

7 *Assumptions*

Some aspects of the ways of thought and life of the thirteenth-century Sieneſe may ſtrike an obſerver in the late twentieth century as particularly unexpected or particularly ſurprising. Which theſe routines, ſuppoſitions or attitudes are, depends, naturally, on the viewpoint or expectation of the obſerver, hence it is not entirely correct to label what ſurprizes us as ‘aſſumptions’ or preſuppoſitions. However, ſince they are important features of Italian medieval civic ſociety and were taken for granted by the medieval Sieneſe as aſpects of their way of life which would not have required explanation or juſtification to their own contemporaries, it may be acceptable to conſider them under the title given to this chapter. It will comprise two main ſections; firſt the advanced bureaucratization of the commune (and the city’s other institutions) and the very ſtriking degree of intervention in all aſpects of life that this made poſſible; ſecondly, the emphasis given to diſplay, pageantry and viſual aſpects of authority and government.

BUREAUCRACY

The ſtrength, extent and ramifications of Sieneſe bureaucracy have already been indicated in connection with the commune’s institutions. The inſiſtence that the chancery ſhould retain copies of all letters deſpatched and preſerve all relevant deeds, while alſo adding copies of them to the cartularies of privileges, ſets the tone for an intenſely literate mode of government characterized by a ſpectacular conſumption of paper, parchment and ink. Typical was the inſiſtence that every tranſaction of the Chamberlain and the four Provveditori had to be recorded in writing, that at leaſt two of the latter were to be preſent whenever that Chamberlain made or received any payment, that both copies of the accounts muſt be checked in full by all theſe officials every month and the terms of their oaths of office be read by them at leaſt every two months. Typical too were the precise meaſures concerning the keys to the commune’s coffers: one of theſe was the ſenior Provveditore’s, the other, which was diſſimilar and therefore complementary, was in the care of his colleagues. The ſystem generated a maſs of written records, ſince all Biccherna accounts were kept in duplicate, the Chamberlain and the Provveditori having ſeparate copies. And to write of this as a ‘duplicate’ method is to underſtate greatly the amount of writing done ſince the ſurviving volumes of Biccherna records are clearly neat copies made up at

the end of six-monthly periods of office, not records made at the time of the transactions themselves. The same is true for the notarial records of Council meetings: the proceedings were noted in rough during the sessions, then written up formally for acceptance as correct records, much as minutes of meetings nowadays.¹

The consumption of paper by the commune's judicial institutions is equally striking, since the detailed depositions of all witnesses in the city's very busy courts were recorded in full, and this involved writing out in Latin the statements of many witnesses concerning what might be quite minor disputes over property, for instance, and cases of theft and violence, which were then read back at full length to the witness in the vernacular.² This technique incidentally implies considerable linguistic expertise.

Correspondence, accounts, minutes and the other forms of record mentioned come nowhere near the total body of written material generated and accreted by the commune. Numberless inventories, for example, were compiled, and statutes promulgated and recorded in several copies. It is hardly surprising that purchases of paper and parchment should have ranked as significant items of expenditure in the Biccherna volumes. Paper, though something of a novelty, compared favourably in price with parchment, the latter costing, per quire, about 5s., the price of some forty sheets of paper. From the earliest surviving volumes (from 1248) the deliberations of the General Council were recorded on paper, whereas parchment was used for the main series of the Biccherna accounts (the *Entrata e Uscita* volumes) until 1302,³ after which paper gradually came to be used.

A few examples will give some notion of the scale of the purchases. In January 1278 six reams of paper were bought (2,880 sheets) for 20 l. 5s. In 1281 twenty-eight quires (a quire was four sheets folded in eight leaves) and six sheets of parchment for use by the Fifteen *gubernatori* and the Biccherna cost 6 l. 5s. 10d. The following year 136 quires and thirteen sheets of parchment were bought for the Biccherna and for copies of statutes and judicial records, while around the same time a considerable purchase of paper was made, amounting to 229 (mainly small) bound volumes and 5,358 sheets at a cost of at least 14 l.⁴ Literate men were not in short supply, but the cost of their labour was of some significance. A notary who in 1282 made a copy of new statutes which covered five quires and four sheets received 52s., while another whose work amounted to about eight quires was paid 3 l. 18s.⁵ The ubiquity of notaries could also be exploited to assist

