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# SPECULUM

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### THE IMPACT OF THE BLACK DEATH UPON SIENESE GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY\*

BY WILLIAM M. BOWSKY

THE Black Death of 1348–1350 was a major catastrophe of western history. Evaluation of its effects is an important factor in such historical controversies as those concerning late mediaeval and early renaissance demographic and economic trends. Yet knowledge of the plague's consequences is still inadequate. Some of the few recent researchers even have reached apparently conflicting conclusions — an indication of the need for more investigation.<sup>1</sup>

The most recent survey of modern scholarly writing on the Black Death and closely related problems concluded that our knowledge can now be advanced “only by local or regional monographs and detailed studies.”<sup>2</sup> Nowhere are such studies more necessary than for the Italian cities; for while Italy is generally considered to have been struck severely by the plague<sup>3</sup> there has been almost no recent investigation of plague effects in even the major Italian cities.<sup>4</sup>

\* This article is based on a paper read at the seventy-seventh annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago on 30 December 1962. Support from the American Philosophical Society and the University of Nebraska Research Council made possible the necessary archival research in Italy. (N.B. The unpublished manuscripts cited below are in the Archivio di Stato of Siena.)

<sup>1</sup> G. Prat, “Albi et la Peste Noire,” *Annales du Midi*, LXIV (1952), 15–25, in a study based on a tax roll of 1343 and another of 1357, argues that while the Black Death left Albi's population almost halved by 1357, the city's social physiognomy was scarcely changed. Few survivors rose on the social ladder, and although almost all were more prosperous than before, the patrimonies of the dead were apportioned almost equally among survivors and newcomers. Similarly, P. Wolff claims that at Castres and Tarn the plague “ne paraît pas avoir entraîné de bouleversement social.” See P. Wolff, “Trois études de démographie médiévale en France méridionale,” *Studi in onore di Armando Saporì*, I (Milan, 1957), 493–503 (esp. p. 503). Y. Renouard, “La Peste Noire de 1348–1350,” *Revue de Paris*, LVII (1950), 107–119 (esp. p. 117), asserts the opposing view that in the cities the Black Death produced major social changes and widened the gulf between rich and poor, intensifying class hatred.

<sup>2</sup> E. Carpentier, “Autour de la peste noire: famines et épidémies dans l'histoire du XIVe siècle,” *Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, xvii (1962), 1062–1092 (quote on p. 1092). This is an excellent survey, and most useful for the scholarly literature that has appeared since 1950.

<sup>3</sup> See below, n. 91. (N. B.: References to footnotes often refer to the pertinent text as well.)

<sup>4</sup> E. Carpentier, “Autour de la peste noire,” includes numerous references to studies dealing di-

The present article arose from a study of Siena under the government of the mercantile-banking oligarchy of the IX from 1287 to 1355.<sup>5</sup> The latter date is also the terminal point for this essay, as motivation for later legislation may be traceable to the economic and social aims and values of successive ruling groups rather than to the plague. This is a case study — an effort to test earlier generalizations, supply new information, and offer as complete a picture as possible based on an exhaustive study of archival evidence. Particular attention is given to plague effects upon population, governmental personnel, administration, legislation, the commune's economic and financial condition, and its social and political structure. Equally important questions might have been posed concerning such problems as plague effects upon guild structure and regulations or upon parish organization, but a lack of documentation prevented their treatment.

The principal published accounts of the plague in Siena deal primarily with the years 1348–1350, and in chronicle rather than analytical fashion.<sup>6</sup> The only serious modern treatment is still to be sought in the writings of M. Kovalevsky of 1895 and 1911.<sup>7</sup> His major conclusion is that Siena, almost alone with Venice among the Italian cities, adopted a liberal citizenship policy in an effort to re-populate the city and state. In the case of Siena at least more careful and less selective reading of the documents would have qualified his conclusion and tempered his enthusiasm.<sup>8</sup>

Among the most important sources for the present study are a series of deliberations of the City Council (or General Council) of Siena. This body was composed of 300 regular members and 150 extra (*de Radota*), all selected by the ruling magistracy of the IX. The series is remarkably complete, and from 1336 through the spring of 1355 lacks only the single volume for the second semester of 1354.<sup>9</sup> Of

rectly or indirectly with the plague in England, Scandinavia, the Low Countries, Germany, France, and Spain, and historians are now familiar with the pertinent writings of M. M. Postan, J. Schreiner, W. Abel, A. Lopez de Meneses, etc. The only modern study of an Italian city cited by Carpentier (p. 1064) is her own monograph, *Une ville devant la peste: Orvieto et la Peste Noire* (Paris, 1962).

<sup>5</sup> The IX, or *Noveschi*, was an oligarchy of bourgeois and noble origin that excluded certain great noble or magnate families from its ranks by law. For the organization of the Siennese government and the social and economic status of the IX, see W. Bowsky, "The *Buon Governo* of Siena (1287–1355): A Mediaeval Italian Oligarchy," *SPECULUM*, xxxvii (1962), 368–381.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. G. Tommasi, *Dell' Historie di Siena*, II (Venice, 1626), 310, 312–317. [Henceforth cited as: Tommasi.] His scattered references to the plague rest almost entirely upon the Chronicle of Agnolo di Tura del Grasso and on several City Council deliberations. Unfortunately, Tommasi's reports of deliberations are only partially complete, and at times are mistaken. See, e.g., below, n. 101.

<sup>7</sup> M. Kovalevsky, "Die wirtschaftlichen Folgen des schwarzen Todes in Italien," *Zeitschrift für Social- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, III (1895), 403–423 (for Siena: pp. 421–422), and *idem*, *Die ökonomische Entwicklung Europas bis zum Beginn der kapitalistischen Wirtschaftsform*, v (Berlin, 1911), 293–296.

<sup>8</sup> See below, n. 174 ff.

<sup>9</sup> For a description of this series see *Ministero dell' Interno, Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato*, IX: *Archivio di Stato di Siena. Archivio del Consiglio Generale del Comune di Siena. Inventario* (Rome, 1952); cf. W. Bowsky, "The Siennese Archive and the *Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato*," *Manuscripta*, v (1961), p. 69. These volumes have never been examined in their entirety for this problem (nor, one suspects, for many others), as too many researchers have been content to rely upon nineteenth-century *spogli* in the Archivio di Stato di Siena — inaccurate summaries of a very small percentage of the deliberations. [Henceforth the City Council deliberations are cited: CG.]

immense value, too, are the extant volumes of the Biccherna, Siena's chief financial magistracy, recording communal income and expenditure.<sup>10</sup> Happily, of the three surviving volumes of deliberations of the bi-monthly magistracies of the IX, one dates from November–December 1347 and another from September–October 1351.<sup>11</sup> Miscellaneous ordinances and a few surviving notarial chartularies also provide useful data.

The major extant chronicle for the period presents a special problem. But it is one that we cannot afford to ignore, for the chronicle is replete with information concerning such crucial issues as pre- and post-plague Sieneese population, plague descriptions, legislation, finance, and public building. Its latest editor, A. Lisini, believes the chronicle to have been first written in the extant early fifteenth century manuscript. The portion treating the years 1300–1351 is commonly called the Chronicle of Agnolo di Tura del Grasso (“the Fat”). According to Lisini, it is based on a collection of “diaries, memoirs, letters and documents then kept by particular families or in public archives,” supplemented by oral tradition. The section including the years 1352–1381 is even more detailed, as its compilers, Donato di Neri and his son Neri, lived in Siena during the second half of the fourteenth century.<sup>12</sup>

The historical value and trustworthiness of Agnolo and of Donato di Neri have never been fully examined.<sup>13</sup> Yet we must make at least some preliminary probings if we are to accept or reject material relevant to the impact of the Black Death upon Sieneese government and society for which these chroniclers are the sole source.

Lisini has demonstrated that Agnolo utilized portions of the Florentine chronicle of Giovanni Villani. From his faithfulness to Villani Lisini surmises that Agnolo was probably careful in his use of other materials that are more difficult for us to identify.<sup>14</sup> Lisini's own notes to Agnolo show several instances in which Sieneese public documents confirm the chronicler's statements.<sup>15</sup> In some few he is shown to have erred — although the errors may well be those of the fifteenth-century copyist rather than those of his sources.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup> For the period 1345–1355 the volumes of the first semesters of 1347 and 1355 and the second semesters of 1346, 1348, 1350 and 1353 are missing. Biccherna records do not record all Sieneese income and expenditures; some payments were made directly from the sources of income to lesser spending agencies. For the archive of the Biccherna see *Ministero dell'Interno, Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato*, xii: *Archivio di Stato di Siena. Archivio della Biccherna del Comune di Siena. Inventario* (Rome, 1953); cf. Bowsky, “The Sieneese Archive,” pp. 71–72.

<sup>11</sup> Concistoro, N. 1 = Jan.–Feb. 1339, N. 2 = Nov.–Dec. 1347, N. 3 = Sept.–Oct. 1351. For the archive of the Concistoro see *Ministero dell'Interno, Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato*, x: *Archivio di Stato di Siena. Archivio del Concistoro del Comune di Siena. Inventario* (Rome, 1952).

