolf, 1840-1858), ii, pp. 244–52; Groten, *Köln,* pp. 121–2, 186–93.

in 1258, that he alone was 'highest judge and lord of the city', suggests that not everyone in Cologne was of the same mind as he was.[51] It is hard to imagine Henry III being compelled to make a similar claim to the Londoners. Whereas for the Cologners, complaints about toll, trade and the mint reveal that their concerns were primarily, although not exclusively, economic. In 1258, issues of immunity and arrest procedure exercised the minds of the citizens, too, and in 1216, the citizens had protested a breach of communal liberties to Engelbert I: 'Lord, this is contrary to the law of the city'.[52]

Estimating the population of any medieval town is fraught with difficulty, but in the middle of the thirteenth century London, Cologne and Genoa probably had populations of broadly similar sizes and, numerically at least, all stood in the second rank of European cities, behind Paris and Venice.[53] All three cities had rather unexceptional Roman pasts, something reflected, as we shall see, in the chronicles produced in the cities. London and Cologne were by far the biggest cities in England and Germany respectively, and they shared close political, economic and social connections, as is shown, indeed, by Arnold fitz Thedmar's own family history and career.[54] The formation of communes in twelfth-century Germany, Flanders and England was a process influenced by events similar to those in the Italian towns, and Hagen's own well-developed sense of communal freedom suggests that he may well have spent considerable time in Italy.[55] The only contemporary template for the agreements which the Cologners struck with local counts in the 1260s, which Hagen himself drafted, were the *cittadinatico* of Italy, in which nobles and urban elites allied themselves.[56] Yet, during the thirteenth century, at least, the Genoese had little direct intercourse with either the Londoners or the Cologners. With mountains at their back, the Genoese looked south and east across the Mediterranean Sea. Genoa is never once mentioned in Arnold's chronicle, nor is London once mentioned in the Genoese annals. There is no evidence at all that any of our chroniclers in one city knew of similar works being composed in the other cities; instead, in all three places urban historical writing developed quite independently. In all three cities, however, these writers only began their work after the establishment of two clear preconditions.

51 'Summus iudex et dominus civitatis', Groten, *Köln,* p. 188.

52 'Domine, hoc est contra ius ciuitatis', Groten, *Köln,* p. 102.

53 Genoa *c.* 50,000, Epstein, *Genoa*, p. 138. London *c.* 50-60,000 people? Derek Keene estimated, *c.*1300, London's population to be a potential 80,000 people but Pamela Nightingale has suggested a figure closer to 60,000: D. Keene, 'London from the Post-Roman Period to 1300', in D. Palliser (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain,* 3 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 2000), i, pp. 187–216, esp. p. 195; P. Nightingale, 'The Growth of London in the Medieval English Economy', in R. Britnell and J. Hatcher (eds.), *Progress and Problems in Medieval England* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 89–106, esp. pp. 97–8; Cologne *c.* 40,000, E. Isenmann, *Die Deutsche Stadt im Mittelalter, 1150–1550* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2012), p. 60.

54 Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 21–31.

55 C. N. L. Brooke and G. Keir, *London, 800–1216: The Shaping of a City* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1975), pp. 45–7, 237–45**;** Groten, *Köln,* pp. 78, 121.

56 Groten, *Köln,* pp. 234–5. Cf. ibid. pp. 267–8.

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The first of these was the founding, in all three locations, of municipal, political institutions. *Civic* political institutions preceded *civic* chronicle writing. In Genoa, the *compagna* headed by consuls emerged at the end of the eleventh century.[57] In Cologne, the *Schöffenkolleg, Richerzeche, Bürgermeister*, *Rat* and parish magistrates all appear in the twelfth century. London had, perhaps, the oldest civic institution found in all three cities – the Husting Court could claim an Anglo-Saxon history – but political institutions came later. The right to elect sheriffs and the office of mayor were both instituted in the twelfth century, and early in the thirteenth century came the first appearances of conciliar government.[58] As we shall see, civic historical writing in all three cities was undertaken for many of the same reasons: to glorify the communal past, to place one's city and oneself in the world, and to defend privileges and liberties. In all three cities, the writers articulated these three motivations through the prism of their cities' political institutions. Pride in one's city was almost always a pride in its institutions; these institutions gave the city a place in the world around it, and, usually, the writers a place in the city; and, more often than not, municipal privileges were granted to, and defended by, urban institutions.

These institutions, moreover, needed and created records and the institutional archives of all three cities were well-stocked. From 1229 in Genoa, all important documents relating to foreign affairs were registered in a book of laws; within a generation so too were domestic documents.[59] In 1263, the Genoese annals refer to public documents which 'remained in the public archive'.[60] In 1269, the Genoese agreed peace with Charles of Anjou and the written accord stated that it was to be placed in the 'statutes of the city of Genoa and should thence never be removed'.[61] In Cologne, the first evidence of systematic record-keeping is seen in the parishes: the oldest extant civic document, a roll of citizens of St Lawrence Parish, can be dated to the 1120s. From at least 1135, parish officials began to record transactions of land, property, inheritance, dowries and gifts on documents known as *Schreinskarten*; early in the thirteenth century these individual folios began to be compiled into codices known as *Schreinsbücher*.[62] The oldest documents in Cologne's unitary archive date from the mid-twelfth century, and in the second half of the thirteenth century it already contained numerous documents, many of which Hagen had himself

57 Epstein, *Genoa,* pp. 33–40.

58 Reynolds, 'Rulers', pp. 341–5, 348–53; *Cron. Maior*., pp. 1–2.

59 *I Libri Iurium della Repubblica di Genova*, ed. M. Bibolini, E. Pallavicino, D. Puncuh and A. Rovere, 9 vols. (Rome: Ministero per i beni culturali e ambientali, Ufficio centrale per i beni archivistici, 1992–2002).

60 'Extiterunt publice scripture scripte in arciuo publico', *Annali Genovesi,* iv, p. 53.

61 'Statutis civitatis Ianue, et nunquam inde removeantur', Cf. the annalist's note that the treaty was written 'in codicibus publicis comunis Ianue, ubi scribuntur conuentiones', *Annali Genovesi,* iv, pp. 115, 120 n.3.

62 Strait, *Cologne,* pp. 1–3. The German noun *der Schrein* (Lat. *scrinium*) is best translated as 'chest' in English. Selections of these can be found in *Die Kölner Schreinsbücher des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts,* ed. H. Planitz and T. Buyken (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachf, 1937). For a good introduction to record keeping in Cologne, Groten, 'Civic Record Keeping in Cologne, 1250–1330', pp. 81–8.

scribed.[63] The Londoners registered and stored charters granted to the city by eleventh- and twelfth-century kings, and Arnold relied heavily on letters sent to London's political leaders to compose his chronicle.[64] In fact, in all three cities the records of these institutions frequently found their way from the civic archives straight into the civic chronicles.[65] That need not surprise us. Arnold, Doria and Hagen were all employed in some archival role. In turn, in Genoa, the annals which Caffaro and Doria composed, after their public presentations, were deposited in the city's archive.[66] Arnold's book, too, soon made its way into London's archive – indeed, it is there to this day.[67] Hagen's *Reimchronik* was hardly known outside of Cologne, yet the extensive use that was made of it by two late-medieval Cologner civic writers shows that Hagen's *Reimchronik*, too, had pride of place among the city's records.[68] Indeed, when Gerlach van Hauwe wrote his account of the strife which engulfed Cologne, in 1396–1400, he called his narrative *Dat Nuwe Boich*, to differentiate it from Hagen's old *Boich*.[69]

The second precondition was the existence, in all three cities, of a well-developed mercantile and commercial culture. It is no coincidence that urban chronicle writing is first seen in the maritime/riparian trading cities of London, Cologne and Genoa, rather than the scholastic centres of Paris, Bologna and Oxford. All medieval towns were well-connected, to their immediate environs and to the wider world, and they would all have been filled with travellers bringing news from near and far. But what existed in these commercial centres was a practical, pragmatic and functional literary culture, built upon the legal documentary record we have just discussed. Indeed, by the mid-thirteenth century the majority of merchants in these cities, reliant on documents, letters and contracts, would have been literate men, if only at a rudimentary level.[70] To be clear, that is not to say that there was no contemporary, urbane literary culture in these cities. Quite the opposite. In Genoa men such as Simon of Genoa, Giovanni Balbi and Jacopo da Voragine all produced sophisticated literary

[63] *Urkundenbuch für die Geschichte des Niederrheins,* i, pp. 276, ii, pp. 291ff; *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Köln,* ed. L. Ennen and G. Eckert, 6 vols. (Cologne: M. DuMont-Schauberg, 1863-79), pp. i, xiii.