1 Above, pp. 52, 59; B. 16, pp. vi–vii.

2 See the surviving records of the Podestà's court, Podestà 5–9 (1298) and the Capitano del Popolo's, Capitano 4 (1302).

3 B 116.

4 B 71, f. 21; 80, f. 74; 82, ff. 115v, 138v.

5 B 82, f. 139.

the flow of information to the authorities; for example, any instance of a will containing bequests in favour of the commune had to be reported by the notary who had drawn up the will. It is an indication of the commune's frequent calls on notaries that their gild forbade them to haunt the entrance to the Palazzo.⁶

The multiplicity of bureaucratic employment offered by the commune, mainly part-time, has already been stressed.⁷ Fiscal valuers, for example, required the assistance of professional surveyors. In 1293 Giarino 'of the abacus' (*de abbacho*) was employed for twenty-two days, with two assistants, to plot out the vegetable-gardens planned for Castelfranco di Paganico, a new foundation in the southern contado: at 14s. a day the bill came to 15 l. 8s.⁸ Naturally bureaucracy bred its own dependents. Three officials had the duty of negotiating the rents paid by the commune for the property it hired to house the Fifteen, the Podestà and his retinue and various other officials. The remuneration of these three, at 5s. each, was no very considerable item, but they could not get by without their very own messenger, which brought the total cost of their functions to 16s.⁹ Officialdom also required an array of equipment, such as the measures, weights and scales needed in the regulatory process for the sale of salt, wine, oil and flour. Identical weights and measures had to be held at every place within the contado. Each barrel manufactured by a Sienese cooper had to be sealed with the commune's official seal.¹⁰

There was a danger that those in charge of the practicalities of civic life might try to skimp on all this and get by with a minimum of *papasserie*, but it was made difficult for them to cut corners. Officials concerned with roads, bridges, fountains and woodlands must have felt the temptation most because their workers were usually illiterate, but they were specially adjured to keep all their paper-work, including financial accounts, in neat copies for retention in the office ('*sì che sempre nel detto officio sia copia di quelle cose le quali si fanno*'). In all respects a high degree of literacy was assumed. A chained copy of the commune's statutes was kept available for public consultation, even if the right of access to this was presumably a formality in the case of a vast majority of the female population and a considerable majority of the males also.¹¹ A full inventory of the commune's arms and warlike stores had to be read aloud and checked over in detail every quarter by the Chamberlain and Provveditori, while new military ordinances

6 *Cost. 1309–10*, 1, p. 105: *Statuti . . . giudici e notai*, p. 83. Wills were normally drawn up shortly before the testator's death. But this clause could have caused difficulties when a testator made an unexpected recovery or was merely (for example) setting out on a long journey.

7 Above, pp. 58–9.

8 B 109, f. 145v.

9 B 82, f. 159.

10 *Const. 1262*, pp. 110–12.

11 *Cost. 1309–10*, 2, p. 136; *Const. 1262*, p. 181.

continued to be promulgated in imposing numbers.¹² As the recent archival records reached constantly increasing dimensions, a decision that fiscal assessments had to be burned after payment had been made was perhaps a consolation to harassed officials.¹³

What has been said of the commune's bureaucracy and its assumptions concerning literacy could equally well be said of the administration of all the other institutions claiming the loyalty of the Sienese. Certainly it is true of commercial firms, of guilds and hospitals, indeed it applied to every form of religious activity except that of the stubbornly solitary hermits. Yet the commune itself, by its expectations as well as its administrative vigour, achieved an unchallengeable hold over the lives of its citizens.

REGULATION

Nothing was so private a matter that it lay beyond the reach of the commune. Such a concept as 'the liberty of the individual' could have little meaning in a society where men might be instructed to wear their hair short at the back 'so that at least part of their neck is visible'.¹⁴ Within the domestic sphere, legislation laid down that a woman might not bequeath more than a quarter of her estate to anyone other than her own children, while many other statutes governed dowries, wardship and family relationships. A woman was permitted to separate from her husband if five reliable men supported her claim that she was in danger from his violence or that of his relatives, and in such circumstances the husband had to give her adequate financial support. Should the need arise, a son could be compelled to provide food for his father. A legal guardian had to be nominated for anyone recognized to be mentally defective or even an incorrigible spendthrift (*prodigus*).¹⁵

At night it was illegal not merely to be outside but to leave a door open.¹⁶ Watchmen of the guard were permitted to frequent brothels during the curfew if not on duty so long as they did not consume food on the premises. Gambling was a civic monopoly and source of profit and so was subject to considerable restrictions: it was totally prohibited within an area three miles outside the city and in Siena could not take place before spectators except in the commune's own casino, while at Christmas all gambling was forbidden. Fines were common both for gambling illegally and for illegal presence as a spectator.¹⁷ Another leisure

12 *Const.* 1262, p. 125; *B.* 15, p. 188 (a notary copies forty-seven new clauses *de ordinamento equorum et balistarum*, 1254).

