1 *Setting*

This book is concerned with the Sienese rather than their city, but as a preliminary something must be said about the setting within which they lived.[1]

Medieval Siena was an extremely small urban zone in the wide expanse of a predominantly rural Tuscany. The appearance of the place was to strike a French traveller in 1580 as already one of great antiquity ('son visage la tesmoine fort ancienne'). This visitor, Michel de Montaigne, saw Siena as an 'uneven' (*inégal*) town, 'situated along a ridge where most of the streets are... Some of these continue onto the facing slopes of other hills'. The built-up area, rapidly growing in the middle decades of the thirteenth century, sprawled along two principal roads. The chief route from the north to Rome, the 'Via Francigena', bifurcated at the very centre of Siena, where the main road bore on, as the Via Cassia, towards Rome, and other routes led away to the south-west, towards Massa Marittima, Grosseto and the other towns of the Maremma. The city – Siena had a bishop and hence ranked as *civitas* – extended in fact along a series of ridges, from which housing had already begun to overflow onto the quite steep slopes and valleys which separated them. To walk from one end to the other of this site would have required no more than some fifteen minutes, unless the streets were exceptionally crowded, and to cross from east to west would have been the work of five minutes or less, despite the contours. Crowded into this urban microcosm were, around the middle of the thirteenth century, some 30,000 people, a number which was rapidly and continually increasing through immigration.

Siena's inhabitants lived in a great variety of dwellings all of which would now be considered appallingly uncomfortable and almost all dreadfully crowded. With little space indoors, life was lived as much as possible in the street, though from October till May this was often a cold and windy alternative to the cramped rigours of existence within the home. For most the house was probably a wattle and daub construction, sometimes with a brick facade, though a good many could afford a small house partly of stone. Often the building comprised a shop at

1 On the topography of thirteenth-century Siena, see Balestracci Piccinni (excellent, but concerned with a later period); Braunfels (see 'Siena' in index); Bortolotti, chapter 2; P. Nardi, 'I borghi di S. Donato e di S. Pietro a Ovile', *BSSP*, third series, 25–7 (1966–8), pp. 7–59. M. Montaigne, *Journal de Voyage en Italie*, ed. M. Rat (Paris, 1942), pp. 89–91 (and, for the 'collines fertiles' of the region, p. 214).

ground level with dwelling apartments above reached by a narrow internal stairway or steps outside. The external approach was characteristic also of the towers and houses of the wealthier citizens, which would have the advantage of possessing upstairs loggias and balconies. The grandest families, who derived their riches both from widespread landed estates and financial transactions, inhabited extensive blocks of buildings, sometimes styled 'palaces' or 'castles', ownership of which was complicated by the system of *consorzeria*, the joint 'consorts' being relatives who had shares in the family building.

An older Siena, going back to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, was beginning to seem swamped by the expansion of the mid thirteenth. Land near the centre was already a valuable commodity and the speed of change must have been bewildering for the older inhabitants. The isolated remnants of the early medieval city from which the new mercantile city had originated were primarily ecclesiastical. Besides the cathedral, sited at the centre of old Siena ('Castelvecchio'), there was a small number of monastic foundations nearby, among them the Benedictine house of S Eugenio, the abbey 'at the archway' (all'Arco), S Vigilio (Camaldulensian) and the Vallombrosan house of S Michele. Among the many developments which were transforming the city the churches of the new orders of friars were perhaps the most imposing. With much financial assistance from the city, ambitious building schemes were launched by the religious innovators of the century, Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, Servites and Augustinian Hermits, and the crusading Orders, Templars and Hospitallers, representatives of an older tradition, were also building. Of the great families, the Tolomei already had a 'big palace' (*palatium magnum*)[2] and in general extensive private building kept pace with ecclesiastical building. Secular public work was a necessity, in particular the hilly site set urgent problems of water supply and the most crucial undertakings of the thirteenth century were the reconstruction of one fountain (Fonte Branda) and the addition of three others, Fonte Nuova, Fonte Ovile and Fonte Follonica.

The lie of the land and the rapidity of the city's expansion militated against a neat system of ring defences. Although the necessity for city walls was a commonplace and Siena possessed a body of officials whose responsibility was to strengthen these defences, the reality was a series of *ad hoc* arrangements. By 1257 the watchmen had thirty-six gates to guard, many of which must have been situated within the city rather than on any outer perimeter. If in some parts building had outgrown walls, in others there were still green expanses within them; inside the walls were vineyards and vegetable gardens, also to be found in the environs of some of the religious foundations.

2 G. Prunai, 'La famiglia Tolomei' in Prunai, G. Pampaloni, N. Bemporad, *Il Palazzo Tolomei a Siena* (Florence, 1971), pp. 9–58.