[64] M. Bateson, 'A London Municipal Collection of the Reign of John', *English Historical Review*, 17 (1902), 480–511 at 505; *Cron. Maior.,* p. 253; Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 95–6.

[65] For example, *Annali Genovesi,* i, pp. 43–5, 55–9; ii, pp. 160–1, iii, pp. 15–16, 34–6, 44–5, 58–9, 64–6, 106–8; Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 2327–63, 2975–3002, 6283–7; Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 91–6.

[66] *Annali Genovesi,* i, pp. 3–4; v, p. 176.

[67] Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 164–9.

[68] It was used extensively in the *Agrippina* of Henry von Beeck (1469–72) and in the *Koelhoffsche Chronicle* (1499), Hagen, *Reimchronik*, p. xxviii; Groten, 'Gottfried Hagen', p. 50.

[69] Du Boulay, 'The German Town Chroniclers', pp. 457–8.

[70] M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record, England 1066–1307,* 2nd edn. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), pp. 224–52; M.B. Parkes, 'The Literacy of the Laity' in M.B. Parkes, *Scribes, Scripts and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Medieval Texts* (London: Hambledon, 1991), pp. 275–97, esp. pp. 278–83.

works.[71] Caesarius von Heisterbach spent his early years in Cologne, and ten years before Hagen picked up his pen, an unnamed composer, probably Master Ludwig von der Mühlengasse, wrote an admittedly rather narrow and elitist Latin *Reimchronik*.[72] In twelfth-century London, Ralph of Diss had compiled his *Opera Historica,* and William fitz Stephen his *Vita sancti Thome*, packed full of classical allusions.[73] But the civic chronicling in these cities was, for the most part, independent of these other works. As we shall see, the chronicles produced by these writers were certainly not produced in a classical, spiritual or scholastic tradition.

In cities such as Cologne and Genoa, with a Roman law tradition, this documentary culture spawned a notarial class. Notaries drew up precisely-worded legal and financial contracts, they provided 'society with a class of trained men who preserved things in writing, [which] allowed illiterates to borrow memory and records'.[74] It was a Genoese notary, Giovanni Scriba, who, between 1154 and 1164, compiled Europe's oldest surviving notarial cartulary.[75] A century later several hundred notaries in Genoa formed a secular, elite class of educated men.[76] These were men whose literate interests ranged far wider than just their professional work; one Genoese notary, Ruggero di Palermo, owned at least ten books when he died.[77] Brunetto Latini, one of the first medieval writers to compose a treatise on urban government, was a Florentine notary. In Cologne, the *Schreinsbücher*, were, to all intents and purposes, notarial repositories. Hagen, knowledgeable about both Roman and canon law, compiled these as well as other notarial contracts before and after he wrote his chronicle.[78] His two predecessors as city scribe, Henry von der Brothalle (*c.* 1225–48) and his anonymous successor (1248–71) both drafted notarial documents.[79] The later Cologner writer, Van Hauwe, was a notary too.[80]

True, Caffaro, Doria and Arnold were not notaries. Indeed, London, which had not that same Roman law tradition, had no notaries until the late thirteenth century.[81] Yet in what Caffaro, Doria and Arnold wrote, the close relationship between law, documentary record and civic historical writing is evident. Each

71 Epstein, *Genoa,* pp. 160–77.

72 *Chronici Rhythmici Coloniensis Fragmenta, MGH SS,* xxv, ed. G. Waitz (Hanover, 1880), pp. 369–80; for Ludwig's authorship, Groten, *Köln,* pp. 220–4. Cf. *Chronica Regia Coloniensis, MGH SSrg,* xviii, ed. G. Waitz (Hanover, 1880).

73 *Radulfi de Diceto Decani Londoniensis Opera Historica,* ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols. (Rolls Series, 1876); *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. J.C. Robertson, 7 vols. (Rolls Series, 1875-85), iii.

74 Epstein, *Genoa*, p. 55.

75 *Il Cartolare de Giovanni Scriba*, ed. M. Chiaudano and M. Moresco, 2 vols. (Rome: S. Lattes, 1935).

76 Epstein, *Genoa,* p. 161.

77 G. Petti Balbi, 'Il libro nella società genovese del sec. XIII', *La Bibliofolia*, 80 (1978), 1–46 at 39.

78 Hagen, *Reimchronik,* p. xii–xiv.

79 For Hagen's predecessors, Groten, *Köln*, pp. 56–7, 114–18, 319.

80 Du Boulay, 'The German Town Chroniclers', pp. 457–8.

81 C.R. Cheney, *Notaries Public in England in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972).

exercised judicial responsibility within their cities, each had access to the records of government, and each wrote a functional, precise and accurate Latin that would not have been out of place in a notarial cartulary. One need only turn to Doria's lists of ships and manpower, or his detail of contracts and agreements, to see evidence of his notarial precision.[82] Caffaro, Doria and Arnold all possessed the 'sorte d'omniprésence' which Heers noted was typical of the notary: 'homme d'écritures, homme d'affaires, mais aussi de gouvernement, de politique et d'administration, de plume enfin'.[83] Master Bartolomeo, who may have had a hand in composing the Genoese annals between 1225 and 1238, was notary to the commune.[84] When the Genoese authorities instituted a committee of four to write the annals, two of the men had to be 'legal experts'.[85] When Doria presented his annals to the commune in 1294, it was in the presence of William di Caponibus, 'notary'.[86] Notaries were men trusted to authenticate legal contracts, who could be more trusted, then, to write the past of these cities.[87]

These, then, were the two very practical preconditions necessary for the development of substantive, urban historical writing. What of its nature? One immediately obvious trait of this civic historical writing is that it was produced by writers who were all eyewitnesses to, indeed often protagonists in, the affairs of which they wrote. This eyewitness testimony often makes their works unique sources for events. Arnold played a leading role in the maelstrom of national and local politics. In 1258, he was accused of malfeasance by the king and deposed as alderman; in 1264, he administered an oath taken by the baronial rebels and Londoners; and in 1265 he represented the humbled Londoners before the king and was probably even imprisoned as a result.[88] Caffaro, too, held political and diplomatic office, he went on crusade, and a typical entry in the Genoese annals reads 'Caffaro, who had these things written down, was present, observed, and as a result rendered testimony, and thus without doubt confirms it to be true'.[89] Master Bartolomeo, possibly one of Caffaro's continuators, was responsible, in November 1227, not just for recording a confirmation of peace and a communal oath (much like Arnold in 1264), he actually proclaimed both on behalf of the *podestà*.[90] The first indication that Hagen was an eyewitness to events he recorded comes in the summer of 1262.[91] Thereafter, Hagen acted as a *procurator* and messenger for the citizens of Cologne, and he proclaimed the *Sühne* which restored peace between city and archbishop in April 1271.[92]

82 E.g. *Annali Genovesi*, v, pp. 30–45, 55–6, 62–4, 71–5, 146–52.
83 Heers, 'Le notaire dans les villes Italiennes', p. 74.
84 *Annali Genovesi*, iii, pp. x-xxi.
85 'Iuris periti', *Annali Genovesi*, iv, pp. 61, 81, 97.
86 *Annali Genovesi,* v, p. 176.
87 Arnaldi, 'Il notaio-cronista e la cronache cittadine in Italia', pp. 293–309.
88 Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 23–31, 100–101.
89 'Cafarus, qui hec scribere fecit, interfuit et uidit, et inde testimonium reddidit, et procul dubio ita uerum esse affirmat', *Annali Genovesi,* i, p. 9.
90 *Annali Genovesi,* iii, p. 33.
91 Hagen, *Reimchronik,* xii–xiii, v. 2637–41.
92 Hagen, *Reimchronik,* pp. xii–xiii, v. 6271–82.