13 CG 65, f. 94 (1304). This was not an unusual measure. The Biccherna volumes analysed in chapter 2 were not fiscal records in the strict sense.

14 Zdekauer, *Vita privata*, p. 45.

15 *Const.* 1262, pp. 213n, 214, 237, 242–3.

16 *Cost.* 1309–10, 2, p. 364.

17 *Ibid.*, 2, pp. 245–7; *B.* 104, ff. 7, 15v; 116, ff. 6, 20v; 120, f. 39v.

activity, visiting the baths at Petriolo, Macereto or Vignoni, was under communal control to an even greater extent. The commune farmed out the rights to these places but still fixed maximum charges for rooms, mattresses and so on, and closely regulated the sale of food there, one of the Podestà's officials having a special responsibility for the bathing establishments. Gambling was forbidden there but certain games such as chess were permitted. Men and women had to bathe separately.¹⁸ Hunting, which was both a leisure pastime and an important source of food, was also regulated closely. It was illegal to snare or shoot pigeons, to take quails between April and June, to set bait for birds within eight miles of the city and to net them anywhere.¹⁹

Education, though certainly not a communal or lay monopoly, was also a matter for the civic authority in Siena, as in the other Italian cities. Though a papal privilege to a 'university' (1252) seems to have been ineffectual, the commune already recruited and paid teachers of commercial arithmetic and of law and Latin (thus contributing to the preparation of future notaries and administrators) as well as of medicine. Teachers of law and Latin were exempted from military service, and the latter were even excused duties as night watchmen (lest they confuse their irregular verbs, on the sleepy morning after?). A Siennese who was teaching Latin at Arezzo was tempted back by an offer of a salary higher than the Aretines were paying, together with tax exemptions. The 1274 statutes offered special protection to scholars and teachers, and in 1275 it was decided to set up a *studium generale* (general school) of letters. No doubt news of this led to an Englishman writing from the papal court to seek employment as a teacher of logic; he seems to have secured an annual salary of 50 l. (1279), twice the basic pay (assigned notionally for their lodging) to the teachers of other subjects.²⁰ Educational expansion meant seeking out pupils as well as teachers; it was suggested that six was the minimum number for the establishment of a viable law school. At this time Siena was not successful in setting up a widely recognized 'centre of excellence' in education, but by the early fourteenth century a good deal had been achieved. There were then five teachers of Latin ('grammar') and logic (subjects in the *trivium*, the liberal arts course) and law, also two doctors of natural sciences (*scienze di fisica*) who were well rewarded at 90 florins per annum.²¹

18 D. Barduzzi, *Provvedimenti per le stazioni termali senesi nei sec. XIII e XIV* (Siena, 1899): CG 51, f. 31: *Cost.* 1309–10, 2, p. 81; see also above, p. 114.

19 *Cost.* 1309–10, 2, pp. 265–7.

20 *Const.* 1262, p. 410n; *Cost.* 1309–10, 1, pp. 103–4; 2, p. 158: B. 5, p. 85; 8, p. 109; 9, p. 97; 103, f. 107v; 118, ff. 299–305v; CG 20, f. 79r and v; 22, f. 29r and v, Alleg. E; 23, f. 20v: P. Nardi, 'Comune, impero e papato alle origini dell'insegnamento universitario in Siena (1240–1275)', *BSSP*, 90 (1983), pp. 50–94.

21 B 118, ff. 299–305v; 120, f. 368. I am indebted also to an unpublished paper by Dr P. D. Denley on the early history of the *studium*.