<sup>12</sup> The chronicles of Agnolo di Tura and of Donato di Neri are published in *R. R. II. SS.*, N.S., xv, Part 6: *Cronache senesi*, ed., A. Lisini and F. Iacometti (Bologna, 1931–1937) [henceforth cited as: *Cron. senesi*.] For the textual tradition and analysis of these chronicles by Lisini see pp. xiii–xxiii (quote on p. xxi.)

<sup>13</sup> U. Balzani, *Le cronache italiane nel medio evo*, 3rd ed. (Milan, 1909), p. 307, mentions these chronicles only in passing with no critical comment.

<sup>14</sup> *Cron. senesi*, pp. xxi–xxii.

<sup>15</sup> E.g., *Cron. senesi*, pp. 485 n. 1, 505 n. 1.

<sup>16</sup> E.g., *Cron. senesi*, p. 478, the chronicler wrote that the siege of Montemassi (1328) lasted seven years, when in actuality it lasted seven months and eleven days.

More complete examination reveals not only that Agnolo is generally reliable for the period prior to and following the Black Death, but that he frequently went directly to official public records for his information. Some of his statements can be traced to City Council deliberations.<sup>17</sup> Many seem to have been drawn directly from an examination of the books of income and expenditure kept in the Biccherna. It is from Biccherna records that he would have derived the knowledge that in April 1329 the florin was valued at £3/7/—,<sup>18</sup> that in 1344 a prior paid Siena exactly £1,750/10/— for having reconquered Alberese,<sup>19</sup> and that in 1351 Cione Malavolti was paid for sixty-nine days service as captain of the Sienese troops sent to aid the Florentines at Casentino.<sup>20</sup>

This is most interesting, since a careful reading of all these Biccherna volumes for the period of the IX reveals a Biccherna employee named none other than “Agnolo di Tura called the Fat.”<sup>21</sup> It is far from impossible that this is our chronicler.<sup>22</sup> Nor should we leave this subject without noting that for the years in which we are interested Agnolo’s continuation, the Chronicle of Donato di Neri, is also

<sup>17</sup> E.g., *Cron. senesi*, p. 495, recounts the purchase of Sassoforte in the Maremma by Siena from the counts of Santa Fiora in Feb. 1330 for 5,500 gold fl.; cf. CG, N. 109, fols. 48r–49r (27 Feb. 1330). Agnolo states (p. 414) that in 1324 for £500 Siena purchased from the church of San Martino many squares located outside of the gate of Valdimontone near the new walls, for new citizens to build houses upon. All this is confirmed in CG, N. 101, fols. 148v–150v (24 Dec. 1324).

<sup>18</sup> *Cron. senesi*, p. 484. Biccherna records listing the daily quotation of the florin confirm this for all but three days of April 1329. See C. Cipolla, “Studi di Storia della Moneta, 1: I Movimenti dei cambi in Italia dal secolo XIII al XV,” *Università di Pavia: Studi nelle scienze giuridiche e sociali*, xxix (1948), 169.

<sup>19</sup> *Cron. senesi*, p. 545. Biccherna, N. 215, fol. 88v (31 Dec. 1344) records this transaction exactly.

<sup>20</sup> *Cron senesi*, p. 562. Cf. Biccherna, N. 228, fol. 116v (30 Oct. 1351), recording a payment of £1,380 to “domino Cioni Minucci de Malavoltis iiii<sup>c</sup> xiiii<sup>or</sup> florenos auri pro suo salario sexaginta dierum qui stetit Florentie in servitium comunis pro capitaneo a gente [sic] armorum. . . .” Biccherna, N. 214, fol. 214v (16 March 1344) confirms Agnolo’s report (p. 544) that on 7 March 1344 the Sienese Captain of War sentenced various Saracini nobles to a fine of £4,000 for wounding one of the Scotti. A payment of 2 June 1350 (Biccherna, N. 226, fol. 80r) confirms Agnolo’s claim (p. 561) that Conte di Manno Squarcialupi was sent to guard Volterra. [For Conte cf. Bowsky, “The *Buon Governo* of Siena,” p. 375 n. 30.] Cf. also below, nn. 33, 34.

<sup>21</sup> He first appears 30 June 1348 (Biccherna, N. 223, fol. 155r) in a payment of £60 to “Ghoro di Gionta e Agnolo di Tura detto Grasso Guardie di biccherna per loro salario de detti sei mesi.” He is still in office during the first half of 1349: Biccherna, N. 224, fols. 184r, 186r, 187r. He disappears until July–December 1355, after the fall of the IX, when he is again at his post. Biccherna, N. 235, fol. 94r (21 Nov. 1355) notes that he is paid £111/16/ — for money that he spent on a gift to and festivities for the wife of a major public official; fol. 111v (31 Dec. 1355): £120 salary for these six months is paid to “Ghide Cennis e Agnolo [sic] Ture custodiibus biccherne.”

<sup>22</sup> The problem of the identity of the “Agnolo di Tura detto il Grasso” named in *Cron. senesi*, p. 555 [cf. below, n. 84] is most complex. Lisini (*Cron. senesi*, p. xx n. 2) claims that Agnolo was not a fictitious character, and on the basis of name alone identifies him with a shoemaker and with one of the Four Provveditori, or chief magistrates, of the Biccherna of 1355. He cites documents ranging from 1326 to 1362; but we cannot be certain that all refer to the same man. The frequency with which he changes residence is alone sufficient to create doubts. Lisini believes that his shoemaker wrote no chronicle, but perhaps left a “booklet of household memoirs that contained some other notice of happenings in Siena during his lifetime.” This statement is unsupported and should not be accepted until a full study is made of this chronicle. Such a study should consider not only our Biccherna guardian, but CG, N. 153, fols. 47v–48r (13 Dec. 1353) — the petition of one “Angelus condam Ture vocatus Grassus populi Sancti Donati de Senis” (fol. 47v) successfully requesting the

generally very accurate and is frequently based upon Sieneſe public records. His report, for example, of the famous purchase of poiſon intended to rid Siena of the mercenary company of Fra Moriale in 1354, and of the 13,324 gold florins paid by Siena as a bribe to that *condottiere*, accord with Biccherna entries — even though the chronicler (or his copyist) wrongly records the bribe as 19 June 1354 inſtead of 29 June.<sup>23</sup> All told, this Sieneſe chronicle muſt be taken moſt ſeriouſly and is a vital ſource of information for the problem that we are examining.

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Siena was a populous city on the eve of the plague; far more populous than is commonly ſuppoſed. Moſt recent ſcholarly eſtimateſ allow of a population of 25,000 within the city walls and another 12,000–13,000 in ſurrounding communities known as the “Masse.”<sup>24</sup> Given the complexity and uncertainties of mediaeval population reſearch, it would be moſt tempting to leave the reader with theſe figures. This we cannot do for two reaſons. Firſt, evaluation of plague loſſes, poſt-plague population trends, and communal policies can only be underſtood in the light of more accurate knowledge of pre-plague population. Far more important: there is abſolutely no documentary baſis for accepting either of the above eſtimateſ. Any ſtudy of the problem muſt begin from a new point of departure.

The firſt evidence for an eſtimate of Sieneſe population during the government of the IX relates approximately to the year 1300. According to Beloch, the Sieneſe walls then enclosed a ſurface area about one-half that within the Florentine walls.<sup>25</sup> If both cities were equally built up within their walls and contained the ſame proportion of dwellings to other buildings — rather larger aſſumptions than Beloch realized — then Sieneſe population would have been about half that of Florence. ſince the lateſt reſearch indicates that Florence then held about 95,000 perſons, excluding *religiosi*,<sup>26</sup> Siena may have had as many as 47,500 in the city alone.

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reſmiſſion of part of the price of a *gabella* purchased 9 Nov. 1351. We might note that Popolo S. Donato was not one of the domiciles of Liſini’s Agnolo.

<sup>23</sup> *Cron. senesi*, p. 573. Cf. Biccherna, N. 231, fols. 187v, 191v. Donato (p. 569) names the members of a Sieneſe embaſſy ſent to the pope in May 1352. Theſe are confirmed by Biccherna, N. 229, fol. 135r (29 June 1352). On the ſame page he names the Sieneſe ambaaſadors ſent to the coronation of Louis of Tarento at Naples, in exactly the order in which they appear in a Biccherna entry, but omitting the laſt named ambaaſador, Arcolano dei Scotti: Biccherna, N. 229, fol. 135r (29 June 1352). For the identities of Donato and hiſ ſon ſee *Cron. senesi*, pp. xxii–xxiii (Liſini).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. K. J. Beloch, *Bevölkerungsgeschichte Italiens*, II (Berlin, 1939), 150; A. Doren, *Italienische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, I (Jena, 1934), 635. Only Liſini, in an undocumented note (*Cron. senesi*, p. 148 n. 2) ſuggeſts that about 1321 the city contained 70,000 inhabitants. (He does not mention whether or not this includes the Masse.) Nonetheless attention ſhould be paid thiſ ſuggeſtion. Liſini waſ director of the Archivio di Stato of Siena, editor of the Sieneſe ſtatuteſ of 1309–1310, and from hiſ acquaintance with many archival documentſ aſ well aſ hiſ perſonal knowledge of the city’s topography had much information on which to baſe hiſ conjecture. For the meaning of the term “Masse” ſee Bowsky, “The *Buon Governo* of Siena,” p. 375, n. 32.