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Another feature common to all three urban chronicles is an obvious absence, generally, of Divine providence. John of Salisbury famously explained that one reason why he recorded history was 'so that the invisible things of God may clearly be seen by the things that are done'.[93] Seldom does one find any of our civic chroniclers seeking providential rationalisation for the events they recorded. Late in life, Doria wrote that it was right to give thanks to God who had so favoured Genoa in the wars against Pisa, but even this sentiment was exceptional.[94] For the most part 'references to God's help or God's will' are 'conspicuously absent' from the Genoese annals; more apparent are 'patriotic zeal and secular preoccupation with naval glory and material gain'.[95] A typically bombastic (and perhaps even Horatian?) Caffaro entry, *s.a.* 1157, reads 'because it is good and advantageous to fight honestly for one's fatherland'.[96] This secular focus can invite the obvious comparison with Thucydides.[97] However, unlike Thucydides, who wrote an obscure, laborious and often unintelligible prose, all of our Genoese writers wrote in an easily comprehensible style. The mysterious way in which God moved is almost completely absent from Arnold's chronicle.[98] When the walls of the Tower of London fell down during a period of building works in 1241, Matthew Paris related how Thomas Becket had appeared in a vision to destroy the walls which were 'an affront and to the detriment of the Londoners'.[99] Arnold did not record this event, but by contrast, his report of a similar building collapse in London in 1271, when the dilapidated tower of the church of St Mary-le-Bow fell killing over a dozen Londoners, ascribed no blame to any supernatural intervention.[100] And while Hagen may have opened his *Reimchronik* with a hagiographical introduction, this was only done so that, in Groten's words, he could paint an 'anachronistic picture of conciliar rule (*Ratherrschaft*) as the original form of the city's constitution [which] was convenient to confirm the position of the contemporary council'.[101]

What of our authors' choice of language? First, we should not assume that because the chronicles in London and Genoa were written in Latin, they were dictated to copyists in that language. True, when Arnold scribed his chronicle in his own hand then the Latin as it appears there was 'his' Latin, but when working with another scribe he may well have dictated in French or English, in which case the Latin there would be that of his amanuensis. Steven Epstein has argued that Caffaro (and perhaps his continuators?) dictated to his scribe in a local dialect, meaning that the Latin of his text, at least, reveals little of him

93 *Historia Pontificalis of John of Salisbury*, ed. and trans. M.J. Chibnall (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), p. 3.
94 *Annali Genovesi,* v, pp. 174–5.
95 Face, 'Secular History', p. 174.
96 'Quoniam bonum et utile pro sua patria honeste pugnare', *Annali Genovesi,* i, p. 47.
97 Face, 'Secular History', p. 183, n.19.
98 Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 115–16.
99 'In contumeliam et præjudicium Londoniensium', *Chron. Maj.*, iv, pp. 93–4.
100 *Cron. Maior.*, p. 130.
101 Groten, *Köln*, p. 248.

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'as a person or historian'.[102] Nevertheless, it appears paradoxical that Arnold and the Genoese annalists, men with no evident clerical training, wrote in Latin, whereas Hagen, a man endowed with the title of 'master', wrote in German. The decision of the chroniclers in London and Genoa to write in Latin must have been a conscious one, which speaks in part to the elite audience for, but more significantly the importance of the documentary record to, the chronicles. In England, Latin was regularly spoken by far fewer people than either English or French, and Arnold, who probably spoke four languages, could certainly read and write French.[103] In mid-thirteenth-century London, French would have been used for pleading in the courts and as the spoken language of international trade; it was, therefore, a language with which Arnold's elite audience would have been familiar and conversant. By that time, too, in England, French was a well-established literary language and Wace, Gaimar and Jordan Fantosme had shown that it could be used for historical writing. But this was not the world in which Arnold moved. Arnold was familiar with the records of royal and local government, legal documents, contracts and agreements, the vast majority of which were composed in Latin. Arnold's use of Latin thus provides further evidence of the importance of the documentary record to civic chronicling. Doria's contemporary Italian writers included Latini, who composed his *Li Livres dou Trésor* in French, and Dante, whose vernacular writing needs little introduction. But in Genoa the use of Latin was 'tenacious', and its exclusive use by the annalists there surely evidences the notarial influence on historical writing within the city.[104]

Likewise, Hagen was skilled in Latin, and, if he studied in Paris, one imagines French too. His decision to write German was just as conscious. In Germany, in the second half of the thirteenth century, German was generally more of a rival to Latin as an official language of record than any vernacular in London or Genoa. A corpus of Old German documents written prior to 1300 contains just 36 dated to before 1250, and nearly 3,000 composed between 1283 and 1300.[105] Similarly, the oldest surviving Cologner document drafted exclusively in German dates only from 1257.[106] From shortly thereafter, however, in addition to Hagen's *Reimchronik*, at least twenty-two documents written by Hagen himself, in German, survive.[107] In Groten's words, 'it was Gottfried Hagen who laid lasting foundations for a German chancery'.[108] Did Hagen eschew Latin, too, because the overriding theme of his *Reimchronik* was the battle of urban, secular powers against their religious overlord? Certainly, Groten has highlighted how

[102] S.A. Epstein, 'Review of Hall and Phillips, *Caffaro, Genoa and the Twelfth-Century Crusades*', *Speculum*, 89 (2014), 1149–50 at 1150.
[103] Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 95, 97.
[104] Epstein, *Genoa*, pp. 161–2.
[105] Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity,* p. 489.
[106] Groten, *Köln,* 183-4; *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Köln,* ii, pp. 376–8.
[107] Welter, 'Urkundliche Quellen', pp. 123–4, listed at p. 124, n. 4; Welter, 'Urkundschreiber und Chronikautor', p. 350.
[108] Groten, 'Civic Record Keeping in Cologne, 1250–1330', p. 84; Cf. Groten, 'Gottfried Hagen', p. 47.

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the use of German in communal documents speaks to a *volkssprachlich* culture, which sought to identify itself against an elite, clerical culture.[109] The use of the vernacular in historical works composed in Germany as a tool to define identity predates anything seen in post-Conquest England or Italy also.[110] It is also true that Hagen could not, and would not have chosen the vernacular if there had not been an audience for his work in German. and his choice of the vernacular suggests that his audience might have been a great deal more public, and a great deal less elite, than the audiences for the chronicles written in either London or Genoa. Perhaps the most important point to remember here, however, is that *Reimchroniken* were usually written for public recital as well as private reception. Arnold and the Genoese annalists may very well have written for a public audience, but it is difficult to suppose that their chronicles were read out aloud to these audiences. By contrast, it is quite easy to imagine Hagen's chronicle being publicly performed.[111] In this way too, then, Hagen broke new ground, for while German was a well-established vernacular for *Reimchroniken*, there was in contemporary Cologne no established German-language literary tradition.

Why did these men write? In the first place because they believed that it was important and useful to record the deeds of men for future generations. Arnold was explicit that 'the deeds and works of good men are set down in writing so that these things, to their praise and perpetual glory, may be handed down to the memory of posterity'.[112] Caffaro set down the truth for 'men of the present and the future' because it was 'good and useful to record the past'.[113] His continuator, Oberto the Chancellor was quite clear that 'for it is of much and great use to record the present and the past … because if they were not recorded, they would be consigned to oblivion in future times'.[114] Doria, similarly, wrote 'because it is of much and great use to record the present and the past, not only so that these things are not consigned to oblivion in future times, but also so that the future should be understood through the past'.[115] In Cologne, Hagen wanted his work to serve as a 'warnynge', and he hoped 'that it will all be useful to us'.[116]

As Antonia Gransden has shown, however, this desire 'to preserve the memory of past deeds for posterity' is one among a 'variety of literary

[109] Groten, *Köln,* pp. 183–4.
[110] 'Historical works, fundamental to defining common identities among their audiences, were in Germany being composed in the vernacular from comparatively early dates', Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity,* pp. 490–1.
[111] See, for example, 'synen breiff den doit uch lesen', Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 4144; Green, *Medieval Listening and Reading*, p. 88.
[112] 'Gesta et opera bonorum in scriptis reddiguntur ut ea ad eorum laudem et gloriam perpetuam possint posteris reduci ad memoriam', *Cron. Maior*., p. 114.
[113] 'Presentibus et futuris hominibus', *Annali Genovesi,* i, pp. 38, 59.
[114] 'Multa namque utilitas et magna est presentia et preterita scribere … quia si non scriberentur, futuris temporibus obliuioni traderentur', *Annali Genovesi,* i, p. 153.
[115] 'Quoniam multa et magna utilitas est preterita et presentia scribere, ne in futuris temporibus non solum obliuioni tradantur, set etiam per preterita cognoscantur futura', *Annali Genovesi,* v, p. 3.
[116] 'Dat it uns allen nützlich werde', Hagen, *Reimchronik***,** v. 16, 29.