The Sienese could be – and were – compelled to plant fruit trees. Their building work was affected by the compulsory uniformity of size of bricks and tiles and by the compulsory wage-scales of masons and woodworkers. A little more surprising perhaps is the commune's right of compulsory purchase, not only in connection with town-planning (new open spaces etc.) but also in the interests of landowners themselves. The owner of a plot bordered on three sides by the land of another owner could be compelled to sell out to that neighbour.²² This measure must have been responsible for much long-sighted scheming and a great deal of ill-feeling.

The close regulation of economic life is the most explicable aspect of Siena's *étatisme*. The supply of grain was crucial to the city's existence and its regime's stability, and it was natural that there should have been communal granaries for use in years of shortage. Connected with the same matter was the control of mills and milling. Detailed regulations governed the location of mills and gave intending millers rights of compulsory purchase in appropriate sites. The construction of fishponds was encouraged and the import and sale of fish regulated. Any purchase of food within two miles of the city by stallholders for resale was forbidden. Baking and the sale of wine were closely regulated and kilns subject to frequent inspection. Horses and pack animals for hire had to be officially valued.²³

Did the commune really possess the means to enforce this all-pervading legislation? The statutes certainly testify to the councillors' belief in their commune's authority. There was no shortage of messengers and criers to make known its will; apart from the regular four messengers and three criers, a body of sixty Sienese was permanently on call to undertake any necessary mission.²⁴ Obviously there was defiance and violence. To evade the law by escape into the wilder parts of Tuscany was common, yet so was the contrary, law-abiding, decision to purchase pardon at a bargain price. Certainly the people of the contado often felt the authority of Siena as a grim reality. It has already been mentioned that when subject communities fell into debt their people were even forbidden to visit a doctor in Siena.²⁵ The system of spies and officially empowered denouncers no doubt added to the commune's formidability. The use of this governmental technique was ruthless. If a man offered a bribe to an official and it was accepted, he was rewarded, if he proceeded to denounce the acceptor, by being granted a quarter of the fine levied on the corrupt official.²⁶

22 *Cost.* 1309–10, 1, pp. 474–5; 2, p. 65 (for the application of this clause v. CG 61, ff. 111r and v), pp. 547–8.

23 *Const.* 1262, pp. 309, 353–4; *Cost.* 1309–10, 2, pp. 66–72, 309–10, 367–8, 389–90, 402–3; CG 61, ff. 51v–5; B. 17, pp. 109, 121, 175. See also S. De Colli, 'Lo statuto degli "ufficiali sopra i mugnai" (anno 1281)', *BSSP*, 64 (1957), pp. 153–81.

24 *Const.* 1262, pp. 113–14.

25 CG 48, ff. 50–9 (see also above, p. 109).

26 *Cost.* 1309–10, 2, p. 432.

SUMPTUARY LAWS

Sumptuary legislation, which is a feature of all the Italian communes, provides a characteristic instance of their ubiquitous control. As with many other aspects of that control, it was much dependent on the institution of 'secret' denouncers; within each *contrada* the Podestà had to have one of his *secretos exploratores et accusatores bonos et legales* to watch out for offences against sumptuary laws.²⁷ These laws should almost certainly be seen as part ethical and religious, part economic, in their motivations (not that contemporaries would have accepted this distinction). There was a primitivist vein of puritanical distrust of individual display and conspicuous expenditure in the outlook of many, but that attitude on its own might have been less influential in law-making had it not been supported by the reasonable doctrine that private fortunes needed to be safeguarded at a time when capital formation was scarce and such consumption withdrew capital from productive activity.²⁸

The laws were concerned both with apparel and ornamentation generally and with major social occasions. Maximum lengths were laid down for women's skirts and in the case of unmarried women they were never to have trains. The embellishments which could be used to decorate clothing were very precisely limited: they could be only of silk or gold and could be worn by women on the breast or hands or on the patterned parts of sleeves and the front of mantles. Men were allowed ornamentation also on the shoulder and neck of leather garments. Women were not to wear crowns on their heads, but the less ostentatious silver 'garlands' or circlets were permitted if they weighed less than two ounces and these might even be gilded 'in the usual way' so long as they did not have pearls in them also. Women were allowed pearl buttons, up to the number of five and worn on the breast, and silver girdles weighing not more than twelve ounces.²⁹

The dubbing of a knight was the occasion of a major gathering, yet it was not to be marked by gifts, except of plain cloth; presents of gold and silver money were prohibited, nor could the entertainment involve the new knight sending round a *giullare* (*jongleur*) or jester. The most detailed social regulations were those relating to weddings. No more than twelve men might be present at the betrothal ceremony and no more than seven female relatives of the groom could call on the

27 C. Mazzi, 'Alcune leggi suntuarie senesi del sec. XIII', *ASI*, 4th s., 5 (1880), pp. 133–44; *B*, 28, pp. 140–1. There is also much sumptuary legislation in S. Mengozzi, 'La "Charta bannorum" di Ubertino dell'Andito, Potestà di Siena nel 1249', *BSSP*, 13 (1906), pp. 381–456 (especially pp. 449–54).