The gardens are a reminder that the land and its activities dominated Siena. The rhythm of the judicial year was that of the harvests. Agricultural instruments, both wooden and iron, were excluded from those possessions which might be confiscated on account of debt,[3] not surprisingly, since a high proportion of the population earned their living by tilling the soil. Medieval Siena had originated as a stopping-place on the road to Rome: by this time it had become a market and financial centre on the road.

ROUTES

Proper guard and protection of the highway was a normal function of government in the Middle Ages and it was natural that the oath taken by Siena's leading official, the Podestà, on assuming office, should include the promise 'to govern the highway throughout the territory of the city, to the honour of God'.[4] The duties of the commune were indeed defined more closely: 'clerks (*clerici*), pilgrims, merchants and others travelling on the highway or other roads of the city or its sphere of jurisdiction must be defended and protected', and any one harming them must be punished, whilst a special legal protection prevailed for those travelling to the market or fairs.[5] The didactic frescoes by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the Palazzo Pubblico emphasize vividly the significance of these clauses. The horrors of bad government include robbery on the highway by an armed band, and a man lies murdered just outside the city gate: the entire countryside is dominated by the figure of Fear. In the contrasting scene of good government the corresponding figure of Safety (*Securitas*) carries a gibbet whereon hangs the body of a malefactor.

The road to Rome from France and the north, the Francigena, ranked in a special category. Robbery on such a frequented route may have been relatively uncommon – though a Sienese merchant lost his gold on it in 1255 and some Florentines a valuable load of iron in 1257[6] – but its upkeep was essential to the city's well-being. A clause in the 1262 statutes begins with the lament that 'the main roads near the city are in such a state of disrepair and the bridges so broken-down that travellers cannot pass without great danger and in consequence the market suffers great disadvantage and foodstuffs cannot be brought to the city'.[7] The aim was to maintain the Francigena as a pilgrim route, not merely as a way for pack animals and carts; a duty of officials of all places between Siena and Torrenieri, thirty kilometres to the south, was to provide chained cups in

3 *Const. 1262*, p. 128.
4 Ibid., p. 25.
5 *Const. 1262. Cont. BSSP*, 2, pp. 318–19.
6 *B.*17, p. 67.
7 *Const. 1262*, p. 297.

wells by the roadside.[8] The travellers themselves appear in Sienese legislation in other ways. When a pilgrim or merchant died in Siena itself, the owner of the hostel or inn where he was lodged was responsible for handing over his possessions, normally to the city; if he died intestate, however, and had been with companions who were willing to take an oath that they would pass on his property to his children or heirs, then these companions would receive it.[9] The numerous hostels were thickest along the main road, particularly close to the northern entrance, Camollia.[10] Naturally transport and communications were important sources of employment for the Sienese. However, analysis of the occupations of Sienese taxpayers in 1285 shows 'carriers' as numerically seventh in the list of trades given (with thirty-four names), keepers of hostels or lodgings ranking a good way below them (with seventeen).[11]

The market was Siena's heart and access to it Siena's arterial flow. If its business was interrupted by warfare the consequences were extremely serious for the city's finances and for those who farmed the indirect taxes. On such occasions the city officials would receive petitions explaining that receipts from the customs would be inadequate to repay the 'farmers' for the advances due from them. As one set of tax-farmers explained, the normal situation thus interrupted was that 'many merchants from Pisa, Lucca, Florence, San Miniato, Volterra, Figline, Colle, San Gimignano and the Elsa and Arno valleys and places north of Siena and its territory came to buy animals for their farms – sows, swine, piglets, sheep, oxen, cows'.[12] Trade in oxen was particularly lively since these beasts constantly needed replacement, having a working lifetime of only two to three years. The principal Sienese hospital, which had big estates, had to purchase between 100 and 150 of them each year.[13] No doubt most of the transactions at the market were on a small scale, such as that of Francuccio from Quercegrossa (a village five miles to the north on the Castellina in Chianti road) in 1306, who sold two oxen in the Campo for 33 l. but had the misfortune to be attacked on his way home by the armed band of Mastro of Poggibonsi, and robbed of all his money.[14]

If the arrival of grain was most crucial of all to the city's well-being, that of raw wool for the local textile industry was also of great importance. Wool-dealers

8 'Breve 1250', pp. 72–3.
9 *Cost. 1309–10*, 1, p. 409; *Const. 1262*, pp. 218–19.
10 Balestracci Piccinni, pp. 150–1, carta n. 9 (locates thirteen hotels in 1318–20). See also G. Venerosi-Pesciolini, 'La strada francigena nel contado di Siena nei sec. XIII–XIV', *La Diana*, 8 (1933), pp. 116–56.
11 Computer analysis of B 88, ff. 77–165v and 90, ff. 61–84v. Only one payer in five gave an occupation.
12 Bowsky, *Finance*, p. 138.
13 Epstein, pp. 220–4, 289.
14 CG 69, ff. 81v–3v (1306).