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commonplaces, *topoi'* widely used by all medieval chroniclers.[117] That, in this way, our civic writers drew from the same well as their fellows in contemporary religious houses reminds us that we should be careful not to make too much of the differences between historical writing undertaken in contemporary religious settings and this new civic form. John of Salisbury's wish to explain God's working in the world has been contrasted with the earthly focus of the civic chronicles under discussion here, but we should remember that John also wrote, in a way strikingly similar to Caffaro, Oberto, Doria and Arnold that 'my aim, like that of other chroniclers before me, shall be to profit my contemporaries and future generations. For all these chroniclers have had a single purpose: to relate noteworthy matters'.[118] This shared outlook should not surprise us. After all, ideas and texts could move freely between secular and religious institutions – as we shall see. In fact, it is quite possible to examine civic historical writing via a model famously developed, by Sir Richard Southern, to explain what motivated Benedictine monks to write history, namely, 'the very practical and human desire which members of a community feel to preserve and glorify their past, to justify their position in the world, and—more questionably—to defend their privileges and assert their independence'.[119]

Certainly, there can be little doubt that each of our writers wrote to preserve and glorify his city's past, and to justify its, and indeed his own, position in the world. This is visible immediately in the structures of these men's reconstructions of collective civic memory. Hagen started his *Reimchronik* by reaching back with evident pride to Cologne's Roman past. Both Arnold and Caffaro began their chronicles in the years in which their communes were officially recognised. Indeed, in both Genoa and London the consular/shrieval year was the framework upon which the annals were structured, and each year's report dutifully opened by naming the civic officers, frequently praised in Genoa by Caffaro and his continuators for actions which were 'to the honour of the city'.[120] From 1099 to 1122, Caffaro's narrative is even presented in the four-year blocks in which the consuls were sworn, rather than annually,[121] whereas the yearly reports in Arnold's chronicle, uniquely among contemporary sources, began on 29 September, the date when London's new sheriffs were installed.

Beyond the structure of the chronicles, the content, too, speaks to evident civic pride. Caffaro's annals began with a lengthy description of Genoese crusading achievements; when they were copied into the city's records, it was, as we have already seen, 'so that future generations of Genoese should know of the victories of the city'.[122] Doria opened by giving a historical justification for Genoa's place in the world, referencing every classical, late-antique and patristic citation of

[117] A. Gransden, 'Prologues in the Historiography of Twelfth-Century England', in A. Gransden, *Legends, Traditions and History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon, 1992), pp. 125–51, at 125–6, 136.
[118] *Historia Pontificalis*, p. 3.
[119] R.W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (London: Hutchinson, 1953), p. 192.
[120] 'Ad honorem ciuitatis', *Annali Genovesi,* i, pp. 15, 41, 46; ii, pp. 72–3; iv, p. 24.
[121] Wickham, 'The Sense of the Past', p. 174.
[122] *Annali Genovesi,* i, pp. 3–13.

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Genoa he could find.[123] Hagen's pride in Cologne's council of skivins saw him dismiss as 'clots' and 'troublemakers' new skivins appointed by Archbishop Conrad on 17 April 1259, calling them 'the weaver', 'the fisherman' and 'the brewer'.[124] In fact, Groten has shown that Hagen's contemptuous descriptions in no way accurately represented their positions within Cologne.[125] Their real sin, in Hagen's eyes, was that these men were dependent on Conrad and served his interests, not the city and its institutions.[126] Arnold's pride in London's Husting court saw him take a keen interest in its workings and proceedings.[127] He must, too, have been proud of the tradition whereby the king would always take his very public leave of the Londoners before heading overseas: he recorded this on four occasions.[128] Arnold even boasted that his grandparents came to London in the twelfth century, having heard in Germany of the city's nobility and fame.[129]

Indeed, in Genoa, although the chroniclers often stated that they wished to record the 'truth of these things which happened to the commune of Genoa, as much the fortunes as the misfortunes', the truth, particularly 'of the misfortunes', was usually less important than glorifying Genoa's past.[130] Caffaro failed to mention the bribing, by the Genoese, of Pope Calixtus II and his curia in 1121.[131] Rather, he noted simply that he, at least, 'dealt honestly and wisely' and that the Genoese 'returned to Genoa with triumph and glory'.[132] Caffaro was similarly reticent, in 1149-51, when he ignored a serious outburst of civic upheaval, a silence which, in Epstein's words, 'discredits the historian'.[133] In 1171, Coparion, the Genoese quarter of Constantinople, was sacked by the Venetians, and, in 1174, the Genoese failed to obtain compensation for this from Emperor Manuel Comnenus of Byzantium. Yet the reader of the Genoese annals would search in vain for record of these events in the civic chronicle.[134] The desire to tell the 'truth', however, was another of the *topoi* of the period and as Gransden has highlighted, for a medieval writer a truthful recollection of each event was almost always of much less importance than an overarching 'truth' of his work.[135]

[123] *Annali Genovesi*, v, pp. 3–8.
[124] Hagen, *Reimchronik,* v. 1230ff, 1247-55, 1398ff.
[125] Groten, *Köln,* pp. 206–18.
[126] Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 1266–72.
[127] Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', p. 42; *Cron. Maior., passim*.
[128] *Cron. Maior*., pp. 9, 19, 42, 50.
[129] *Cron. Maior.,* p. 238. I have discussed this text more fully in I. Stone, 'Arnold fitz Thedmar: Identity, Politics and the City of London in the Thirteenth Century', *The London Journal*, 40 (2015), 106–22.
[130] *Annali Genovesi,* iv, p. 81.
[131] Face, 'Secular History', pp. 176–7; Hall and Philips, *Genoa and the Twelfth-Century Crusades*, p. 12; Epstein, *Genoa*, p. 41.
[132] 'Honeste et sapienter tractauit' and 'cum triumpho et gloria Ianuam uenerunt', *Annali Genovesi,* i, pp. 19–20.
[133] 'Caffaro, proud enough to document triumphs over the Muslims in the Holy Land, was apparently too ashamed of what was had happened in the aftermath of the Spanish debacle to record it. Given his own role in the plans, this omission is not surprising', Epstein, *Genoa,* p. 52.
[134] Epstein, *Genoa,* p. 85.
[135] Gransden, 'Prologues in the Historiography of Twelfth-Century England', pp. 128–9.

In sacrificing smaller truths for a greater truth about their city's accomplishments our Genoese writers were by no means acting in an unusual fashion.

Such pride in one's city is absolutely understandable. In 1251, the Genoese Pope Innocent IV entered the city in triumph; in 1252, very close in time to similar events in England, Genoa minted her first gold coinage; and in 1256 peace was even agreed with the perpetual enemy, Pisa.[136] As Arnold walked through the rich, expanding and increasingly self-confident metropolis, with its recently rebuilt bridge and cathedral, his pride can only have been exalted further. In 1215 London's liberties were protected in Magna Carta, and the city's mayor took his place among twenty-five barons of the realm. By 1220, if not before, the rulers of London were styling themselves '*barones*'.[137] In 1250, in Arnold's own words, the Londoners asserted that their peers were the earls and barons of England.[138] Likewise, in the same year, the citizens of Cologne concluded a contract with Count Adolf von Berg which finished with an agreement, in German, that the two parties should treat each other as equals.[139]

In Cologne and Genoa, the pride which the writers took in their communities was reciprocated in the esteem in which the writers were held, something which in turn justified their position within the city. Genoese annalists who followed Caffaro praised him as 'our historian' who 'began a praiseworthy work'.[140] Very unusually, we know the names of almost every annalist over a two-hundred year period, because they nearly all took pains to name themselves when they took over as continuators, frequently praising former writers and placing themselves in Caffaro's footsteps.[141] In Face's words, the decision made to copy Caffaro's work for the public archive 'speaks to the deep appreciation which Caffaro's contemporaries in Genoa's political hierarchy felt for the useful and patriotic work which he had begun more than half a century before; and it clearly illustrates their awareness of urban development *per se*, their pride in the accomplishments of the Republic and its distinguished chronicler'.[142]

The Genoese annalists made clear, too, just how important the scribes were in Genoa: the annals frequently record the names of the 'scribes of the commune' and/or the individual officers' scribes.[143] In 1231, the annals record that the citizens elected six representatives and sent them 'with one of our own scribes' to Frederick II at Ravenna.[144] At some point during the first half of the thirteenth century, if not before, the authorities in Cologne employed an official city scribe