<sup>25</sup> K. J. Beloch, *Bevölkerungsgeschichte Italiens*, II, 150.

<sup>26</sup> E. Fiumi, “Fioritura e decadenza dell’economia fiorentina,” *Archivio Storico Italiano* [ASI], cxvi (1958), 465. Tommaſi’s aſſertion (II, 140) that “per un libro della lira del 1300, ſi vede manifeſto, che Siena haveva non meno di centomila habitatori,” cannot be confirmed. It iſ rather made

Preserved in the Sienese archives are the so-called “Tables of Possessions” for the city. Drawn up between 1318 and 1320, these fifty folio volumes list the names of persons residing in the city and owning more than their own homes. The real property of each is described and evaluated. Even though several volumes are missing and many pages are lacerated or illegible, these losses are partially compensated for by MS. C. 46, a copy made in 1718 of an earlier index to the contents of these and other volumes.<sup>27</sup> Better still, MS. C. 46 (pp. 486–487), contains a table summarizing the contents of the Tables of Possessions.

Paradoxically it is this very table (or an earlier version from which it was copied) that led to the erroneous current estimates of Sienese population. Recent commentators upon Sienese population during the first half of the fourteenth century rely upon two pages of an article published by G. Pardi in 1923.<sup>28</sup> And Pardi did not himself consult the table in MS. C. 46. He relied upon a description of it provided by E. Ripetti in 1844 — and Ripetti assumed that it referred not to the population of Siena, but of the Masse. Erroneously assuming that the total number of taxable individuals listed was 4,125, Pardi multiplied that figure by slightly less than three (giving no explanation for the adoption of this multiplier), to arrive at a total of about 12,000 persons in the Masse.<sup>29</sup>

In a series of computations that he added to p. 487 of MS. C. 46 Lisini, purposely using a low multiplier of three,<sup>30</sup> derived an urban population of 42,695 persons for the city of Siena. To this figure he added about 10,000 for monks,

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dubious by the fact that there is no record of a new lira, or tax evaluation, being made in Siena in 1300. The pertinent Biccherna volumes are lost, but CG, N. 56–59 show no such lira; whereas when there was a lira indications of it appear in the volumes of this series. Cf. below, for the lira of 1328.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Bowsky, “The Buon Governo of Siena,” pp. 375 ff.; *idem*, “The Sienese Archive,” p. 75; *Ministero dell’Interno. Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato, V: Archivio di Stato di Siena. Guida-Inventario*, 1 (Rome, 1951), p. 272 [hereafter cited as: *Guida-Inventario*].

<sup>28</sup> G. Pardi, “La popolazione di Siena e del territorio senese attraverso i secoli,” *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria [BSSP]*, xxx (1923), 85–132, esp. pp. 102–103.

<sup>29</sup> See E. Ripetti, *Dizionario geografico, fisico, storico della Toscana*, v, fasc. 4–6 (Florence, 1844), pp. 380–381. Ripetti’s error is quickly perceived if one compares the names of the property holders listed in MS. C. 46, pp. 1–345, with the totals on pp. 486–487. Moreover the second and third columns of figures on pp. 486–487 do not give the numbers of persons described with more than one surname, but rather the properties owned by several persons; while column four lists the number of heirs owning property in each of the lire or tax districts. Hence the total number of “allirati” (persons inscribed on the tax rolls) is not 4,125, but rather 3,383 individuals+169 pairs of persons+42 citations of three or more persons+531 heirs.

<sup>30</sup> All familiar with the problem of mediaeval population research are well acquainted with the debates over the size of the multiplier(s) to be used for arriving at household size. The 3.5 suggested by J. Russell in his *British Medieval Population* (Albuquerque, 1948) has been strongly attacked. J. Krause, “The Medieval Household: Large or Small?” *Economic History Review*, Second Series, ix (1957), 420–432, makes a good case for the argument that Russell has not invalidated the old 4.5 and 5, and recalls that Russell himself noted evidence for 4 for Florence in 1380. Where E. Fiumi had evidence of both hearths and “mouths” for Florence in 1380 he arrived at 4.19: “Fioritura e decadenza II,” *ASI*, cxvi (1958), 466. In an excellent demographic study of mediaeval Volterra and San Gimignano Fiumi advocates an average of no less than 5 persons per household in thirteenth century Tuscany: “La popolazione del territorio volterrano-sangimignanese ed il problema demografico dell’età comunale,” *Studi in onore di Amintore Fanfani* (Milan, 1962), pp. 254–255. Cf. also J. Titow, “Some Evidence of the Thirteenth Century Population Increase,” *Economic History Review*, Second Series, xiv (1961), 222, who also concludes that “Russell’s index is much too low.”

nuns, friars, household servants and retainers, and transients.<sup>31</sup> If this last number seems too high, we might recall a petition on behalf of 15,000 poor and indigent inhabitants heard by the City Council in 1302 and granted by the overwhelming vote of 166 to 6.<sup>32</sup> Thus, while we no longer have an estimate for the population of the Masse, we are more than recompensed by having a modest approximation of a city population of over 52,000 in 1318–1320.

Siena's population increased during the early decades of the fourteenth century. Agnolo di Tura reports that in 1323 it was necessary to build new walls and gates in the district of Valdimontone to accommodate the additional city dwellers.<sup>33</sup> Biccherna records show an expenditure of £1,000 on 23 August 1323 to pay for part of this construction.<sup>34</sup> The following year the commune purchased land between the gate of Valdimontone and the New Gate (in the district henceforth denominated Borgo Santa Maria) from the church of San Martino, so that those who became citizens of Siena could build houses there "as it is said are being constructed daily by the aforesaid citizens."<sup>35</sup>

Nor was this idle speculation. A book kept by the Biccherna contains the promises made by new citizens to build new houses in Siena or its suburbs. In it are the pledges proffered by 130 men from 1307 through 1338, and all but twenty-seven date from the years after 1317.<sup>36</sup> From the autumn of 1326 onwards pledges to build houses "in Borgo Novo Sancte Marie contrate Vallis Montonis" became especially frequent.<sup>37</sup> Still other Biccherna volumes record the payment of fees by 123 new citizens in 1329 and by 184 in 1331,<sup>38</sup> although many of these had probably acquired citizenship during the preceding two decades.

An influx of men from the dioceses of Grosseto and Chiusi wishing to become Sienese citizens necessitated new legislation in 1328 facilitating their obtaining

<sup>31</sup> Lisini multiplied  $3,383 \times 3 = 10,149$ ;  $169 \times 2 = 338$ ;  $42 \times 4 = 168$ ;  $531 \times 3 = 1,593$ , thus using 3 as a multiplier. To this he added  $10,149 \times 3 = 30,447$ , apparently believing that only about one-fourth of the Sienese population possessed sufficient real property to appear on these Tables of Possessions.

<sup>32</sup> CG, N. 61, fols. 132r–136r (21 June 1302). In this request "dicunt et proponunt XV<sup>m</sup> pauperum qui vivunt in civitate Senarum in miseria infinita quam propter karestiam victualium que est in civitate Senarum ipsi inveniunt tam modicus [sic] elemosina quam vivere quasi non possunt." They seek alms from the commune. (fol. 133v). The vote appears on fol. 136r.

<sup>33</sup> *Cron. senesi*, pp. 410, 412. For the expansion of the walls at this time, cf. *Cron. senesi*, p. 134 n. 1.

<sup>34</sup> Biccherna, N. 147, fol. 99r: £1,000 to "Conte Borsaio operario comunis supra murum castellacie qui fit in plano Vallis Montonis." This work was ordered on 12 July 1323 (CG, N. 97, fols. 42r–46v, esp. 43v–44r, 44v–45v, 46v), although no mention was made in CG of the district in which the work was to be done.

<sup>35</sup> See above, n. 17. The phrase quoted, "ut dicatur cotidie construuntur [domus] per cives predictos," is in CG, N. 101, fol. 149r.

<sup>36</sup> Biccherna, N. 1058, fols. l. bis r — 78r.

<sup>37</sup> Biccherna, N. 1058, fols. 75r and seq.

<sup>38</sup> Biccherna, N. 162, fols. 82r–87v (31 Dec. 1329) lists £2,321 collected during the second half of 1329 "ab illis qui devenerunt novi cives civitatis." (fol. 82r). Biccherna, N. 168, fols. 117r–126r (30 June 1331): fols. 117r–118r, records payments totaling £2,290 from 24 men "qui devenerunt cives Senarum qui solverunt ad rationem L. s. pro centinario extimationis facte de bonis eorum et debent hedificare unam domum extimationis C. lbr. in civitate Senarum vel burgis." (fol. 117r). Fols. 118v–126r record a total of £2,084/16/ — paid by 160 persons who paid at a rate of 6% of the evaluation of their goods "Et non tenentur domos hedificare." (fol. 118v). Frequently persons exempted from building new homes already possessed one or more houses in the city.



citizenship and at the same time channeling them into the new Borgo Santa Maria. On 28 March the City Council voted 176 to 39 that for the next six months anyone from these or any other dioceses who wanted to obtain Sienese citizenship could do so merely by giving surety that he would build a house worth £100 in Borgo Santa Maria or worth £200 in any other suburb or part of the city.<sup>39</sup> The increased population of this district is further attested by the construction there of the church of St Luke in 1329,<sup>40</sup> and church building was not restricted to Borgo Santa Maria.<sup>41</sup>

It is from this same period of building, expansion, and growth that we have our next indication of overall urban population. Agnolo reports that in 1328 the commune “made a new lira because the city was in great and good condition, with a very large population and great riches.” In what may be the copy of an official document he then lists all the “companies” (in this case “lire”) in each of the three *terzi* or major districts of the city, with the number of heads of families in each company. The companies, 59 in all, include 11,710 heads of families.<sup>42</sup>

The lira was an occasional evaluation, not an annual one. The fact that the lira was indeed made anew in 1328 lends credibility to the chronicler’s account. A City Council deliberation of 11 March 1328 even names the assessors “presently” making the lira.<sup>43</sup>

The adoption of a multiplier of 4 would indicate an urban population of almost 47,000 in 1328, while 4.5 suggests over 52,000. This does not include the very poor, transients, and the religious population.