(*lanaioli*) rank numerically immediately after carriers among the 1285 tax-payers, while more specifically industrial textile occupations (carder, dyer, comber, shearer, fuller) are cited by twenty-five of them. The upkeep of the main road northwards to 'Lombardy' (i.e. the Francigena) was the subject of routine discussion by councils,[15] but the major route for commerce may have been that to the nearest port, Pisa. The most commonly used road for this journey branched off the Francigena only a few miles out of Siena and bore north-west through San Gimignano. With Rome the main links were financial rather than industrial. Whether the papal court and its innumerable ecclesiastical visitors were in that city or nearby in the Alban hills, or at Viterbo or Orvieto, they constituted the most promising nucleus of potential borrowers for Siena's bankers. Viterbo was the only significant commercial centre on the way to Rome, while Siena also had links with Umbrian towns such as Perugia, Foligno and Todi.[16]

That legislation concerning Siena's roads was extremely frequent is in part a testimony to its inefficacy.[17] Outside the city the principle of local responsibility for the upkeep of roads and necessary works prevailed, and on the chief roads boundary stones marked the limits of the areas of responsibility of the various localities. In 1306 twenty-nine authorities contributed sums ranging from 551. to 16 l. to the maintenance of the main road to Asciano and fifty-one shared the costs of the 30-kilometre stretch of the Francigena further west. Nine roads were regarded as 'principal' or 'public' ways, and those within two miles of the city walls ranked with those in the city itself. These were the special charge of three *ad hoc* officials (*pretori*), but after the 1270s they were reinforced by the office of six 'good men' appointed to act as general supervisors of roads, bridges and fountains. Later on it was decided that these functions were so sensitive that a high-grade official was appointed who was not to be Sienese; the problems presumably arose over local financial responsibility, since only fountains were maintained from the city's general fund. This *iudex viarum* held office for a period of six months and his duties included both inspection and decision-taking. He supplemented and regulated but did not supplant the existing Sienese supervisors.

15 E.g. CG 31, ff. 15 ff. (1286).

16 See D. Bizzarri, 'Trattati commerciali del comune di Siena nel sec. 13', *BSSP*, 30 (1923), pp. 199–216. On the itinerary of the thirteenth century papal Curia see A. Bagliani Paravicini in *Società e Istituzioni dell'Italia comunale: l'esempio di Perugia (sec. XII-XIV)* (Perugia, 1988), 1, pp. 225–46.

17 T. Szabò, 'La rete stradale del contado di Siena. Legislazione statutaria e amministrazione comunale nel duecento', *MEFR*, 87 (1975), pp. 141–86. Szabò counts 339 clauses in the Statutum Viarium (1290s).

PROMINENT BUILDINGS

The predominant impression within the city must have been one of social inequality. The homes of the wealthy towered above the dwellings of ordinary citizens, were much more numerous than churches and other religious buildings, and indeed in the thirteenth century had no secular rivals. Giovanni Antonio Pecci, an immensely learned eighteenth-century antiquary, noted that original sources known to him contained references to fifty-six towers as being in existence in the thirteenth century. This provides a minimum figure for the towers but it is also relevant that the list of *casati* or 'magnates' compiled by the commune in 1277 comprised fifty-three families.[18] The date at which leading families constructed 'palaces' or extensive towers cannot be established nor is it clear whether towers were features of all early magnatial palaces. Quite commonly the earliest reference that now survives to such a building is an account of its destruction by the commune following a 'rebellion' or family warfare or feuding. The rarity of specific reference before the middle of the thirteenth century is due merely to the poverty of surviving manuscript sources, the exceptionally early reference (1212) to the castle block *castellare* of the Ugurgieri family being the result of a freak (and indirect) survival.[19]

A rubric in the Sienese statutes proclaimed the right of any citizen to build 'in the city or *burgi* (suburbs) a house or tower or any other building of any height, size or nature' – with the proviso that this applied unless the council should decide to establish fixed maxima. Nor should a citizen be deprived of his house or tower unfairly; any confiscation must be general, i.e. applied not just to an individual but to his co-owners also.[20]

The high towers characteristic of the towns of northern and central Italy in the Middle Ages had a parallel in the watch-towers of the countryside and were probably modelled on them, though there is insufficient evidence to establish any clear priority.[21] The purpose of the towers was primarily to serve as a place of safety, but they could also be used as bases for offence. 'If anything is thrown for the purpose of inflicting harm (*ad iniuriam*) or to begin or carry on warfare', the 'lord' or principal owner of the tower where the offence occurred had to pay a fine of 100 l., in the case of a *casatorre*, palace or other fortified building, or 25 l., in that of an unfortified building (1262). By the early fourteenth century the penalties had been increased and varied from a 400 l. fine for both the lord and

18 For Pecci's figure see *Misc. St. S.*, 2 (1894), pp. 18–25. Eleven torri in the terzo of Camollia are mentioned in Lira, n. 5 (1260).