28 See C. M. Cipolla in *C. Econ. H.*, 3, pp. 419–21.

29 Mazzi; *Cost.* 1309–10, 2, p. 378.

new bride. The groom might not give presents to the bride's relatives, nor she to his, nor his female relatives to her. At the betrothal both parties had to swear an oath of adherence to these provisions (here considerably abbreviated and simplified). Only relatives and close neighbours could be involved in the celebrations. Restrictions concerning women's clothing were not lifted for these occasions, and ladies' dresses were not to be *décolleté*, i.e. *frascollati de la forcella del petto in giù*. Again, payments to *giullari* were regulated.³⁰

Similar decrees applied to funerals, the other major 'rite of passage'. Women were not permitted to attend burials of men, nor more than six of them the burial of a woman. The size of the group accompanying the widow from her house to the interment was limited to twelve men and twelve women. The duration of the formal lamentation in front of the house, which could not begin until a bell had been rung, was also restricted. Those who might take part in this and who might then sit in the house and later make visits of condolence were defined and limited. Women other than the widow were not to wear mourning for more than a fortnight.³¹ Such regulations governing the commemoration of death, though normally, and probably rightly, regarded as coming under the heading of 'sumptuary' measures, were not primarily economic in their motivation. A very important factor in all these measures was clearly a generally accepted notion that all forms of display should be subject to direction and restraint.

DISPLAY

The commune's concern with display and the visual aspects of life was not merely negative or passive. A major occasion for civic pageantry was the feast of the Assumption, more particularly after the city's devotion to the Virgin Mary had been strengthened by the victory of Montaperti. Since the German cavalry, whose share in the battle had been crucial, had invoked the aid of St George, that saint also was specially commemorated, at least for some years, by a civic procession with candles to his church on his feast day (23 April).³²

But the major feast continued to be the Assumption (15 August), when representatives of the contado communities bore wax candles to the cathedral as a symbol of their subject status. The feast was to the Sieneese what 'Empire Day' was to the British in the early twentieth century, a day for celebrating overlordship. On the eve of the feast the people of Siena, in their contrade, processed to the cathedral, attendance being compulsory. On the following day ceremonies

30 *Const.* 1262, *Cont.*, BSSP, 2, pp. 142–3; *Cost.* 1309–10, 2, pp. 312–15, 405.

31 *Const.* 1262, *Cont.*, BSSP, 2, pp. 315–17; *Cost.* 1309–10, 2, pp. 318–23.

32 *Const.* 1262, pp. 54–5.

associated with the city's overlordship took place, and, at least from 1310, there was a horse race, with a first prize (*palio*) of 50 l. Evidence of an August *palio* goes back as far as 1238, so the legislation of 1310 concerning the race should be seen as a re-establishment, or perhaps an attempt to set it on a firm annual basis. The race certainly did not take place in the Campo; the 1310 *palio* was run from the village of Fontebecchi to the cathedral. Music also played an important part in the festivities of 15 August and it was sometimes necessary to reinforce the city's own musicians by borrowing those of neighbouring communes (as witness the payment made to San Gimignano's trumpeters in 1295). A tight-rope walker seems also to have participated in the entertainment, to judge from a payment made to a juggler, 'for the hire of a rope'.³³