<sup>39</sup> CG, N. 105, fols. 77r–81v.

<sup>40</sup> Biccherna, N. 161, fol. 10v (30 June 1329): £250 were assigned for the construction of the church “al prato che si chiama Sambragio et una chiesa nel borgo sante marie che si chiama santo lucha.”

<sup>41</sup> E.g., 21 Oct. 1328 the commune ordered that a subvention of £25 be given to assist in building the convent and church of Santa Marta in Borgo Novo di San Marco: CG, N. 106, fols. 68v–69r.

<sup>42</sup> *Cron. senesi*, pp. 486–488. O. Malavolti, *Dell’Historia di Siena* (Venice, 1599) [hereafter: Malavolti], Pt. II, fol. 86r, gives the totals for each of the three *terzi* and the grand total only. It is from Malavolti rather than Agnolo that Pardi took these figures (“La popolazione di Siena,” p. 102). But Pardi misused even Malavolti, claiming that these figures include the Masse as well as the city proper. According to Malavolti they offer a “descrittione della Città Terzo per Terzo,” and this is confirmed by the names of the companies listed by Agnolo. Multiplying the total by 4.25 Pardi arrived at a population of almost 50,000. This he then arbitrarily rejected in favor of 37,000, which is yielded by a multiplier of 3.25. Throughout, however, Pardi was unaware that the Masse are not included, nor did he recognize that Agnolo and not Malavolti is our ultimate source for this data. As will be readily recognized, the generally accepted estimate of 37,000 for Siena with the Masse (25,000+12,000) is based solely on Pardi.

<sup>43</sup> CG, N. 105, fols. 63r–70r. A ten year exemption from all similar offices was granted the men (named on fols. 65v–66v) described in the official proposal as “pro parte vestrorum [dominorum Novem] et comunis Senarum offitialium, videlicet allibratorum qui presentialiter morantur et vestro mandato positi sunt ad locum fratrum Sancti Augustini, ad locum abbatie Sancti Vigili et ad locum fratrum minorum de Senis pro vobis et comuni Senarum ad allibrandum et libram faciendum hominum et personarum civitatis Senarum et burgorum eiusdem.” The CG volume for July–Dec. 1327 that should have contained the legislation ordering this lira is missing, but Biccherna N. 157 (1328 Jan.–June) contains numerous notices of payments to these *allibratori*, their notaries and messengers, beginning 26 Feb.: e.g., fols. 15v, 16r, 17v, 32v, 39v, 40r. In contrast it will be recalled that no similar confirmation is found for Tommasi’s assertion concerning a lira of 1300 (above, n. 26).

It is not impossible that Siena's population increased even during the two decades remaining before the Black Death, for in 1346 it was necessary to extend the city's walls in all three major districts.<sup>44</sup> For Siena, as for Volterra and San Gimignano,<sup>45</sup> we must wait until the twentieth century to see the population return to pre-plague heights.

Difficult though it is to estimate the population within the city itself, it is enormously more difficult to arrive at any meaningful estimates for the remainder of the state. Forced to reject Pardi's 12,000 for the Masse, we can set no meaningful figure in its place.<sup>46</sup>

The problem of estimating the population of the remainder of the Sienese state, the *contado*, before the plague is even more complex. It simply has not been attempted, by Pardi or any other modern scholar. A minimum can, however, be arrived at, although in all probability it is very far below the real figure.

From tax records of 1291 it can be ascertained that 266 *contado* communities paid a total of £7,839/16/6, at the rate of 15s. per *massarizia* or farm. If these *massarizie*, numbering 10,453 in all, were not simply fiscal units, and if no *massarizie* escaped untaxed (an improbable assumption), then an average of only four persons per farm would mean a farm population of almost 42,000; six per farm would mean over 62,700.<sup>47</sup>

We can supplement this information with data drawn from 96 surviving volumes of 1316–1317, in which are described the farm lands pertaining to 158 communities of the *contado* and Masse.<sup>48</sup> I. Imberciadori “counted over 15,000 pieces

<sup>44</sup> See Biccherna, N. 219 (1346 Jan.–June), fol. 79v: £397/5/8 “Anco de la nuove mura del terzo di Camolia”; fol. 80r: £387/5/6 for the *terzo* of Città, and £397/5/6 for the *terzo* of San Martino. These receipts are income from a *gabella* of 12 d. per lira from the salaries of foreign officials destined specifically for use in building the city walls. Fol. 166r (30 June) records a payment of £1,000 to “Ben-civenni Ghuccii camar. dele Nuova mura de la citta del terzo di Citta,” and another £1,000 to “Buoninsegna di Meo operaio dele nuove Mura de la citta del Terzo di Sancto Martino.” Cf. Biccherna, N. 229 (1347 July–Dec.), recording payments of over £4,000 to the men supervising the building of the new walls: fols. 125v (“pro edificandis novis muris civitatis”), 142v. The word “new” was not used when money was spent on repairing existing walls.

<sup>45</sup> E. Fiumi, “La popolazione . . . volterrano-sangimignanese,” p. 283.

<sup>46</sup> The most useful indication of population in the Masse is a notice that during the first half of 1291 the Biccherna collected £385/10/- from 35 Masse communities that paid 15 s. “pro massaritia”: Biccherna, N. 105, fols. 49r-v. This would mean 447 *massarizie*, or single farms, in all; hence a population of almost 2,000 at the rate of four per *massarizia*. But the famous legislation “tribus per massaritiam” decreeing that each *massarizia* must have at least three persons, and the law that this must include at least two males above the age of fifteen, would suggest that a figure of even six per farmstead is not too high. (L. Zdekauer, ed., *Il costituito del comune di Siena dell'anno 1262* [Milan, 1897], dist. IV, r. lii, liii, pp. 418–419.) A multiplier of six yields a total of 2,682 persons. But too many possibilities for error exist for even these crude approximations to be given great weight. For example, it is probable that the *massarizie* were already stereotyped tax figures and did not represent an actual number of farmsteads. This is suggested by the fact that in August 1291 this entire system of taxation was abandoned as being unrealistic. See Bowsky, “The *Buon Governo* of Siena,” p. 375 n. 32, and below, n. 67. Even if the *massarizia* was still a viable unit, how many *massarizie* did not pay their taxes in 1291? Finally, but not least important, the *massaritia* does not account for the non-farming elements in the Masse communities. All told, the 2,000–2,700 figures can only be regarded as basic minima.

<sup>47</sup> The tax collections are recorded in Biccherna, N. 104, fols. 43v–48v. For limitations to their usefulness, cf. above, n. 46.

<sup>48</sup> *Estimo*, N. 145–239; cf. *Guida-Inventario*, I, 272.

of land” recorded in these registers. Of these 6,500 were rented and 8,500 worked by their owners.<sup>49</sup> Since the *contado* and Masse then contained approximately 295 communities<sup>50</sup> if the same proportion of farms holds true for the remaining 137 communities there were over 27,000 pieces of land in all. Estimating a mere 3.5 per piece, one would arrive at a population of over 97,000.

But even if all the “pieces” counted by Imberciadori were actually worked many problems remain. These pieces varied immensely in size. Some were worked by several persons, others were so small as not to occupy a family full time. These figures too omit *contado* townsmen who neither owned nor worked real property, and the inhabitants of religious houses. And how safe is the assumption that the proportion of the pieces of farm land to the number of communities was the same for the 158 communities accounted for by Imberciadori as for the remaining 137?

If only because Siena added vast territories to its state during the third and fourth decades of the fourteenth century these figures should be revised upwards. During those decades Siena acquired much of the southern and western portion of her state, including many holdings of the Aldobrandeschi counts of Santa Fiora. The city of Grosseto with its *contado* was definitively acquired in 1334.<sup>51</sup> While 540 men of Grosseto in 1221 had sworn to observe a treaty with Siena,<sup>52</sup> according to a document of 1370 pre-plague Grosseto had numbered 1,200 men.<sup>53</sup> Massa Marittima, acquired in 1335, was said in 1369 to have had a population of 3,000 during the regime of the IX — presumably prior to the plague.<sup>54</sup> And it was only in 1341 that the prosperous mining center of Montieri fell to Siena after decades of desperate efforts to maintain its independence.<sup>55</sup>

There are some indications of the population of a few isolated communities in the years immediately preceding the plague,<sup>56</sup> but no accurate estimate can be

<sup>49</sup> I. Imberciadori, “Il catasto senese del 1316,” *Archivio ‘Vittorio Scialoja’*, vi (1939), 156. Neither Imberciadori nor the *Guida-Inventario* mention that Estimo, N. 145–239 and N. 1–92 include Masse communities. For proof of this cf. MS. E. 14 (Inventario dell’Estimo), fols. 16v–22v, with the Masse communities listed in Lira, N. 423, fols. IIIv–IVr, a volume based on records of 1348–1364.