19 P. Cammarosano, *La famiglia dei Berardenghi* (Spoleto, 1974), pp. 210–13.

20 *Const. 1262*, p. 403.

21 For a contrary view see A.A. Settia, 'L'esportazione di un modello urbano: torri e case forti nelle campagne del nord Italia', *Società e Storia*, 12 (1981), pp. 273–97.

the giver of the relevant command in the case of a tower (the thrower himself was to pay 200 l. and to lose the offending hand by amputation if payment was not made within a month) to a 50 l. fine for the thrower from an unfortified house.[22] In time of emergency the commune would commandeer and garrison and if necessary repair strategically situated towers.[23]

Tenure in common must have been liable to a continuing process of subdivision. In 1254 ownership of the Tolomei palace was divided into nine fractions, one half share being fragmented into four shares and the other into five. Even these nine shares were subject to co-ownership, so that at least twenty-four members of the family were part-owners at that date. This situation is revealed in the terms of an agreement that every ten years all the occupants would change their place of habitation within the palazzo. The principal aim was presumably to secure fair treatment for all concerned.[24] The process of subdivision was of course continuous: in the early fourteenth century one Francesco di Luccio owned a 1/192 share in the same palazzo or complex of buildings.[25]

Why did the possession of an imposing tower become a major social aspiration? The word 'aspiration' in itself helps (surely) with the answer. It would be hard to invent any achievement more illustrative of conspicuous consumption and conspicuous ownership. Not everyone could hope to achieve the status of those powerful men who 'began or carried on warfare', but possession of such a lofty launching-pad was an evident sign of having 'made good', of having become at least a potential aggressor. Ambitions to tower over others expressed social ambitions, to do so was to have strength and status: towerlessness was humility in the worst and best senses.

For a long time municipal building lagged behind. Throughout the thirteenth century, as before, the normal places for council-meetings were churches, most commonly the very central S Pellegrino or S Cristoforo, occasionally the cathedral.[26] More rarely secular palazzi were pressed into service, among them the palaces of the Ugurgieri, the Tolomei and Jacobus Pieri.[27] The rent for such scattered premises came to comprise a normal though not very considerable item in the commune's expenditure. At times the Podestà resided in the palaces of the Piccolomini, the Ugurgieri and Guglielmus Benachi, the Captain in that of Jacobus Pieri. In 1281 the normal meeting-place for councils was the palace 'formerly of the Alessi', while the leading office-holders (the Fifteen) met at the palace 'of the sons of Mariscotto', but by the following year the Fifteen had moved

22 *Const. 1262. Cont. BSSP*, 3, p. 89; *Cost. 1309–10*, 2, pp. 235–7.
23 B 36, f. 58 (1263); 39, ff. 3, 19 (1266); 44, f. 14v (1270).
24 Dipl., Tolomei, 19.3.1254 (text in English, '5 Magnate Families', pp. 237–40).
25 Balestracci Piccinni, p. 131.
26 CG 15, f. 43v (1272).
27 CG 5, f. 7v (1255); 17, ff. 45–8 (1273); 20, f. 33v (1275).

on to the Gallerani palace. Tax officials sometimes met at the house of the Templars.[28] A building near the principal square, the Campo, which housed also some fiscal and other offices, was occasionally styled the 'palazzo del Podestà'.[29] Although rented premises continued to be required by the commune well into the fourteenth century, in the 1290s the great task was at last undertaken of clearing and extending the Campo with the intention of constructing a majestic public palace on the north side. Henceforth public wealth and might were to be proclaimed and private architecture would no longer predominate in grandeur.