[136] Epstein, *Genoa,* pp. 127–9.
[137] D. Keene, 'Text, Visualisation and Politics: London, 1150–1250', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 6th series, 18 (2008), 69–99 at 77.
[138] 'Cives vero responderunt … nullum judicium recipere inde deberent in absentia parium suorum, scilicet Comitum, Baronum Anglie', *Cron. Maior.,* p. 17.
[139] Groten, *Köln,* pp. 119–120.
[140] 'Historiographus noster' and 'opus cepit laudabile', *Annali Genovesi,* iv, p. 129.
[141] *Annali Genovesi*, i, pp. 3–4, ii, p. 69, 157, iii, pp. 4, iv, pp. 61, 81, 129.
[142] Face, 'Secular History', p. 171.
[143] E.g. 'scribe uero comunis', *Annali Genovesi,* iii, pp. 36–7 and *passim*.
[144] 'Cum uno de suis scribis', *Annali Genovesi,* iii, p. 59.

to write *städtische* documents.[145] This role must have been of some standing: both Henry (scribe *c.* 1225–48) and Hagen (scribe 1269x71–1287) undertook difficult diplomatic missions on behalf of the city.[146] Hagen was proud to name himself as both city scribe and author of the *Reimchronik*.[147] In comparison to all of which, Arnold fitz Thedmar stands in some contrast. Arnold was clearly held in high esteem in London as an alderman, arbiter, chirographer and keeper of the civic chest, even if he was frequently at odds with many of his fellow citizens.[148] Yet, there is no evidence that Arnold's contemporaries either paid or praised him for his efforts as a writer; nor does one find any commendation of Arnold's labours by the medieval writers who used his book after his death. What a contrast to the esteem Matthew Paris was held in at St Albans![149] For all Arnold's official roles, and perhaps even a thus far undefined or unofficial position as town clerk or chamberlain, his role as a writer had clearly not been officially acknowledged in the same way that the Genoese and Cologners had recognised their writers.

Preserving and glorifying the past of the city and justifying its place in the world, then, runs through the chronicles of all three cities like the writing in a stick of rock; one can break into the chronicles at almost any point and find manifest civic pride, alongside both communal and individual justification. Yet there is, within the chronicles, far less uniformity in the treatment of the third of Southern's motivations, that of defending privileges and asserting independence. For Arnold, this clearly meant justifying and maintaining London's liberties. London's oldest surviving charter of liberties had been granted by the Conqueror: a terse three-sentence-long document, it was in the civic chest in Arnold's possession, alongside fuller charters of liberties granted by Henry II and Richard I.[150] In 1215, the Londoners did not get everything they wanted from Magna Carta, but what they did gain was confirmation that the city was to enjoy all its ancient liberties.[151] To Arnold, the maintenance of royally-granted liberties was the touchstone of good, civic government and, thus, London's liberties are the warp and weft of his chronicle. Indeed, attacks on London's liberties and the citizens' responses thereto are treated at length on more than a dozen occasions within it.[152]

It was for this reason, then, that Arnold inveighed against Londoners, both individuals and groups, whom he perceived to have themselves diminished the city's liberties. Thus, Arnold accused Simon son of Mary not just of having frequently acted 'against the liberty of the city', but also of 'many other depraved

[145] Henry von der Brothalle was employed as city scribe *c.* 1225–48, Groten, *Köln*, pp. 56–7, 116, 319.
[146] Groten, *Köln,* p. 319.
[147] Hagen, *Reimchronik,* v. 6283–4, 6291.
[148] Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 21–31, 99–100.
[149] *Chron. Maj.*, v, pp. xiii–xiv, 748; R. Vaughan, *Matthew Paris* (Cambridge University Press, 1958), pp. 7, 19–20. I owe thanks to Michael Clasby for these references.
[150] *Cron. Maior*., p. 253.
[151] D.A. Carpenter, *Magna Carta* (London: Penguin, 2015), pp. 117–21.
[152] Discussed fully in Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 121–6.

and detestable actions which he had secretly perpetrated against the city'.[153] Similarly, *s.a.* 1258, Arnold condemned the *populus* induced to act against their own liberties as 'most wretched'.[154] Correspondingly, *s.a.* 1263, Arnold denounced the populist mayor Thomas fitz Thomas for missing the opportunity to augment London's liberties.[155] It is no coincidence, either, that Arnold picked up his pen to begin composing his chronicle in 1257, the year in which the threats to London's liberties – and, indeed, his own position within London – began to be felt at the same time. This pressure came from above (King Henry III's personal rule, 1234–58, had been a testing time for the Londoners), within from increased civic factionalism, and below as London's lower orders more visibly objected to aldermanic rule. In fact, when Arnold wrote to express his pride in London's past, to justify the city's place in the realm and his place within the city, and to defend London's privileges he did so, not from a position of smug, triumphalist self-satisfaction, but from a position of doubt, uncertainty and fear.

True, similar entries in which civic liberties are defended can be found in the chronicles of the other cities.[156] These references are, however, nowhere near as prominent, and liberty was clearly articulated in very different ways in both Genoa and Cologne. Rather than *libertates ciuitatis*, it is in fact *honor ciuitatis* which most exercised the minds of the Genoese writers.[157] Indeed, only once in a two-century-long tradition of historical writing does a lengthy treatment of Genoese liberty appear in the civic annals, when, in response to demands made of the Genoese by Frederick Barbarossa in 1158, Caffaro reached back to antiquity to claim that the Genoese were exempt from all imperial exactions, as they had the expensive and onerous responsibility of guarding the coast against barbarians and pirates.[158] It is, perhaps, surprising that liberty, even in its negative sense of protections from various impositions, is so absent from the Genoese annals. Authors of treatises on civic governance and teachers of rhetoric in eleventh- and twelfth-century Italian towns were undoubtedly familiar with Sallust and Cicero and had consequently developed an 'ideology of self-governing republicanism'.[159] In this ideology, liberty was founded upon justice, the rule of law and an elective system of government.[160] The urban elites of northern Italian towns had, too, quickly appropriated the philosophy of *libertas Ecclesie, mutatis mutandis*, for their own use.[161]

One explanation for the absence of the concept of liberty from the Genoese annals could be that thirteenth-century Genoa was, for the most part, a Ghibelline

[153] *Cron. Maior*., p. 15.
[154] Ibid., p. 32.
[155] Ibid., p. 56.
[156] Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 2669-3006; *Annali Genovesi,* i, pp. 29, 32–3, ii, pp. 38–9.
[157] E.g. *Annali Genovesi,* i, pp. 15, 20, 30, 39, 41 and *passim*.
[158] *Annali Genovesi*, i, pp. 49–53, esp. pp. 50–1.
[159] Q. Skinner, 'Machiavelli's *Discorsi* and the Pre-Humanist Origins of Republican Ideas', in G. Bock, Q. Skinner and M. Viroli (eds.), *Machiavelli and Republicanism* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 121–141 at 122.
[160] Ibid., pp. 131–4.
[161] S. Ferente, 'The Liberty of Italian City-States', in Q. Skinner and M. Van Gelderen (eds.), *Freedom and the Construction of Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), i, pp. 157–75.

city, and the appropriation by the Guelph party in that century of the ideology of *libertà* would have made thirteenth-century Genoese writers wary of using such a term.[162] Certainly, the singular noun, *la nostra libertae*, is much more visible in late fourteenth-century Genoa.[163] A second explanation could be the simple practicalities of Genoese life. Genoa, a mercantile, trading city had no distinguished imperial past and no university. Julia Crick has shown how the term *libertas* was funnelled into English discourse through patristic and canonical texts, as well as papal documents, and that a 'proximity to *Romanitas* brought exposure to notions of liberty'.[164] Notwithstanding Caffaro's isolated references to Sallust and Cicero, and Doria's prologue with its references to Livy, Isidore and Pope Gregory the Great, no one could argue that Genoese civic chronicling sprang from traditions such as these.[165] Nor were Caffaro's continuators any different. True, the Genoese annalists used the vocabulary of ancient Rome as a template for their writing, but referring to the Genoese polity as 'res publica' is not the same as espousing a republican philosophy of liberty.[166] The obvious weakness in such a hypothesis, however, is that, in London, Arnold's writing betrays no obvious proximity to *Romanitas* either, yet liberty, or the defence of liberties at least, dominates his narrative. Yet this comparison between London and Genoa probably gets us close to a third, and more compelling explanation. Simply put, the Genoese annalists, detached from imperial rule and largely self-governing, in contrast to thirteenth-century Londoners, seldom felt that their liberties and privileges were ever under enough pressure to need defending. As Crick has noted, 'freedom did not operate in a vacuum; freedom could only be understood in relation to something else', and it was only in response to this 'something else' – one of Barbarossa's rare attempts to impose himself on Genoa – that Caffaro felt compelled to address the issue.[167]