<sup>50</sup> Estimo, N. 1–92; cf. *Guida-Inventario*, i, 272.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. *Cron. senesi*, p. 512. Dipl. Rif. 23 Jan. 1333 (st. sen) and Capitoli, N. 3 (Caleffo Bianco or dell’Assunta), fols. 39v–41v, contain provisions for the return of Grosseto to Siennese custody.

<sup>52</sup> See G. Cecchini and G. Prunai, ed., *Il Caleffo Vecchio del Comune di Siena*, *Fonti di Storia Senese*, I (Florence, 1932), N. 190, pp. 278–285; cf. F. Schneider, ed., *Regestum Senense*, *Regesta Chartarum Italiae*, VIII (Rome, 1911), N. 604, p. 271.

<sup>53</sup> A. Corradi, *Annali delle epidemie occorse in Italia dalle prime memorie fino al 1850*, VII (Bologna, 1892), 1042.

<sup>54</sup> CG, N. 179, fol. 54v (19 July 1369).

<sup>55</sup> Cf. G. Volpe, “Montieri: Costituzione politica, struttura sociale e attività economica d’una terra mineraria toscana nel secolo XIII,” in his *Medio Evo Italiano*, 2nd ed. (Florence, 1961), pp. 319–423.

<sup>56</sup> E.g., according to A. Corradi, *Annali delle epidemie*, VII, 1042, pre-plague Magliano numbered 400 men. Sasso di Maremma and Montemassi counted 160 and 220 men respectively: below, nn. 132, 133. Their *gabella* taxation in 1344 was £26/19/6 (Sasso) and £103/4/5 (Montemassi): *Gabella*, N. 21, fols. 39v, 38v. Thus we cannot assume that *gabella* taxation was based on population alone, and try to estimate *contado* population by comparing the taxation of the few communities with known population with an average of that paid by all the communities listed on the few extant *contado*

made of the entire *contado* population. Even partial analyses of the armed service given Siena by *contado* communities on various occasions, such as might be made from a careful study of Biccherna volumes, would not yield the desired results. It is frequently impossible to distinguish indigenous soldiery from mercenaries hired by *contado* communes for Sienese service, and many communities needed only to serve with the number of troops that had been established at the time of their submission to Siena.

Despite the many reservations that it has been necessary to make, it seems certain that by the eve of the plague Siena was a populous commune. It probably included over 50,000 persons in the city itself, and perhaps more than double that number in the remainder of the state.

During its six decades of rule the oligarchy of the IX had developed the generous sources of revenue and the complex financial administration needed by the Sienese state.<sup>57</sup> The major share of income came from *gabella*, particularly sales and excise taxes farmed to companies of Sienese businessmen, and from the rental of communal properties in the city and *contado* — shops, squares, pastures, and farms.

Voluntary loans bearing alleged interest rates of 8% to 10% a year — though frequently much higher in fact — provided other income. Legislation of 9 September 1336 includes a complaint against “lenders having their hands continually placed about the throat of the commune,” and loans that bore interest of 20% and even 30%.<sup>58</sup>

Documentation is particularly sketchy and unsatisfactory for voluntary loans, often omitting, for example, the length of time for which interest was being paid. Some loans escape notice entirely. There is direct evidence that a voluntary loan to the commune could be disguised so as to appear to be a loan to private individuals, and even the sum lent was at times recorded as double the actual amount in the receipt — supposedly to protect the lenders.<sup>59</sup> We are thus unable to deter-

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*gabella* rolls. Nor do these *gabella* lists ordinarily include such communities as Grosseto and Talamone. Attempts to derive *contado* population from the number of houses planned for Paganico in 1305 (150–200) also fail to yield positive results. (For these plans see A. Lisini, ed., *Il costituito del comune di Siena volgarizzato nel MCCCIX-MCCCX* (Siena, 1903), I, dist. I, r. ccxviii, pp. 180–181; partially reprinted in W. Braufels, *Mittelalterliche Stadtbaukunst in der Toskana* (Berlin, 1953), p. 78.

<sup>57</sup> The following summary of Sienese finances is derived principally from a thorough study of all extant Biccherna records of income and expenditure, of CG deliberations, and of *Gabella* records of income and expenditure (*Gabella*, N. 12, 14, 15, 17–21), for the years 1287–1355.

<sup>58</sup> See CG, N. 118, fols. 4v–7r, esp. “prestatores continue habentes manus ad gulam comuni [sic] delectantur et student quod in comuni Senarum graves expense fiant.” (fol. 4v). This measure set the maximum interest rate at 10%; but such legislation had little effect and was often even overtly waived (e.g., CG, N. 119, fols. 47r–48r, 27 Sept. 1336).

<sup>59</sup> See esp. Biccherna, N. 99, fol. 10v (16 Dec. 1288). This records that the commune acquired a loan of £13,000 from a group of sixteen men, but gave them a receipt for £26,000 together with a separate second receipt from the Four *Provveditori* of the Biccherna signing as private individuals. The communal receipt was “de duplo dicte quantitatis silicet de XXVI<sup>m</sup> libr. . . . et fuit solummodo unum debitum de XIII<sup>m</sup> libr. den. sed creditores pro maiori eorum securitate perceperunt ut dictum est dicta cautione. et predicti creditores receperunt similiter instrumentum a predictis IIII or [pro-

mine the real amounts lent, and hence the actual interest rate, for those loans that do not come so clearly or completely within our purview.

Court fines, profit from the communal salt monopoly, and various fees (for arms permits, the use of communal mills, admission to citizenship, etc.) filled out the regular sources of income.

At irregular intervals Siena levied taxes based on assessed evaluations of the immovable, and at times moveable, properties of inhabitants of the city and Masse and of *contado* nobles. These were taxed at low rates, frequently less than .5%.<sup>60</sup> Unlike Florence<sup>61</sup> Siena had not developed an aversion to such taxation.

To meet special emergencies forced loans (*preste* or *prestanze*) were levied upon the wealthier inhabitants of the city and *contado*. They ordinarily paid 8% to 10% interest, and at times specific sources of revenue were obligated to their repayment.<sup>62</sup> In some few instances the commune went so far as to pawn castles and entire *contado* districts in order to gain large sums of money quickly. Such was the case in December 1347, only a few months before the onset of the Black Death, when the City Council authorized the pawning of Campagnatico, Civitella Ardenghesca, Colle Sabbatini, Sasso di Maremma and other lands for 6,000 gold florins bearing 10% annual interest.<sup>63</sup> Still other revenue accrued to the commune through occasional legislation that provided for the compounding of fines at 5% to 20% and for the monetary composition of death penalties.<sup>64</sup>

A modest annual tax or *gabella* apportioned among the *contado* communities provided less than 15% of Siena's income. Since reaching its all-time high of £60,000 in 1334 this tax had been lowered periodically. In 1347 it was set at only

visoribus Biccherna comunis Senarum] obligando se personaliter et non faciendo mentione de eorum officio nec de commune Senarum." [Omission mine.] Cf. CG, N. 46, fol. 68v, 22 Oct. 1293: the case of a private creditor (whose property had been confiscated by Siena) who gave his debtor (the Comune of Castelnuovo Berizi) a receipt for the payment of £200 towards a debt of £2,000, "de dicta summa .MM. libr. Et ipsa summa non erat in veritate nisi .M. li. et quod de dicta summa predicti comune et homines castri novi tantum tenebantur eidem domino Gabriello [condam Ranerii Rustichini] .M. li. solvere et non plus."

<sup>60</sup> E.g., 9 Oct. 1342 a lira or dazio of 9 den. per £100 evaluation was imposed in the city on the basis of a new lira or evaluation: CG, N. 131, fols. 64r-65v. Cf. above, nn. 42, 43.

<sup>61</sup> See M. Becker, "Florentine Popular Government (1343-1348)," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, cvI(1962), 362.

<sup>62</sup> E.g., 27 April 1347 the City Council provided for the restoration of *preste* of 15,000 florins (10,000 fl. borrowed July 1346 from 200 Siennese citizens, and 5,000 fl. borrowed from 500 others Sept. 1346 — both paying 10% annual interest). Arrangements were made for the income of certain *gabelle* (incl. that on wine sold at retail in the city and *contado*), for the sale of communal grain, and the salt monopoly, to be given to the Biccherna for the repayment of these *preste*. The Four *Provveditori* were to appoint special officials encharged with repaying the *preste* and interest. The repayment was to be made in three equal payments during July, August, and September 1347. See CG, N. 140, fols. 33r-34r; cf. fols. 41r-v (28 May 1347) for the implementation of these proposals.

<sup>63</sup> CG, N. 141, fols. 40r-42v (10 Dec. 1347). Cf. below, p. 13.