Easter was the other principal occasion for festivities. Dramatic spectacles were presented in the Campo on Good Friday. In 1257, for instance, the Crucifixion was enacted, as well as 'a play of the Marys'. From 1307 another *palio* was run every year on 20 March, to commemorate the death, twenty years earlier, of the Dominican Ambrogio Sansedoni. Around that period the gild of judges and notaries observed fifty-five annual religious feasts as days on which their members were not to work.³⁴ The readiness with which other circumstances became opportunities for festivity illustrates even better than these regular occasions the Sienese enthusiasm for pageantry. Notables, officials and armies had to be formally welcomed, and leave taken of them. In 1281, for example, a gathering of 'barons and magnates' took place in Siena, perhaps in connection with the *podesteria* of Count Guido Selvatico. This must have been an important Guelf occasion and trumpeters were sent to meet the *baronibus et magnatibus viris, pro honore communis*.³⁵ Siena's Podestà for the first six months of 1306, Andrea, a feudatory from Massa Fermana in the Marche, was clearly a man who relished pageantry. He had the band of trumpeters, with their piper and tambourine player, accompany him for a formal meeting with a colleague who was taking up appointment as Podestà of Lucca. In Andrea's time the eight trumpeters were frequently in demand, for the first *palio* in honour of the blessed Ambrogio Sansedoni, for the procession to celebrate the news of the Florentine capture of Pistoia (10 April 1306), for the arrival of the new Capitano and his entry into office, for his predecessor's departure and for the dubbing of knights. The

33 On the patronage of the Virgin see H. C. Peyer, *Stadt u. Stadtpatron im mittelalterlichen Italien* (Zürich, 1955), pp. 48–55; Heywood, *Palio and Ponte*, pp. 62–6; *RIS*, *CS*, p. 310; B 112, f. 98.

34 B. 17, p. 102; Heywood, pp. 68–81; for Sansedoni see above, pp. 142–6; *Statuti . . . giudici e notai*, p. 101.

35 B 80, f. 135.

following year a Sieneſe contingent of cavalry and foot was diſpatched to aid Florence and took its leave at a ceremonial parade in the Campo.³⁶

On ſuch occasions the commune's *carroccio*, its cherished civic emblem, was preſent as the focus of patriotic pageantry. All the principal independent Italian cities had their own ceremonial waggons (*carrocci*).³⁷ There is no contemporary representation of Siena's, or any means of learning much with certainty about its appearance, though it was brightly painted and dominated by a banner at the top of a tall maſt. It may have been drawn by horſes or by horſes and men rather than the more conventional oxen. The maſt bearing the banner could be lowered when neceſſary: it was twenty-ſix *braccia* long and attached to another, fixed, maſt which enabled the Sieneſe ſtandard to dominate the ſcene from a great height, no doubt a factor of particular importance when the waggon was borne into battle.³⁸

Something of the veneration felt for the *carroccio* is conveyed by the inſtruction (in the 1262 ſtatutes) that a lamp ſhould burn day and night in its preſence. This ceremonial waggon uſually accompanied the Sieneſe army on campaign with an eſcort of infantry. Brought back in triumph from the victory of Montaperti, four days later it ſtood in the Campo to preſide over the ſubmiſſion of the men of Montalcino (*in campo Fori ante conſpectum victorioſi carroccii civitatis Senarum*). Nor was its role confined to affirmation of the city's external authority, for thirty years earlier the organization of the Popolo had promiſed obedience to the commune, its members ſwearing an oath 'at the *carroccio*'.³⁹

Pageantry conſtituted a ſubſtantial element in the commune's expenditure. The pay of a trumpeter, which roſe from 1 l. to 2 l. per month, was by no means to be deſpiſed, particularly ſince this ſeems to have been a retainer, augmented by a ſum of 2s. for each occasion on which the trumpeters performed.⁴⁰ But it was the appeal to the eye rather than to the ear which coſt money. Muſicians, meſſengers, town-criers, all had to be arrayed in clothing which bore the commune's arms. The meſſengers (*balitores*) of the Court of Wardſhip (Curia del Placito) had to have a cloak or waſt-band coloured half-red, half-yellow; the commune's muſicians were to have the commune's arms on their uniform. In 1282 the Fifteen decided that the attire of their doorkeeper reflected unfavourably on their preſtige and 9 l. 2s. was laid out on procuring him a much ſmarter uniform and cloak. At the time of the military criſis of 1260 the alliance between Siena and King Manfred's representative Count Giordano was given viſual emphasis; when

36 B 118, ff. 173, 222–4, 249, 287; 120, ff. 253v, 322v, 344v.

37 See H. Zug Tucci, 'Il Carroccio nella vita comunale italiana', *QFIA*, 65 (1985), pp. 1–104.

38 The account by the chronicler Montauri (*RIS*, CS, p. 203) dates from the fifteenth century.

39 *Const.* 1262, p. 26; B. 13, p. 178; CV, 2, n. 628 (pp. 846–52); the payment to a notary who *stetit et scripsit iuramenta populi quando iverunt ad caroccium* is B. 2, p. 207.