The importance of *Romanitas* and a Gregorian philosophy of *libertas Ecclesie* in forming a coherent ideology of *libertas ciuitatis* is, however, brought into focus once more by turning to Cologne.[168] Hagen had a precocious conception of liberty which shaped the Cologners' self-understanding for centuries, and in adapting Cologne's Roman past for his own ends, Hagen was typical of German writers, identified by Len Scales, who engaged with 'the remote and alien Roman past … when it seemed to speak to their own perspectives and understanding'.[169] This is first evident in his *Reimchronik*'s hagiographical introduction, where Hagen argued that Cologne was a city commonwealth

[162] S. Ferente, 'Guelphs! Factions, Liberty and Sovereignty: Inquiries about the Quattrocento', *History of Political Thought,* 27 (2007), 571–598, esp. 573–81.
[163] Ibid., esp. pp. 592–5.
[164] J. Crick, '"*Pristina Libertas":* Liberty and the Anglo-Saxons Revisited', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* sixth series, 14 (2004), 47–71 at 63–7.
[165] For Caffaro's classical references, Hall and Philips, *Caffaro, Genoa and the Twelfth-Century Crusades*, p. 4; For Doria's, *Annali Genovesi,* v, pp. 3–8.
[166] *Annali Genovesi,* ii, p. 3; Epstein, *Genoa,* p. 81.
[167] Crick, '*Pristina libertas*', p. 63.
[168] For most of what follows, Groten, *Köln,* pp. 246–54.
[169] Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity*, pp. 306–7.

before it converted to Christianity, and that Cologne's conversion was achieved not by force, but peacefully.[170] Thus, to Hagen, was 'the freedom of the city unbroken' and thus the city had the right, from antiquity, not only to choose its own skivins, but also its 'city council and ruler'.[171] By portraying a citizen-led conversion, he argued, too, that the term *sancta Colonia* belonged not to the Church but to the Christian burghers. Moreover, in Hagen's philosophy, since the forcible conversion of Cologne was unnecessary, it must follow that God had already chosen Cologne for salvation. This and the martyrdoms of Cologne's saints, whose bodies rested within the city, made Cologne a holy city under divine protection.[172] Thus, Cologne was, to Hagen, unconditionally a 'holy, free city'.[173] Evidence of Hagen's understanding of liberty can be found outside of his *Reimchronik*, too. Hagen drafted the agreement of 7 May 1263 between Walram, brother of Count William von Jülich and the citizens of Cologne, in which the burghers of Cologne defended not just their 'rights' and their 'good customs' but also their 'freedom'.[174] Hagen's conception of *freiheit* was much more profound than *libertates* in the sense of privileges. It made the citizens of Cologne 'free citizens' who would honour the archbishop as long as he respected and protected their freedom, but who could, and indeed should, oppose any attempts by the archbishop to infringe upon this.[175] Hagen thus argued that civic freedom and archiepiscopal lordship must stand in their rightful relation to each other.[176] Hagen's depiction of the Cologners as 'free, noble Romans' is absolutely unparalleled by anything written in London or Genoa.[177] However, rather than deriving directly from the classical tradition, Hagen's conception of freedom and of 'free noble Romans' stemmed from his understanding of *libertas Ecclesie*. It is no coincidence that the civic author with the best-defined and best-articulated concept of liberty is the one who had studied at Paris and the one who had obtained the title of 'master'.

There was, however, a final important factor, unique to historical writing in our urban environments. In the towns of twelfth-century Europe, a new movement had appeared variously called the *populus, populares, minores,* and *pedites* in contemporary chronicles. Bruges and Soissons were perhaps the first towns to experience communal struggles fought along class lines. In London in the 1190s, the populist leader William fitz Osbert placed himself at the head of London's poor and middling classes in their struggle against the richer citizens.[178] In Italy,

170 Hagen, *Reimchronik,* v. 44–151.
171 'Der stede vryheit unzebrochen' and 'stede rait ind potestait', Hagen, *Reimchronik,* v. 77, 86–8.
172 Hagen, *Reimchronik,* v. 152–426.
173 'Hilge vrye steide', Hagen, *Reimchronik,* v. 2447.
174 'Dad wir die stad inde de burgere van kolne na vnser maht halden in hüden sülen in alle deme rehte inde in der vrihende inde in den güden gewoneden', *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Köln,* ii, p. 468.
175 'Vrie burgere', Hagen, *Reimchronik,* v. 691–5, 1276, 2997ff.
176 Groten, 'Gottfried Hagen', p. 48.
177 'Vrien edelen Romeren', Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 663.
178 *Cron. Maior*., p. 2; *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Hovedone,* ed. W. Stubbs, 4 vols. (Rolls Series, 1868–71), iv, pp. 5–6; William of Newburgh*, Historia Rerum Anglicarum*, in

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numerous towns were home to a similar popular movement.[179] In each town, the *populus* had unique aspirations and characteristics, but all shared some features: the *populus* never comprised the bottom of urban society's heap, rather they were the artisan classes, the craft workers, and the free citizens who resented their exclusion from political, social and administrative responsibility, and an increased tax burden which, they felt, was unfairly apportioned.

True, medieval towns were no place for the faint-hearted. They were dirty, unhealthy, loud and dangerous places, frequently disturbed by riots and other manifestations of violence. In twelfth- and early thirteenth-century Genoa and Cologne blood was usually shed along vertical lines of kinship.[180] Hagen wrote that in 1237 leading families turned on each other 'like cats and dogs'.[181] It is, however, striking that similar large-scale popular movements all emerged in London, Cologne and Genoa between 1257 and 1263. In January 1257, a riotous *populo* in Genoa shouting 'to arms, to arms, let the people prevail' elected William Boccanegra captain of the people.[182] Thereafter, throughout the period covered by the Genoese annals, the city was frequently convulsed by violence fought along both horizontal and vertical lines. Particularly visible in Cologne from 1259 onwards, in Hagen's chronicle at least, are the horizontal divisions which were only partially evident in the early thirteenth century. On 4 April 1260, a pitched battle was fought between the *Geschlechter* and the *Gemeinde* in Cologne which left sixteen dead and fifty wounded.[183] On 31 May 1265, a battle raged in the Weißbüttengasse between the *Geschlechter* and the fraternities.[184] Not that the vertical infighting ceased: in 1267/8, the Weise faction were expelled from the city.[185] In 1258 in London, the 'populus', memorably denounced by Arnold as 'sons of various mothers, many of whom were born outside of the city and were of a servile condition' clamoured for the removal of London's aldermen from power.[186] In 1263, Thomas fitz Thomas, placed himself at the head of the popular faction and granted privileges to London's craft workers.[187] Indeed, in that year two days of rioting in London culminated when a mob of

Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I, ed. R. Howlett, 4 vols. (Rolls Series, 1884–9), ii, pp. 466–73; D. Keene, 'William fitz Osbert (*d*. 1196)', *ODNB*.

179 L. Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (London: Pimlico, 2002), pp. 45-71, with a list of Italian cities with dates for the appearance of the *popolo* at pp. 47–8; Waley and Dean, *The Italian City-Republics*, pp. 141–55.

180 1060 Epstein, *Genoa,* pp. 52, 75, 80–91, 86.

181 1061 'Als katzen ind hunde', Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 4057–65, 4134–9, 4211–14. There was a geographic element to this too, Hagen writes of 'those of St Kolumba' parish [the von der Mühlengasse] and 'those of the Rheingasse' [the Overstolzen], Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 1495ff.

182 'Ad arma, ad arma! Fiat populus', *Annali Genovesi,* iv, pp. 25–6.

183 Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 1298ff.

184 Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 3256ff.

185 Hagen linked the Weise with the von der Mühlengasse *Geschlecht*, but they were, in fact, a wider party than that, Groten, *Köln,* pp. 275–6, 288–9.

186 'Filios diversarum matrum, quamplures natos extra Civitatem, et quamplures servilis conditionis'. Arnold's long account of this affair is in *Cron. Maior.,* pp. 30–7, quotation at p. 36.

187 *Cron. Maior*., pp. 55–6.