<sup>64</sup> Biccherna, N. 200 (Jan.-June 1339), fols. 168r-440v, record a total of £39,086/3/7 collected from approximately 1,900 persons of the city and *contado* as a result of legislation of 18 Jan. 1339. This does not include almost £16,000 in five payments of 1,000 gold fl. each collected from a Salimbeni, a Bonsignori, and three Tolomei permitted to commute their death sentences to these money payments: fols. 19r, 44v, 57r, 88r.

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longolo p'nuare & trouasi ch' in d' tempo mouste  
 in Siena ch' da vinti anni i que moy in Siena 36.  
 p'one & uechi & almagente i p'one di 52 in  
 tutto in Siena Enobozoli di Siena moy 28.  
 p'one Si ch' in tutto Si troua di falacina & bo  
 zchi di Siena mouste 30 p'one ch' i que  
 sto tempo facea Siena & libozghi p'one di 30.  
 homini & un mast' Siena omene di 2 ho  
 minij & quelli ch' un mast' erono come di  
 spanti & quasi fuore di sentimento & abi da  
 - mast' molte maragle & altre cose & tutte  
 leccue di lauento & hoc & come ch' erano  
 i que di Siena Sabondano come Suode  
 Inpo ch' nel contado moy molta piu gente  
 ch' molte cere d'olle Sabondano d'ne u.  
 un mast' p'one no troua lacrudela ch' era  
 nel contado ch' ilupi & le fibre saluanti ch' si  
 magriano in corpo mal fetterati & altre cau  
 d'ita ch' fareba troppo dolore alij collegie  
 ste

Vinaguera conte di Simbonifatio di uerona  
 fue infermo la terza uolta p. di Siena di uolo  
 Epoi uchi ro di luglio moy in Siena & fuo po  
 lito a frah minor & grande honore & la sua  
 sepultura fu posta in p' d' la porta di la uerona ad  
 alto i bono quello lauozato di marino etc. ch'  
 Siena fa tutte le spese di la sua sepultura

PLATE. Agnolo di Tura del Grasso. Archivio di Stato of Siena, Ms. N. 54bis, fol. 179r.

£36,000.<sup>65</sup> This was less than the cost of a single communal grain purchase made that very year.<sup>66</sup> In addition to this taxation *contado* communities contributed small sums (often £10 a year per community) to pay part of their rectors' salaries, and *gabelle* were exacted on several forms of transactions that took place in the *contado*.<sup>67</sup>

The Biccherna practiced deficit financing. Each group of *Provveditori* paid the debts of the Biccherna of the preceding semester. After record-breaking high semi-annual budgets of 1341–1344 (about £260,000–£280,000), from 1345 to the outbreak of the plague the Biccherna spent about £215,000–£195,000 per semester — with semi-annual incomes of from 40% to 50% of those amounts. As might be expected, the major expenditures were for officials' salaries, the hire of mercenaries, and other military expenses.<sup>68</sup>

Bank failures and papal pressure for payment of the debts of the defunct Bonsignori Company had strained communal finances. Poor harvests and famine in 1346 and 1347 occasioned special *preste* (over £45,000 in 1346)<sup>69</sup> and the pawning of communal properties to provide money for the purchase of grain to be distributed free or sold at or under cost in the city and *contado*.<sup>70</sup>

In early 1348 Siena was displaying economic strength and resiliency despite these pressures, and seemed a thriving commercial center. The commune did not stint in making considerable expenditures for road repairs.<sup>71</sup> Nor did financial pressures diminish the commune's zeal for furthering a long-cherished project. In February 1348 the commune granted its representatives authority to spend whatever sums proved necessary for obtaining papal recognition for the Sienese University as a *studium generale*.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> See CG, N. 115, fols. 68r-70r (20 Apr. 1334), setting the tax at £48,000. In 1343 it was lowered to £40,000; CG, N. 132, fols. 7r-9v (14 Jan. 1343). For 1347: CG, N. 141, fols. 8r-9r (3 Aug. 1347).

<sup>66</sup> CG, N. 141, fols. 20r-21r (10 Sept. 1347) authorized a 12,000 florin grain purchase. The florin was valued at from £3/3/10 to £3/2/5 during September and October and remained at £3/3/- for the remainder of 1347: C. Cipolla, "Studi di Storia della Moneta," pp. 211–212.

<sup>67</sup> The legislation of 1291 establishing the *contado* tax retained the individual *gabelle* on bread sold commercially, wine sold at retail, meat slaughtered and fairs held in the *contado*. See CG, N. 42, fol. 16r (3 Aug. 1291): "et non cessentur kabella vini quod venditur ad minutum per comitatum Senarum et panis venalis et kabella carniū que macellantur in comitatu et kabella de mercatis que fiunt in comitatu Senarum et etiam salarium dominationum, que comune Senarum sibi reservat, que kabelle debeant solvi per comunitates ultra dicta summa [sic] [XLVIII<sup>m</sup> lib. den.] destinatam et determinatam." (Fol. 17r contains the same text with minor variations.) For this legislation see Bowsky, "The *Buon Governo* of Siena," p. 375 n. 2, and above, n. 46.

<sup>68</sup> These figures for income and expenditure, as well as those presented below for the years 1348–1355, were derived from a study of extant Biccherna volumes. Sienese archivists, sponsored by the Accademia Senese degli Intronati, are to be praised for undertaking the laborious task of editing and publishing this series; but since Biccherna N. 28 (July–Dec. 1258) is only now in the course of preparation decades may pass before the series arrives at the regime of the IX.

<sup>69</sup> See above, n. 62.

<sup>70</sup> See above, n. 63.

<sup>71</sup> See, e.g., Biccherna, N. 223, fols. 96v, 100v, 104r — well over £500 in all.

<sup>72</sup> CG, N. 142, fols. 8v-9r, 9v, 10r (8 Feb. 1348). This deliberation, approved 183 vs. 34, inspired by a request from Sienese proctors at the papal court that they be authorized to spend any money needed, was unfortunately omitted from G. Cecchini and G. Prunai, edd., *Chartularium Studii Senensis*, I: 1240–1357 (Siena, 1942).

The Black Death struck Siena with tremendous force in the spring of 1348.<sup>73</sup> Major industry ceased and most governmental activity ground to a halt. Men ceased bringing oil to the city for sale and the wool industry shut down almost completely.<sup>74</sup> On 2 June the City Council recessed civil courts until 1 September because of the epidemic.<sup>75</sup> The next regularly recorded council session did not take place until 15 August<sup>76</sup> when regular sessions were renewed.<sup>77</sup>

If at the onset of the disease Siena enacted sanitary legislation aimed at checking its spread, as did Pistoia,<sup>78</sup> none has survived. The thousand florins allocated 13 June to succor the ill and poor in the city and *contado* could not check the ravages of the disease.<sup>79</sup>

Though the plague occasioned renewed religious fervor and a desire to appease

<sup>73</sup> According to Agnolo di Tura (*Cron. senesi*, p. 555) “La mortalità cominciò in Siena di magio,” but it may have arrived during the second or third week of April (cf. E. Carpentier, *Une ville*, p. 119 f. CG, N. 142 records regular City Council sessions through 11 April. Fol. 26v contains only the beginning of the instestation for a session of 16 April. Fols. 27r-33v are blank, and this is unusual for these volumes. The next recorded session is that of 2 June (fols. 34r-v), but it is possible that the notary’s notes for intervening sessions were lost.

<sup>74</sup> CG, N. 144, fols. 6r-8r (4 Jan. 1349) contains petitions for reductions in purchase price by several *gabella* farmers, in which it is stated “maxime occasione epidimie decurse non potuerent homines deferre oleum ad Civitatem Senarum prout erant actenus consueti et quod lanifices qui consuerent oleum emere pro arte lane faciendi non fecerunt ipsam artem, imo quasi tempore dicte epidimie omnes cessaverunt ab ipso lanificio exercendo” (fol. 6v).

<sup>75</sup> CG, N. 142, fols. 34r-v. This motion passed 178 vs. 46, indicating that almost half the councillors were still at their posts—if this records an actual vote.

<sup>76</sup> The session of 2 June 1348 is the last session recorded in CG, N. 142, and appears on the last written folio. This volume lacks the usual final page bearing the notary’s sign and mention of City Council approval of the book. But a session of 13 June 1348 is mentioned in CG, N. 144, fol. 50r (25 June 1349), and allegedly on that date the council allocated the expenditure of 1,000 gold florins on alms for the infirm and wretched of the city and *contado*. The alms were to be distributed by three citizens to be chosen by the IX. The same entry makes clear that at least 200 fl. remained unspent. Biccherna, N. 223, fol. 152r (23 June 1348) records payment of £610 to “Paulo di Cieccho Buonamichi Biagio Turchi, [e] Guido Federighi ufficiali eletti a dispendare mille fiorini doro de la pecunia del comune di Siena a povari e infermi de la detta soma [sic] dugiento fiorini doro e quali lo demo per pulizio de signori nove.” All three men were *Noveschi*. Paolo’s father held office at least four times (1318, 1326, 1332, 1339): cf. Dipl. Rif. 25 July 1318, 13 Oct. 1326, 12 Jan. 1331 (st. sen.), Capitoli, N. 2, fol. 107r. Biagio Turchi was in the IX Nov.-Dec. 1347 (Concistoro, N. 2, fol. 1r). Guido di Federigo was in the IX Nov.-Dec. 1329 (Dipl. Rif. 30 Dec. 1329). For the 1,000 florin allocation, cf. Agnolo (*Cron. senesi*, p. 555).