40 B 56, f. 30; 113, f. 155; 118, ff. 173, 222, 293.

the trumpeters went out to welcome the Count's arrival they were dressed in tunics specially designed for the occasion, bearing the Count's arms as well as the commune's. Even routine expenditure on such clothing was heavy. The criers had to have new suits of red or green each year. The clothing allowance for one year (1305) for three criers (*bannitores*) came to 44 l. 12s. 4d., 42 l. 10s. of this being for material (38 *brachia* of cloth at 35 l., and 7 l. 10s. for leather), the remainder being the charges of the tailor (36s.) and the cutter (6s. 4d.).⁴¹

The normal beneficiaries of the commune's high sartorial standards were its own officials, but special rewards of clothing were made to bearers of good news. Messengers reaching Siena with news of the birth of a son to King Manfred, and of a victory at Lucca (1263), of 'good news from Ravenna' (1274) and from Pavia (1275), and the victory in the contado at Rigomagno (1281) all received gifts of cloth. Of these the bearer of dynastic news benefited more handsomely than those whose news was military, but he had come further. Whereas the usual outlay on such an occasion was around 10 l. or less, the messenger from Manfred's court received garments to the value of 39 l. 9s. A period of multiple good news could be an expensive time. In 1306 five messengers reached Siena with favourable tidings from Bologna, Lucca and Florence and gifts of apparel to them cost 60 l. 16s. 6d.⁴²

Banners were another costly item. The Biccherna volume recording these gifts to messengers registers a total expenditure of 337 l. 3s. 10d. on banners in a half-year period. The following year 69 l. 3s. 4d. was spent on two silk pennons and two standards (one for cavalry, one for infantry) for the force to be despatched to Florence. These were large but not unprecedented bills. In 1278 there occurred one of many campaigns against the recalcitrant population of Sticciano; the army was furnished with eighteen new flags and four new banners, at a total cost of 80 l. Often elements within the army required their own banners. The gift of a banner might even help to induce one contado community to serve against another, while Guelf affiliations had also to be affirmed with appropriate standards. The carroccio of course had its own flag; when Conradin came to Siena in 1268 a purchase was made of white silk for a new one and for a first prize for the celebratory horse-race, at a cost of nearly 500 l. A few years before that the victory of Montaperti had been celebrated by buying an entire new set of standards and banners.⁴³

41 B 56, f. 18v; 82, ff. 102v–03; 118, f. 225; 'Breve 1250', pp. 71–2; *Cost. 1309–10*, 1, pp. 112–13; *Const. 1262*, p. 115.

42 B 37, f. 33v; 56, f. 18v; 61, f. 7v; 80, f. 90; 118, f. 229v.

43 B 118, ff. 228v–9; 120, f. 369; 73, f. 49; 59, ff. 55 (Monticiano against Prata), 46 (36 l. 5s. 6d. for three standards of the Guelf Party); 42, f. 93v; 35, f. 20 (1262). The distinctions between 'pennons', 'flags', 'banners' and 'standards' are problematical: the vocabulary used here is that of the Biccherna notaries.

VISUAL ART

It was an assumption that a Siene official, like Dogberry, should have 'everything handsome about him'. The commune had its own gold cup, its deeds were preserved in painted chests, and the volumes of statutes and accounts were illuminated and bound in covers which constitute one of the most notable surviving forms of medieval Siene art. The books and their bindings, now greatly admired, were a much less considerable budgetary item than the banners and tunics. A notary's fee for copying and illuminating (not a specialist's job in this instance, it would seem) the statute of the Fifteen was merely 1 l. The sums paid for painting Biccherne covers varied from 8s. per volume (in 1277 and 1281) to 1 l. (in 1306). In these early volumes, the covers (most of which have unfortunately migrated from Siena) usually depicted the Chamberlain or the coats of arms of the Provveditori. More elaborate scenes – to judge from the covers which are still extant – begin around 1320, with the portrayal of the Chamberlain kneeling before the local saint, St Galganus.⁴⁴