HOUSING

Towers and palaces were for a minority, but they tended to cluster near the centre, which made a quite different impression from that made by regions closer to the walls. This disparity is evident from tax assessments and payments. The surviving fiscal material from 1260 relates only to the terzo of Camollia, the northern third of the city, but it is noticeable that the sums due from taxpayers in a libra (fiscal parish) near the gate (S Bartolomeo) average only one-sixtieth of those due in the central libra of S Cristoforo *a lato dei Tolomei*.[30] The figures of payments made in 1285, which are from the whole of Siena, show a very clearly marked pattern, the nearer to the centre, the greater the sum paid. The wealthiest libre of the terzo of Città were Galgaria, Incontri and Manetti, all close to the cathedral. In Camollia the highest payments – as in 1260 – were from S Cristoforo, followed by S Pietro ad Ovile *sopra*, S Egidio and S Andrea *a lato della piazza*, all of them quite central, whilst in the terzo of S Martino too the rich libre were the central ones of Pozzo S Martino, S Pietro alle Scale and S Vigilio *dentro*. In contrast the poorest libre of Città were S Agata and S Marco, those for S Martino the similarly placed Badia Nuova and S Maurizio *fuori*. Even within particular regions this pattern normally prevails: the payments from Stalloreggi *dentro* were larger than those from Stalloreggi *fuori* (the proportion of those paying above 5 l. was eight times as high) and the same was true of S Andrea *a lato della piazza* and the less central libra of S Andrea itself. At the time of the major fiscal survey of 1318–20, for which there are fewer gaps in the surviving evidence, the same generalization held, as it did in other cities. Grohmann's study of Perugia in 1285 presents an identical picture and in particular emphasizes the poverty of those who lived immediately outside the walls.[31] Many of these, at Siena also, must have been recent immigrants living, surely, in roughly constructed shanties.

28 CG 25, Alleg. D; B 79, ff. 29–31; 82, ff. 155–6; Zdekauer, *Vita pubblica*, p. 88n.
29 An early reference (1248) is *B.* 8, p. 173.
30 Calculation from Lira, n. 5 (the sums are 1s. 3d. and 3 l. 16s. respectively).
31 Balestracci Piccinni, maps 5 and 6: A. Grohmann, *L'imposta diretta nei comuni dell'Italia centrale nel XIII sec. La Libra di Perugia nel 1285* (Rome/Perugia, 1986), pp. 63–106.

An indication of comparative wealth was the possession of a loggia or balcony, but these desirable features had disadvantages for the population as a whole. Extending over the narrow thoroughfares (only the main street was reasonably wide), they blocked the way and made the streets and passages dark and greatly increased the danger from fire. That hazard was one of the reasons for the policy of encouraging the construction of fountains. Crafts involving the use of ovens and kilns were seen as particularly perilous: potters were not permitted to have kilns inside the city, glass manufacture was prohibited within a zone of some fifteen miles,[32] and inspectors were sent out to search for potentially dangerous ovens. Despite these precautions fires were fairly frequent and it was difficult to confine the damage to the immediate neighbourhood of the outbreak. At least sixty-four major fires are known to have occurred in Siena during the fourteenth century.[33] Sometimes the damage was so widespread that nearby towns sent messages of condolence, as happened in May 1279 when more than 300 houses were burned to the ground. After a severe fire in 1292 it was decided to appoint a corps of eight paid fire-fighters (appropriately they were to be chosen from Siena's carpenters) while it remained the duty of all to assist in fire-fighting within their own region.[34] Checking fire from spreading often involved the destruction of property and it was not easy to reach decisions about this. Accusations of over-zealousness were inevitable because 'sometimes people suffer greater damage from human agency than from the fire itself'.[35]

'If it should happen that a house in the city of Siena is destroyed by reason of fire – which God forbid! – I [the Podestà] shall cause compensation to be paid by the commune according to the valuation made by three good and law-worthy craftsmen' runs a clause in the city statutes. This sworn estimate covered damage as well as total destruction.[36] The compensation could be an expensive matter for the commune and this may explain the failure to extend the provision to the Masse (the areas beyond the walls) where housing must have been tightly packed and mainly of timber.

In 1305 a fire caused much damage to the palazzo and houses of the Scotti and Saracini families. This proved a particularly costly occasion, largely because those who came to the rescue were numerous and their expenses considerable. At least 540 people helped over a period of two days, apart from 149 carpenters who gave skilled assistance. Many claimed for water-carrying pots which had been broken and one potter lost more than 1,000 vessels of various descriptions (767 oil jars at

32 *Const. 1262. Cont., BSSP*, 2, p. 138.
33 Balestracci Piccinni, p. 169.
34 Davidsohn, *Forschungen*, 2, 213; *RIS, CS*, pp. 76–7, 225.
35 *Cost. 1309–10*, 2, p. 166.
36 Ibid., 1, p. 302; *Const. 1262. Cont., BSSP*, 2, p. 140.