Two other notices confirm a session of 13 June 1348. See CG, N. 143, fol. 39v (14 Dec. 1348): “Cumque die XIII mensis Julii [sic] proxime preteriti fuerunt approbata in generali Consilio Campanie dicti Communis quedam ordinamenta inter que est quoddam capitulum dictans quod a dicto die in antea in perpetuum non sit baractaria in Civitate Senarum vel burgis Et quod kabella dicte baractarie sit pro tamen (?) sublata.” But CG, N. 144, fols. 6v, 7r (4 Jan. 1349) states that this *gabella* on gambling was removed 13 June. [This is a petition for a partial remission of the purchase price of that *gabella*.]

<sup>77</sup> The session of 15 Aug. 1348 (CG, N. 143, fols. 2r-3r) is followed by others on 22 Aug. (fols. 3v-4v), 26 Aug. (fols. 5v-6v), 29 Aug. (fols. 7r-8r), 30 Aug. (fols. 8v-9r), 5 Sept. (fols. 9v-10v), 9 Sept. (fols. 11r-12r), etc.

<sup>78</sup> See A. Chiappelli, “Gli ordinamenti sanitari del comune di Pistoia contro la pestilenza del 1348,” *ASI*, ser. IV, xx (1887), 3–24. The four documents on pp. 7–24 date from 2 May–13 June 1348.

<sup>79</sup> See above, n. 76.



divine wrath — religious processions,<sup>80</sup> promises to build churches<sup>81</sup> and a hospital<sup>82</sup> — only one piece of morals legislation was passed. And that was rescinded in December 1348 in order to increase income.<sup>83</sup>

Men's preoccupation was with their own safety. Agnolo's description has become classic:

Father abandoned child, wife husband, one brother another; for this illness seemed to strike through the breath and sight. And so they died. And none could be found to bury the dead for money or friendship. Members of a household brought their dead to a ditch as best they could, without priest, without divine offices. Nor did the [death] bell sound. And in many places in Siena great pits were dug and piled deep with the multitude of dead. . . . And I, Agnolo di Tura, called the Fat, buried my five children with my own hands. And there were also those who were so sparsely covered with earth that the dogs dragged them forth and devoured many bodies throughout the city.<sup>84</sup>

Especially hard hit were the clergy — exposed because of their calling or living in crowded monasteries, and not all in the prime of youth.<sup>85</sup> But it is an ill wind that blows no good. While clerics may have suffered out of proportion to their numbers, judging from the results of investigations elsewhere,<sup>86</sup> the legacies of the plague's victims and expectant victims enriched Siena's pious and religious insti-

<sup>80</sup> Biccherna, N. 223, fol. 152v (30 June 1348) records the payment of £1,131/10/2 to "Petro di Tofano Buonamichi per doppiieri, torchi, e candele avuto da lui per la processione e per la sagrestia, offerte e altre cose da lui per le feste a le quali semo tenuti per Riformagione del consiglio di campana." Pietro survived the plague to serve on the IX July–Aug. 1352: Capitoli, N. 3, fol. 264r and Malavolti, II, fol. 109r. The practice of bringing candles to the church of St Peter in S. Pietro in Castelvechio in Siena and burning them in honor of St Sebastian began during the plague epidemic: CG, N. 147, fols. 39r-v (29 Dec. 1350).

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Biccherna, N. 223, fol. 144r (29 May 1348), a payment to "Coltino Buonfigli operaio per lo comune a fare la chiesa nuova di San Donino e di Sa Regholo e San Bastiano la quale si die fare di fuore de la porta a uliviere." Cf. Tommasi, II, 316. Immediately after the plague the Siense promised to build a chapel in the Campo adjoining the communal palace dedicated to the Madonna, the commune's special patron and protectress. This was only completed four years later, and the City Council ordered that it be dedicated at the festival of the birth of the Virgin 6 Sept. 1352: CG, N. 150, fols. 42v, 43v (22 June 1352). Cf. Agnolo (*Cron. senesi*, p. 557, n. 1).

<sup>82</sup> 26 Aug. 1348 the City Council authorized the purchase of houses at the gate of Monteguatiano in Siena to make space for the construction of the Hospital of the Madonna delle Grazie: CG, N. 143, fols. 5v-6v. November 1350 this hospital successfully petitioned for a legal proctor empowered with receiving legacies and issuing receipts in its name: CG, N. 147, fols. 30v-31r, 31v (3 Dec. 1350).

<sup>83</sup> 13 June 1348 the City Council ordered the end "forever" of legalized gambling in Siena, and ended the *gabella* or tax on it: above, n. 76. "Forever" came quickly. 14 Dec. 1348 the council cancelled this legislation and voted 172 vs. 65 to increase communal income by providing that the Executors of the Gabella "possint vendere kabellam baractarie pro eo tempore quo eis videbitur" (CG, N. 143, fols. 39v-40r; quotation on fol. 40r).

<sup>84</sup> *Cron. senesi*, p. 555. Cf. CG, N. 143, fols. 14v-15r (12 Sept. 1348), granting the *Podestà* authority to impose arbitrary penalties upon thieving undertakers who took advantage of the turmoil and sadness to loot the homes of the dead.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Y. Renouard, "Conséquences et intérêt démographiques de la peste noire de 1348," *Population*, III (Paris, 1948), 463.

<sup>86</sup> See J. Russell, *British Medieval Population*, pp. 214–226; J. Saltmarsh, "Plague and Economic Decline in England in the Later Middle Ages," *The Cambridge Economic Journal*, VII (1941), 36–37; cf. E. Carpentier, "Autour de la peste noire," p. 1083.

tutions. *Contado* lands were willed to monasteries without regard for the communities to which they were liable for taxes. Evidence of this practice appears in a Sienese decision to permit the loss of needed revenue and allow the commune of the castle of Abbadia San Salvatore of Montamiata to pay only one-fourth of its annual debt of four hundred florins for 1349, and only two hundred florins a year for the following eight years, because during the plague many property owners had willed their possessions to the neighboring monastery and no longer paid taxes on them.<sup>87</sup> So great were plague legacies that in October 1348 the Sienese City Council suspended for two years the annual appropriations to religious persons and institutions because these, formerly needy, were now “immensely enriched and indeed fattened” by plague bequests.<sup>88</sup>

As might be expected, it is difficult to arrive at even a rough estimate of the plague’s toll in any city. It is now well established that the Black Death struck European cities with varying severity. Hamburg, for example, lost 50%–66% of its inhabitants in 1350, Bremen 70%.<sup>89</sup> Italian cities are believed to have suffered particularly severely, but little modern historical research has been done that could confirm or deny such assertions as that of A. Doren that their losses ranged from 40% to 60%.<sup>90</sup>

The *Reports to the International Congress of Historical Sciences* in 1950 includes the undocumented statement that “the plague in Tuscany caused the deaths of three-fourths to four-fifths of the population.”<sup>91</sup> In a recent ground-breaking

<sup>87</sup> The City Council granted this remission by a vote of 132 to 40 on 10 Dec. 1349: CG, N. 145, fol. 44r. The details given above are not included in the CG deliberation, but in the text of the provision passed: Biccherna, N. 2, fols. 46r–47v. This begins: “Locus ambiguitati non relinquitur ubi experimenta et probabilia suffragantur hinc est, quod sapientes prefati suis cordibus recensentes quod occasione ephydimie et pestilentie rigide que invaluit mirabiliter, anno preterito proxime ex fatalitate decursa prefatum comune Castri Abbatie Sancti Salvatoris de Monte Amiato privatum grandi numero personarum presentialiter dici potest, ob quod possessiones terrigenarum dictorum dicto tempore defunctorum ad monasterium dicte terre iure testamentario pervenerunt, dicto comuni conferentes in nichilo, prout existentia [sic] iuribus possunt clarius attestari, ob quod etiam Comune predictum extitit presentialiter impotens ad portandum honus solutionis florenorum Quatringentorum dandorum anno quolibet Comuni Senarum et solvendum eorum ut tenetur comune predictum Comuni Senarum” (fol. 46r).

<sup>88</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 27r–v (17 Oct. 1348). This suspension was enacted “maxime quia sunt religiosi et conventus aliaque loca et persone olim egrosi legatis et relittis atque oblati a defunctis ex epidimia nunc occursa in immensum suffulti et affatim impinguati” (fol. 27r).

<sup>89</sup> E. Carpentier, “Autour de la peste noire,” p. 1065. Cf. W. Abel, *Die Wüstungen des ausgehenden Mittelalters*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart, 1955), pp. 76–78.

<sup>90</sup> A. Doren, *Italienische Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 1, 579. This statement rests upon the work of K. J. Beloch, and of such writers as Kovalevsky and Pardi. E. Carpentier (*Une Ville*, p. 135) estimates the death toll in Orvieto as “at least half the population” (cf. *ibid.*, p. 224).