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London commoners pelted Queen Eleanor with stones, filth and eggs as she attempted to flee the Tower for Windsor Castle.[188] The mayoral election of 1272 descended into chaos as for three weeks the streets were thronged by crowds of London's lower orders, who chased the aldermen all the way to Westminster, and whose shouts outside Westminster Palace, that 'we are the commune of the city, and the election of the mayor belongs to us, and we definitely want Walter Hervey, whom we have elected, to be mayor', even disturbed King Henry III as he lay on his deathbed.[189]

It is no coincidence that such civic discord proved the spur for particularly fecund historical writing in all three cities. The reasons for the rise of the *popolo* in twelfth- and thirteenth-century European towns are complex.[190] The historian looking for further enlightenment in this matter will not find it in the chronicles under discussion here. Neither Arnold nor Hagen showed much interest in financial affairs or economic difficulties. The Genoese writers recorded nothing whatsoever on the banking collapses of 1256 and 1258 which may have acted as a catalyst for popular discontent.[191] Indeed, almost on the eve of the outbreak of popular violence in Genoa the annals drily record that the *podestà* 'finished his term of office and although he was not praised for his virtue, all favourable things, however, befell the city of Genoa in his time'.[192] Boccanegra appears in the Genoese annals as if from nowhere. The annals are similarly unhelpful in explaining the collapse of his regime in May 1262, writing little beyond accusations that almost everyone hated Boccanegra, which can hardly be true.[193] Likewise, the annals are inscrutable for 1290, when the *popolo*, unhappy with the performance of the captains of the people demanded outsiders be appointed. Doria is clear that he will not be drawn on the matter 'which is too long to put down here'.[194]

In fact, the reactions of the writers in all three cities to the rise of the popular movement were analogous and explicit: in the first place, to condemn it out of hand. To Arnold the *populus* were 'raised up and inflated with pride' and 'were manifestly disturbers of the peace'.[195] Indeed, in Arnold's chronicle, when the *populus* act 'against the peace of the realm' they disturb the peace in a very real

[188] *Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia A.D. 1–1297, Ann. Mon*, iii, pp. 222–3; *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury,* ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols. (Rolls Series, 1879–80)*,* ii, p. 222; *Flores Historiarum,* ed. H.R. Luard, 3 vols. (Rolls Series, 1890)*,* ii, pp. 481–2; *Chronicon Vulgo Dictum Chronicon Thomae Wykes, 1066–1288, Ann. Mon.,* iv*.,* p. 136.

[189] 'Nos sumus Communa Civitatis, et ad nos pertinet electio Maioris Civitatis, et volumus precise quod Walterus Herevy sit Maior quem elegimus', *Cron. Maior.*, pp. 148–153, quotation at p. 150.

[190] See above, n. 179.

[191] Epstein, *Genoa,* pp. 40, 135–9.

[192] 'Regimen suum finiuit et licet de puritate non fuerit laudatus, omnia tamen prospera suo tempore ciuitati Ianue contigerunt', *Annali Genovesi,* iv, p. 24.

[193] *Annali Genovesi,* iv, pp. 38–48.

[194] 'Que nimis longum esset his ponere', *Annali Genovesi,* v, p. 121

[195] 'Iste populus ita per hoc erat elatus et superbia inflatus' and 'manifeste fuerunt pacis perturbatores', *Cron. Maior*., p. 55.

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sense, 'shouting' and 'making a right racket'.[196] Arnold never tired of reminding his readers of what happened when the *populus* had the 'first voice in the city': looting, robbery, the return of outlaws and the emptying of prisons.[197] Arnold condemned their leaders, the two London mayors, Thomas fitz Thomas and Walter Hervey, for the same offences too. Both suspended the Husting Court.[198] Both stirred up the *populus*.[199] Both granted 'abominable' provisions and statutes which Arnold condemned in similar words.[200] In Genoa, the annals overtly criticised Boccanegra's regime, often levelling the same sorts of accusations that Arnold levelled against Thomas fitz Thomas and Hervey.[201] In Cologne, Hagen called the skivins installed, in 1259, by Conrad and the *Gemeinde* 'clots' and asked, ironically, whether men who had been weavers, bakers and fishermen all their lives would know how to give judgments.[202] He chastised the weavers for their revolt (probably in 1265) writing that they could have maintained their honour if they had acted in accordance with their social position.[203]

It seems axiomatic, but an appeal to history offered one way in which our historical writers could have articulated their condemnation of the popular movements and justified the political and social structures within their cities. Certainly, elsewhere in Europe in the 1260s, Latini was compiling his *Trésor*, in which, heavily influenced by Aristotle, Seneca, Sallust and Cicero, he discussed the origins and nature of civic government.[204] It is true that Hagen's use of the term '*Geschlecht*', which stressed birth and lineage, does attempt to explain how power had historically come to rest in the hands of the present elite, something he made explicit in verses which connect the descent of 'noble citizens' of the present from those of the past when Cologne was converted to Christianity.[205] Indeed, in this way Hagen stands in some contrast to subsequent German historical writers in Mainz, Lübeck and Cologne, identified by De Boulay, who also wrote against backdrops of internal revolt, but who did so 'without any exact historical sense of how power had come to be concentrated in certain hands'.[206] But there is no appeal to a biblical, classical or patristic authority to rationalise Cologne's political and/or social organization. The writers in London and Genoa offered no historical justification of their position at all, rather they remained rooted in the present-day. The obvious authority to which medieval

196 'Contra pacem regni', 'populus autem semper clamabat sicut antea' and 'magnum tumultum facientes', *Cron. Maior*., pp. 149, 150.
197 'Primam vocem in Civitate'. Arnold used this phrase on three separate occasions, *Cron. Maior*., pp. 55, 80, 91.
198 *Cron. Maior.,* pp. 70, 159.
199 *Cron. Maior.,* pp. 55–6, 148–53, 164–70.
200 *Cron. Maior.,* pp. 56, 164.
201 Boccanegra acted 'sine discreto'; he was tyrannical; he sidelined the *podestà*, consuls and magistrates; and he overturned legal judgements, *Annali Genovesi,* iv, pp. 26, 38, 45, 46.
202 Hagen, *Reimchronik,* v. 1230–9, 1254–5, 1398ff.
203 Groten, *Köln,* p. 254.
204 *Li Livres dou Trésor de Brunetto Latini*, ed. F. J. Carmody (Berkeley, CA.: California University Press, 1948), *passim*.
205 Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 2474, 3381–4, 3561ff, 3673; Groten, *Köln,* pp. 255–7.
206 Du Boulay, 'The German Town Chroniclers', p. 458.

urban writers could have turned was the example of ancient Rome, but never do the compilers in those cities reach back to classical Rome to support their exalted position within their cities. Indeed, the vocabulary of ancient Rome is conspicuously absent from Arnold's book in particular. He never refers to London's sheriffs or mayors as 'consuls', never calls the aldermen 'senators', never refers to the 'more discreet citizens' as 'equites', never once uses the term 'res publica'. It is not as if this republican idiom was completely alien to medieval Londoners. Writing in the 1170s William fitz Stephen, another famous Londoner, had described London's political division into wards as similar to that of Rome, and argued that London had 'sheriffs instead of consuls, a senatorial order and lesser magistrates'.[207] Writing early in the fourteenth century, Andrew Horn copied sections on the 'Government of Cities' from Latini's *Trésor* into his *Liber Custumarum*.[208] Yet to Arnold, the Londoners were simply 'barons' of the realm, while the aldermen were the 'discreet men' and the 'more law-worthy of the city'.[209] Nor did he offer any historical reason why the *populus* should not have political power. Instead, he stayed in the present-day again, writing that many of them were foreign to London, of servile condition, and that they had no property within the city.[210]

In the second place, all the historical writers issued a plea for civic unity. Even before the outbreak of popular violence, Arnold was quite clear that when Simon son of Mary was deprived of his aldermanry by London's mayor, it was done 'by the assent of the whole commune'.[211] Arnold could not have been any clearer, *s.a.* 1250*,* when he wrote that 'all of the people' and 'the whole commune' acted, 'all with one voice', to make sure that 'not a single article' of London's liberties was threatened.[212] In 1267, Arnold pleaded that 'all of the city, both rich and poor, should be as one body and one man'.[213] In Cologne, Hagen attributed the citizens' success against the archbishop in 1252 to their solidarity.[214] He never tired of appealing to the citizens to stay united.[215] Nor is his chronicle obviously partisan towards either elite faction within Cologne.[216] The mid-twelfth-century section of the Genoese annals 'reminded people', as Hall and Philips noted, 'that both the consuls and crusading had achieved great things while the divisions of