16d. each, 374 water jars at 1s., 145 pots at 4d.). At a quite early stage more than 1000 l. was paid out by the commune (619 l. in compensation for damage, 402 l. in expenses and 41 l. in other payments to helpers). The bill continued to mount. When a member of the Tolomei family returned from a business visit to France he found that he and his 'consorts' had lost a house and a roof as a result of destruction undertaken to prevent this fire from spreading.[37] This disaster was by no means totally exceptional. In 1292 compensation totalling over 700 l. had been made to fifty-two houseowners, and a fire in 1307 involved the payment of over 1000 l. to twenty-nine owners and 138 l. to water-carriers.[38]

With buildings packed tightly together the policy of destroying houses to check fires from spreading must have created widespread damage. Towers which had been destroyed for this reason, others destroyed as a political punishment, and those which had collapsed from decay all constituted a danger and their debris sometimes blocked the streets. In 1271 the church of S Cristoforo was damaged by the destruction of the Salvani family's palace, and when the tower of the Incontrati fell in 1300 it caused havoc in the surrounding area. Nine members of the family died and the total death roll was over seventy.[39]

The very large volume of legislation concerned with building is also a reminder that lack of intervention by the commune in this matter would have brought about a very dangerous form of chaos.

CONCERN FOR THE APPEARANCE OF THE CITY

That the commune, the community of the city, should be concerned with Siena's appearance as a matter of self-respect and pride was taken for granted. No doctrine of the rights of the individual hampered this assumption. A Sienese could not, for example, destroy his own house except to rebuild immediately on the same site. Any dwelling demolished by its owners without consent had to be rebuilt within three months. This did not mean however that an all-powerful commune was totally ruthless in dealing with private property: if an owner suffered through schemes of clearance such as those designed to extend piazze, compensation was paid.[40] The prevailing attitude is well introduced by the words of a law proclaiming the need for a public garden in Siena: 'Among the cares and responsibilities that pertain to those who undertake the government of the city is especially that which regards the beauty of the city; and in any noble city one of the principal beauties is that it should have a meadow or place for the recreation and delight of citizens and strangers; and the cities of Tuscany and also certain

37 B 117, ff. 333–7, 339 ff; CG, 67, ff. 159–60v.
38 B 107, ff. 174v–5v; 121, ff. 301, 336 ff.
39 *RIS, CS*, p. 257; CG 59, ff. 76–8v.
40 *Cost. 1309–10*, 2, p. 264; B 83, ff. 111v, 117; Zdekauer, *Vita pubblica*, pp. 118–19.

other towns and cities are provided and adorned with such meadows and pleasure grounds.'[41]

A more basic requirement than fine public buildings, squares and gardens was a decent degree of cleanliness. A rubric in the statutes concerned 'the election of the inspectors of streets which have not been cleaned'. Four officials were to be chosen in each terzo and it was their responsibility to inspect the streets and the brick-paved piazze every Saturday. If these were found to have been neglected the local inhabitants were to be warned to clean them up. Should they fail to obey, a fine of 1s. a day was to be levied – on the area rather than on each individual, though the wording is ambiguous – for each offence. Each householder or shopkeeper was answerable for the street outside their own building.[42] Such ambitious measures needed the support of realistic legislation dealing with the filth which threatened to swamp any medieval city. From these clauses one could compile a list of Siena's unofficial public privies and litter dumps. Rubbish was not to be thrown into the public street or the Campo in daytime or at night 'up to the third ringing of the bell' and excrement was not to be thrown into the street at any time. Refuse and in particular human excrement was banned on the road along 'the ditch between Porta S Giorgio and Porta di Follonico since the route (which had presumably become an open-air public lavatory) is a most useful one for women and men'. Refuse was not to be thrown onto the property of religious foundations or churches, including cemeteries, and smelly leather products were prohibited from the same areas. Householders might not have privies which issued into the territory of their neighbours. Privies and wells could be cleaned out only at night (this applied also to the refuse of butchers' shops), and those who cleaned them were exempted from the curfew; they were not to throw away the resultant refuse within the city or into the roads just outside the walls leading to fountains. Bodies of animals were not to be flung into the ditch near S Domenico.[43]

Various textile and leather trades were prohibited from using the streets and water used in dyeing could not be thrown into the street. The intestines of animals were not to be stored in the street or used for industrial purposes anywhere in the city. Timber was not to be stored in the street either, nor mules saddled there. There is perhaps a tendency for such legislation to become increasingly realistic and specific, directed at keeping filth from certain streets and areas, including the squares in front of churches and particularly that outside the bishop's palace. The ban on lepers from living within the city or nearby, except in

41 Quoted from *Cost. 1309–10* by Braunfels, p. 208n.
42 *Const. 1262*, pp. 300–1; *Cost. 1309–10*, 2, p. 304.
43 *Const. 1262*, pp. 277–8, 286, 329; *Cont., BSSP*, 1, pp. 283–4; 2, p. 137.

recognized leper hospitals, was another measure designed to protect health and appearance.[44]