Painting on the outside of chests (*cassoni*) was another inexpensive job – the painter of a *cassone* to be kept at Giuncarico received a mere 6s. 6d. (1292)⁴⁵ – but murals were a different matter. In 1289 Master Mino painted the Virgin and other saints on the walls of the council-chamber in the temporary Palazzo del Comune adjacent to the new Palazzo, and was paid 22 l.⁴⁶ Visual art in the Palazzo was minatory as well as religious, hence the portraits of convicted forgers displayed there.⁴⁷

The great series of decorative programmes in the new Palazzo was not embarked on in the period considered here, the main fourteenth-century elements being Simone Martini's *Maestà* in the Sala del Mappamondo, scenes of military virtues, subject places and famous men, and that great allegory of civic life, Ambrogio Lorenzetti's incomparable frescoes in the Sala of the Nine. In the following century these were to be joined by Taddeo di Bartolo's series of famous Romans and saints and by Spinello Aretino's cycle of the life of Alexander III, the Siene pope.

The Simone Martini *Maestà* (1315) bears an inscription in which the Virgin, the city's patron or tutor, reminds the councillors of her delight in good counsel (*buon*

44 See *Le Biccherne* (Rome, 1984). B 82 f. 99 (payment to a notary *scribenti statutum et minianti statutum xv*); 67, f. 29; 79, f. 25 (both 8s.); 103, f. 69 and *Le Biccherne*, p. 66 (both 10s.); 118, f. 307 (2 l. for volumes); *Le Biccherne*, pp. 78–9; for a list of the covers now untraced but known to have existed, *ibid.*, p. 387 (a list which could be supplemented from the Biccherne volumes).

45 B 108, f. 146.

46 B 101, f. 74v.

47 *Cost. 1309–10*. On this topic see G. Ortalli, *La Pittura infamante nei sec. XIII–XVI* (Rome, 1979).

consigli), while the Christ-child carries a scroll with the words *Diligite iustitiam qui iudicatis terram* ('Love justice, you who are judges of the earth' – *Wisdom*, I, 1).⁴⁸ The tradition of didactic civic art, which was to reach its noble zenith in Siena with Ambrogio Lorenzetti's paintings in the Palazzo, had already been established in the thirteenth century.

Pageantry and visual display were justified and encouraged as stimuli to civic patriotism and pride, and the expense involved was willingly borne in the cause of promoting that spirit. That at least is what modern writers seem to imply. But have they rightly analysed cause and effect? Would it not be more accurate to see display as the *expression* of patriotism? The citizens of a great medieval commune required no consciously instilled 'image' to provoke strong feelings about their home city. It had formed them, it provided the familiar surroundings of their lives, its historical traditions were known to them from childhood, its enemies were known to them as their enemies. They had their domestic enemies too, but altruistic public spirit needed no conscious, cynical inculcation.

The bequests to the commune which notaries were required by law to report were not figments of a hopeful imagination but realities.⁴⁹ In 1290 one Bonacorso spent twenty-four days in the contado collecting customs dues. On his return he found that the payment he had received for the expenses of his military escort was actually 24 l. more than he had spent, and he returned that sum because 'he did not wish to keep it' (*quia noluit eos retinere*). A few years later a Franciscan friar paid 5 l. 16s. 6d. into the Biccherna 'saying that he had received them from a person who told him that he had had them wrongly, from the commune of Siena' (*disse che lli aveva ricevuti da una persona che lli disse che lli aveva ricevuti dal comune di Siena come non doveva*).⁵⁰

A Sienese chronicler said that the Campo of Siena was thought 'the most beautiful piazza, with its beautiful and abundant fountain and beautiful and noble buildings and shops around, of all the piazze in Italy'.⁵¹ He was neither propagandizing nor echoing propaganda. He was reporting his own and others' pride in the appearance of the city to which they fully belonged. For such men the pageantry of patriotism was the natural vocabulary of visual expression.

48 See N. Rubinstein, 'Political Ideas in Sienese Art: the frescoes by Ambrogio Lorenzetti and Taddeo di Bartolo in the Palazzo Pubblico', *JWCI*, 21 (1958), pp. 179–207.

49 B 107, f. 22 (3 l. 'a Guidone Pieri de Faenza quos reliquit communi Sen' in suo testamento').

50 B 103, f. 26; 116, f. 129 (1302).

51 *RIS*, CS, p. 550.