[207] *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket,* iii, p. 8.
[208] *Munimenta Gildhallæ Londoniensis; Liber Albus, Liber Custumarum et Liber Horn,* ed. H. T. Riley, 4 vols. (Rolls Series, 1859–62), ii, pp. 16–25. The material exploited by Horn is found in Latini, *Trésor,* pp. 392–416.
[209] 'Viros discretos' and 'viros de legalioribus Civitatis', *Cron. Maior.,* pp. 36, 114.
[210] *Cron. Maior.,* pp. 36, 150.
[211] 'Per assensum totius Commune', *Cron. Maior.,* p. 15.
[212] 'Universus populus', 'tota Communa', 'clamabant omnes una voca quod in nullo articulo a libertatibus suis usitatis discedere voluerunt', *Cron. Maior.,* p. 16.
[213] 'Quod omnes de Civitate, tam pauperes quam divites, essent quasi corpus unum et vir unus', *Cron. Maior.,* p. 98.
[214] 'Dar zo synt sy eindreichtich enbynnen', Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 797; Groten, *Köln*, p. 122.
[215] Hagen, *Reimchronik,* v. 797, 831–3, 1132ff, 1374.
[216] Welter, 'Urkundliche Quellen', p. 126.

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the present were to be ended and harmony restored'.[217] At other times it is clear that the annalist believes bad things happened when the city was disunited.[218] In the chronicles of all three cities, however, it was always a civic unity on the terms of the urban elite. It is no coincidence that the Genoese urban elite began appointing committees to compose the annals in 1264, within parameters they had set, immediately following the collapse of Boccanegra's regime.[219] According to Arnold only the aldermen had 'reason' and they alone could be trusted to protect London's privileged position in the realm.[220] In Cologne, Hagen, like Arnold, had a clear idea of who should govern the unified city: 'the best of the city', 'the richest' and the 'good people'.[221] For Hagen free, noble citizens 'descend from masters and skivins'.[222] This should not surprise us: historical writing in London, Cologne and Genoa was undertaken by men who formed part of and/or allied themselves with urban elites.

It is, however, again striking that none of our writers turned to a classical authority when they urged their fellow citizens to live in peace with each other. In his *Bellum Jugurthinum*, Sallust had argued that 'harmony makes small states great, while the mightiest are undone by discord'.[223] This philosophy had certainly been picked up by some in thirteenth-century Italian towns.[224] In the section of his *Trésor* entitled 'De Concorde', Latini even drew an explicit connection, writing that 'Sallust says that small things grow great through concord, and the greatest [things] destroy themselves through discord'.[225] There is nothing like that in the chronicles under discussion here. Indeed, here we come to something of a puzzle. On the one hand, these chronicles, preserving and glorifying their urban pasts, defending civic liberty, and calling for harmony among the citizens seem to echo many of the themes found in the works of great Roman writers such as Cicero, Sallust and Livy. Certainly, the structuring of London and Genoa's chronicles, too, calls to mind the Roman tradition of dating history by consular years. On the other hand, however, there is little firm evidence, from the civic chronicles produced in London, Genoa and Cologne, that classically-inspired ideas of liberty, political organization and civic governance had taken firm root at all among the mercantile classes of those cities in the thirteenth century. Certainly, Arnold seems never to have read

217 Hall and Philips, *Caffaro,* p. 5.
218 *Annali Genovesi,* ii, p. 22, iii, pp. 31–6.
219 Dotson, 'Genoese Civic Annals', pp. 67–8.
220 *Cron. Maior.,* p. 150.
221 'De besten van der stat', 'de richsten' and the 'gude lude', Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 1190, 1212, 1284.
222 'Van heren ind van scheffen komen', Hagen, *Reimchronik*, v. 3563.
223 'Nam concordia parvae res crescunt, discordia maxumae dilabuntur', Sallust, *Bellum Jugurthinum*, X. 7.
224 Skinner, 'Machiavelli's *Discorsi*', pp. 128–30.
225 'Salustes dist, par concorde croissent les petites choses et par discorde se destruisent les grandismes', Latini, *Trésor,* pp. 291–2 at 292. Cf. 'Car a ce ke guerre et haine est si mutepliee entre les ytaliens au tans d'ore, et parmi le monde en maintes terres, k'il a devision en trestoutes les viles et enemistié entre les .ii. parties des borgois, certes, kiconques aquiert l'amour des uns il li covient avoir la malevoeillance de l'autre', ibid., pp. 394–5.

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Sallust or Cicero, and the Genoese annalists had, at best, a limited familiarity with republican authors. True, Hagen's *Reimchronik* does describe the burghers of Cologne as 'free, noble Romans', this is, however, evidence more of a man bearing the title 'master' adapting the philosophy of *libertas Ecclesie* to one of *libertas ciuitatis* than it is of a prevalent classical ideology in thirteenth-century Cologne. Rather, in response to immediate concerns over jurisdiction, privilege and civic unrest, these men wrote in an idiom which remained very much situated in the present-day.

Nevertheless, the civic historical writing witnessed in thirteenth-century London and Cologne, and twelfth- and thirteenth-century Genoa was exceptional. In the great heyday of historical writing by men established in religious communities, these townsmen took the first, tentative steps along a road which would subsequently be well-trodden. That they did so independently of each other yet in such strikingly similar ways tells us much about the self-conception of urban elites in contemporary Europe. Indeed, this comparison has served to reveal several truths about these writers that would, perhaps, not otherwise always be evident. For instance, that their pride in their civic past, their desire to place their cities in the world and their defence of liberties were far from unusual. But the differences between their works are also instructive, and we must also conclude that in thirteenth-century London and Genoa written vernaculars were not yet a tool with which to articulate a civic identity, although German was beginning to assume that role in Cologne.

This essay began by noting that medieval chronicle writing was an institutional affair. Quite so. In this respect, thirteenth-century urban historical writing had much in common with historical writing undertaken by monks and secular clerks. Where there is more difference between the two branches of historical writing is in their reception. In comparison to some of the great historical works produced by medieval monks and canons, all our chronicles have very small manuscript traditions.[226] A written manuscript tradition is, however, just one way of measuring a work's reach. Indeed, the 'public' audience within the monasteries and cathedral chapters of contemporary Europe for the works produced in those houses would have been very limited – in both its size and in its philosophical heterogeneity.[227] By contrast, the immediate audience for our civic chronicles was almost certainly much bigger and more varied. In Genoa, against a backdrop of recurrent urban violence, the civic annals were officially authorised and publicly presented to the city's governors. In Cologne, while factions were forced to flee the city and the citizens lined up in opposition to their archiepiscopal lord, a chronicle was produced by the city scribe and procurator and almost certainly publicly proclaimed. Is it possible, even, that the burghers of Cologne commissioned Hagen's *Reimchronik*? Around 1350

[226] See above, n. 5, 24, 29.

[227] 'Many medieval chroniclers did not write for a "public" audience, but primarily or even solely for (in the case of monastic chroniclers) their fellow monks or canons, or (in the case of secular clerks or laymen) a small and usually indeterminate group of friends, family or colleagues', Given-Wilson, *Chronicles,* pp. xx–xxi.

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the town scribe of Magdeburg dedicated his work to the governors of the town, having composed his chronicle in accordance with their will;[228] in 1385 the town council of Lübeck commissioned a chronicle of their town.[229] To examine what Arnold chose both to record and to omit from his narrative would be the subject of another study entirely, but there is clear evidence from the way he structured his work that he shaped his narrative for a divided, public audience too.[230] Indeed, Arnold's fellow aldermen and others of their stamp must have known about his chronicle; either he was their chamberlain/clerk, or they were feeding him the documents of which he made such great use. Of course, all of these chroniclers wrote for themselves and to make sense of the world around them, but being aware of the different composition of the audience for these works helps us better to understand the works themselves. For, in the final analysis, who were the audiences for these chronicles? It was, after all, the public, urban community whose past was being preserved and glorified, whose position was being justified, whose privileges were being defended, whose independence was being asserted and whose members were being urged to come together.

[228] Du Boulay, 'The German Town Chroniclers', p. 465.
[229] Van Houts, 'Local and Regional Chronicles', p. 48.
[230] Stone, 'The Book of Arnold fitz Thedmar', pp. 127–30

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