Such sanitary legislation was dependent on the activity of special officials appointed, for example those whose responsibilities included the cleanliness of streets and the throwing of refuse from balconies. Among them were some whose paid task was to denounce their neighbours. Versatile, all-purpose denouncers had to enquire into 'thieves and thefts, the cleaning of paved streets, women spinning in the streets, girls wearing long trains to their dresses, people throwing water or rubbish from balconies into the street, people mourning loudly after burials' or otherwise breaking the sumptuary laws concerning funerals. By the early fourteenth century sixty people were being paid a small wage of 5s. (probably for a six-month period) to act as 'secret accusers of those who throw away refuse in public places and those who wear pearls and superfluous ornaments'. An accusation against a man of 'having refuse in front of his workshop' would lead to a light fine, but a heavier one of 3 l. awaited the miscreant who bathed in a public fountain.[45]

In a category of its own, surrounded by a special protection verging on that accorded to a religious site, was the Campo, the *campum fori* as it was called, the classical vocabulary conveying a special dignity. There were officials appointed 'pro custodia campi fori', their duties being to keep the Campo clear of stones, bricks, timber and dirt and to prevent such activities as slaughtering and skinning animals. ('Committing a nuisance' was an offence only for those aged over fourteen.) The wardens' functions extended to the streets immediately adjoining the Campo. Grain, straw and hay could not be sold there or stored nearby – though marketing of most commodities at stalls was permitted – and barbers could not exercise their craft in the open Campo, presumably since this was messy and was felt to lack dignity. An ambitious law even sought (1297) to establish uniformity in the appearance of windows in the buildings round the square.[46]

The last measure coincided with a programme already mentioned, to extend greatly the area of the Campo and to erect a superb municipal palazzo on its northern side. This was the genesis of the Campo as we know it today. Though earlier extensions had been undertaken, until the late thirteenth century it was essentially the open space on which stood the customs office (dogana delle gabelle) and the church of S Paolo. As early as 1257 the lower end of the Campo had been seen as a possible site for the commune's palazzo, but discussion of the building of an ambitious new structure began only in 1281 and the site was not

44 *Const. 1262 Cont.*, *BSSP*, 2, pp. 137–8; *Cost. 1309–10*, 2, pp. 297–8.

45 *Const. 1262*, p. 183; *B.* 8, p. 135; 9, p. 143; B 82, f. 93v; 116, ff. 41, 383–4.

46 *B.* 15, p. 193; 'Breve 1250', pp. 86–8; *Const. 1262*, pp. 287–92; *Cost. 1309–10*, 2, p. 29 (printed in Braunfels, doc. 1).

definitely settled till 1288. The necessary purchase of nearby housing began in 1293.[47]

Although many cities of Lombardy, Emilia and the Veneto had purpose-built public palazzi by the start of the thirteenth century, this development occurred rather later in Tuscany. Volterra's palace, contemplated early in the century, was completed in 1257, probably the first in a Tuscan city. It was one consequence of their comparative tardiness that the Sienese felt that they could and must build on a spectacular scale. One factor was the need to outshine the Florentines, who were at work contemporaneously (1299–1314) on their Palazzo Vecchio. In Siena the work of clearing was still under way in 1299, but most of the palace was constructed between 1300 and 1310. The immensely high tower, designed to rise above that of the cathedral, followed in 1326–48. Meanwhile the inconveniently sited church of S Paolo had been demolished (*c.* 1308) and paving of the Campo begun. The paving of the central part was completed by 1346, when the activities of the cattle market were moved to the area behind the palazzo.[48]

A great deal of money was expended on Siena's impressive urban nucleus. Although labour and building materials were cheap by modern standards, the total cost was swollen by large payments of compensation to the dispossessed, such as the 2,700 l. paid in 1293 to Bartolomeo Saracini and Meo Nastasii for their houses and courtyards, and 900 l. for a house to Tuccio Alessi.[49] At the period when the building process began to achieve its busiest rhythm, in 1297, it was decided to set aside 2,000 l. in each six-monthly financial period for work on the palazzo and more than 10,000 l. was spent in the years 1309–10.[50] Deficiencies in the sources, however, make it impossible even to estimate the total sum spent on the palazzo.

Thenceforth the great brick Gothic structure dominated Siena, its tower visible from afar, and the finished work stood up well to comparison with its Florentine rival. Some of the frescoes inside were soon damaged by fire, but after restoration their appearance was judged 'a delight to the eye, a joy to the heart and a pleasure to all the senses. And it is a source of great honour to a commune that its rulers and leaders (*rectores et presides*) should live well, handsomely and honourably (*bene, pulcre et honorifice*).'[51] This reflection expresses clearly the motives which dictated the great public works of the Sienese at the end of the thirteenth century.

47 For purchases in 1293–94 v. *CV*, 4, docs. 994–5, 999.

48 E. Guidoni, *Il Campo di Siena* (Rome, 1971); Braunfels, chapters 3 and 5, especially pp. 121–2, 193–8; see also J. Paul, *Die mittelalterliche Kommunalpalasten in Italien* (Cologne, 1963).

49 B 109, f. 166

50 *Cost. 1309–10*, 1, pp. 98–9; Balestracci Piccinni, p. 103n (and at least 16,900 l. in all in 1307–10: A. Cairola and E. Carli, *Il Palazzo Pubblico di Siena* (Rome, 1963), pp. 20–5).

51 Quoted by Braunfels, p. 198.

Nor was this pride demonstrated in secular building only, as the subsidies paid to the Dominicans and other mendicant religious orders prove. The purpose of one grant of 100,000 bricks for the continuation of work at S Domenico was to make possible the construction of 'the crossing of the church at the upper end, towards Fontebranda, using the columns which are there already, so that the length of the church, when the altars are sited there, should be more beautiful, more extensive and more spacious for housing the multitude of people which often gathers to hear sermons and the divine service'. Intervention could take the form of instructions as well as aid, and the Dominicans received orders to demolish a wall which impeded church-goers and blocked the view.[52] The mendicants were the main recipients of assistance, but older orders were not neglected: in 1306 the Camaldulensian abbot of S Donato successfully appealed for legislation in support of the abbey's intention of buying up and demolishing the buildings facing the abbey and its hospital. He wanted to open up a piazza 'for the adornment of the city and the convenience of neighbours'.[53]

A more ambitious scheme for opening up the area around the cathedral dated back to the middle of the thirteenth century. The commune had contributed to work on the interior and facade over a long period, but the principal development planned was the reconstruction on a new site of the baptistery, S Giovanni, which was to be below and to the north-east of the cathedral.[54] The next stage was to be a vaster cathedral, of which the earlier building was to be a mere apse, but that ill-fated plan falls outside the period covered by this book.

It is harder to trace work on Siena's walls and gates, though this must have been more or less continuous. Six official *superstantes murorum et operationum* had the task of employing masons to undertake regular repairs and improvements. Statutes sought to prevent people from making a passage-way through the city walls or otherwise weakening their defences.[55]

Water supply was a matter of far greater moment to the Sienese than fortification and, in view of the possibility of a siege, more crucial as a military requirement. The city's supply depended on an elaborate system of aqueducts and channels excavated in the rock, which brought water from quite distant streams. The main duct feeding Fonte Branda, with its tributary inflows, was some 1,600 metres in length, and the work of excavation had to be undertaken between compact clay and the porous sandstone stratum above, with one man working at a time with pick or axe in a narrow channel. Such was Siena's anxiety about

52 *Cost. 1309–10*, 1, pp. 77, 336–7.
53 CG 68, ff. 61–5v.
54 Braunfels, pp. 156, 257–8 (docs. 15–17); CG 4, f. 47; 47, ff. 32 ff.
55 CG 80, ff. 104 (payment to the mason Andrea Albertini who had agreed to repair a section of wall 'at his own risk'), 105v, 107v, 109v, 112; *Const. 1262*, pp. 275–7.

water that in 1267 a project was considered – though eventually abandoned as too expensive – for drawing water from springs at Ciciano, beyond the Val di Merse, which would have involved channelling a total distance of about sixty-five kilometres.[56] The discovery of any spring had to be reported to the authorities, and sometimes false hopes were raised, as in the notorious case of the Diana, that non-existent river over which the Sienese were mocked by Dante.[57] The maintenance and extension of fountains was a considerable item in the city's expenditure: the Biccherna volumes for 1293–96, for example, record sums amounting to over 5,000 l. spent on work at seven different fountains, one of them the particularly prized Fonte Branda where water spouted out of the mouth of a lion.[58] Sculptural work on fountains was considered no less appropriate than figures for the cathedral facade for an artist of the calibre of Giovanni Pisano.

Before work on the great municipal palace had started, the palazzo of Sugio Iuncte degli Arzocchi was bought as a stopgap (1294), at the considerable price of 4,600 l. It was characteristic of the Sienese authorities that they were not content to take over that building as it was. Within a few days of purchase a payment was made to an artist for his work of 'painting in the palace of the commune, which was formerly Sugio's'.[59] Public buildings and public objectives were constantly kept in the forefront of interest. There was a sort of dialogue between the architecture of the commune itself and the proud display of the palace-owning patricians.

56 F. Bargagli Petrucci, *Le Fonti di Siena e i loro Acquedotti*, (Siena, repr. 1974), especially 1, pp. 33–46.
57 *Const. 1262*, p. 350; *Purgatorio*, XIII, 151–3.
58 B 109, f. 171; 110, ff. 152 ff; 111, f. 132v; 113, ff. 244v ff. (for a further 1,600 l. spent in 1298, B 114, f. 218). These figures omit much expenditure on roads leading to fountains.
59 B 110, ff. 120v, 125.