<sup>91</sup> C. Cipolla, J. Dhondt, M. M. Postan, and P. Wolff, “Anthropologie et Démographie. Moyen Age,” in *IX Congrès international des sciences historiques Paris, 28 août–3 septembre 1950: 1: Rapports* (Paris, 1950), pp. 55–80, includes specific data to support estimates of population loss in England and France (pp. 68–69). Plague losses in Italy are treated in the single sentence, “Pour l’Italie, on sait que la peste à fait périr en Toscane les trois quarts ou les quatre cinquièmes de la population urbaine” (p. 69).

study E. Fiumi reports the death rate in San Gimignano to have been about 58.7%.<sup>92</sup> We may compare this with the claim of the fourteenth-century chronicler Matteo Villani (I, 2) that three-fifths or 60% died in Florence *and its contado*; and at the same time recall that, although very little has been done in studying plague toll in rural areas, it is generally believed that they suffered less than urban centers.<sup>93</sup>

In an undocumented assertion Y. Renouard specifically designates Siena as an “urban hecatomb.”<sup>94</sup> The sole reference to the plague in an anonymous fourteenth-century Siennese chronicle states simply that “In 1348 there was a great pestilence in Siena and throughout the world, and it lasted three months, June, July, and August, and out of [every] four three died.”<sup>95</sup>

Agnolo di Tura offers a useful set of mortality figures, but they are generally ignored by modern authors who believe that they are not internally consistent. In actuality Agnolo’s account is clear. The misunderstanding is due to the modern editor’s arbitrary punctuation and capitalization.<sup>96</sup>

According to Agnolo 52,000 “persons” died in the city, including 36,000 old persons (“vechi”). 28,000 died in the suburbs (“borghi”). Thus a total of 80,000 died in the city and suburbs combined. As a result there remained in Siena over 30,000 “men” (“homini”), and Siena, apparently not including the suburbs, was left with less than 10,000 men. It would not have been surprising for Agnolo to have distinguished between “persons” and “men” (adult males), especially if he was relying upon contemporary official documents.

Admittedly Agnolo claims as plague victims a number that was in fact probably close to the total Siennese population;<sup>97</sup> but his account is not internally contradictory. Further, it is not improbable that he included as plague victims many persons who fled the city and only returned long after the scourge had passed.<sup>98</sup> Nonetheless, Agnolo’s estimate of an urban death rate of about 84% is high — a veritable “urban hecatomb.”

Fortunately chronicles are not our sole evidence for Siennese population loss. By 9 September 1348 plague deaths were so common that the City Council imposed a heavy fine on all persons except widows who wore mourning clothes in the city or suburbs.<sup>99</sup> Despite the fact that the city’s governors lived and worked in more

<sup>92</sup> E. Fiumi, “La popolazione . . . volterrano-sangimignanese,” p. 280, based on the number of hearths in 1332 and 1350. On the same basis he estimates a 45% loss in the *contado*.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. above, n. 92; and E. Carpentier, “Autour de la peste noire,” p. 1065, who includes the warning that further study may cause estimates of plague deaths in rural areas to be revised upwards.

<sup>94</sup> Y. Renouard, “La peste noire,” p. 111. In the same place he concludes that in Europe as a whole plague deaths ranged from “entre la moitié et le huitième selon les régions.” But two years later, in 1950, he estimated “entre les deux tiers et le huitième, selon les régions.” (“Conséquences et intérêt démographiques,” p. 463.) E. Carpentier, “Autour de la peste noire,” pp. 1065–1066, adopts his 1948 estimate as that which is generally accepted for urban losses.

<sup>95</sup> *Cron. senesi*, p. 148. See Lisini’s introduction, p. xiii.

<sup>96</sup> See Ms. N. 54*bis*, fol. 179r [= Plate]. Cf. Lisini’s edition, in *Cron. senesi*, p. 555.

<sup>97</sup> See above, pp. 5–11.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. below, nn. 104–106.

<sup>99</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 11v–12r. The fine of £50 for each violation was approved 109 vs. 9.

spacious and comfortable quarters than the great mass of urban workers the death toll was high among those who stayed at their posts during the epidemic. Of one group of IX four died in office, as did two of the Four Provveditori of the Biccherna, one of the three Executors of the Gabella, one of the two captains of the mercenaries assigned to guard the IX, and Ser Matteo del fu Guido da Prato, the notary who for several decades had recorded the deliberations of Siena's major councils.<sup>100</sup> The decisions of 30 August 1348 to reduce by one-third the size of the City Council (including the Council de Radota) and of the Council of the People, and to halve (or perhaps reduce by one-third) the number ordinarily needed to constitute a quorum in the City Council, may suggest a crude approximation of the toll among the members of the ruling oligarchy and great magnates.<sup>101</sup>

The poor and the clergy<sup>102</sup> may well have suffered greater losses. Men of lesser station filled the ranks of the military companies. These companies were reduced 51%, from forty-three to twenty-one, in the spring of 1349.<sup>103</sup> This may be especially significant, for by that time persons who had fled the city during the plague — and hence might have been included among the dead in the earliest reckonings — would probably have returned home.

All told, it is not unreasonable to believe that the population loss in Siena was at least fifty per cent, and probably more. To be more precise would be to press our evidence beyond its limits.

Those who could do so did in fact flee the city during the epidemic. Such was probably the case of Ser Francesco di Pietro di Ferro, author of the sole extant Sienese notarial chartulary begun before the plague and continued after it. This

<sup>100</sup> Agnolo (*Cron. senesi*, p. 556). CG, N. 143, fol. 7r (29 Aug. 1348) records the approval of funeral expenses for all of these except the Executor of the Gabella. At least one notary of the Biccherna also died during the plague: CG, N. 143, fol. 24v (8 Oct. 1348). Cf. E. Carpentier, *Une ville*, pp. 126 and 135.

<sup>101</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 8v-9r. This deliberation only makes clear the decision to halve the number needed for a quorum. That these provisions included the one-third reductions in total size results from CG, N. 149, fol. 53r (24 Dec. 1351): "Cum ex fatalitate decursa obvierint multi cives et ex inde fuerit consiliariorum numerus diminutus in tantum quam numerus sexcentorum ad quadrigentos consiliarios sit reductus, consiliiarii Campane ad ducentos, Radote ad centum, et populi ad centum. Et ubi dudum ante fatalitatem iamdictam sufficebat ducentorum consiliariorum numerus congregari hodie sufficiat numerus centumviginti." Originally limited to 1 Jan. 1349, these reductions in the quorum and size of the City Council and Council de Radota were renewed several times, on 29 Nov. 1353 being extended to 1 Jan. 1355: CG, N. 153, fols. 40v-41r. Tommasi, II, 315, erroneously states that as a result of the plague the City Council was reduced from 450 to 100 members.

<sup>102</sup> See, e.g., below, n. 109.

<sup>103</sup> The City Council ordered the number of companies reduced on 30 March 1349, but the deliberation does not indicate the size of the reduction: CG, N. 144, fols. 27r, 28r. Biccherna, N. 223, fol. 154r (30 June 1348), records the payment of rent for 43 *ridotti* (storehouses where the arms for the military companies were kept) for the first half of 1348. Biccherna, N. 692, fols. 25v-26v, list 41 companies whose *ridotti* rentals were paid for July-Dec. 1348. Rentals were paid for the *ridotti* of 42 companies for Jan.-June 1349: Biccherna, N. 224, fol. 188v. During July-Dec. 1349 there were only 21 *ridotti*: Biccherna, N. 225, fol. 108r. So far as these rentals can be traced for the remainder of the regime of the IX, i.e., through Dec. 1352, the number of *ridotti* was probably 21, as the rental remained at £105 (£5 each): Biccherna, N. 230, fol. 139v. During the first complete semester of the XII, the regime that succeeded the IX, there were apparently 41 *ridotti* (Biccherna, N. 235, fol. 113r, 31 Dec. 1355); but at the same time the Biccherna recorded payments to 36 "sotietates" that were seemingly military companies (*ibid.*, fols. 114v-115v, 31 Dec. 1355).

document offers eloquent testimony.<sup>104</sup> 31 March 1348 Ser Francesco entered an act in Siena. There follow several blank pages. We next find him at the seaport town of Talamone on 17 September. This “vacation” was not his wont. Neither he nor his clients customarily left Siena for the summer.<sup>105</sup> But in 1348 Ser Francesco remained in Talamone at least three months, doing little business and that of slight consequence.<sup>106</sup> Not until 13 January 1349 do we again find him in Siena, writing marriage documents for two Sieneese nobles.

By then the storm had passed and the restoration of order was under way. The major task fell to communal authorities. Although important officials had died, the disruption of the summer had been only temporary. Communal records show a continuity of legislative and administrative personnel. Many *Noveschi* lived on to play key roles in government, as did members of the great noble families even though they remained excluded from the IX.

Equally important, administrative techniques were not seriously disrupted. Comparison, for example, of the volume recording the deliberations of the IX in November–December 1347 with that for September–October 1351 reveals continuity in the functioning of the IX, in the nature of the issues they treated, methods of action, and even in the format and composition of the volumes of deliberations. In fact, the very few indications in the 1351 volume that there had been a major disaster are indirect.<sup>107</sup> Biccherna and City Council records demonstrate continuity in recording and accounting procedures. Sixty years of *Noveschi* rule and close attention to the details of government had laid firm foundations.

This is not to deny a shortage of personnel after the epidemic. As early as 15 August 1348 it was necessary to order that the names of the dead be removed

<sup>104</sup> Atti Notarili, N. 67, contains acts drawn up 29 Mar. 1348–8 July 1349. For those of 30 Mar. 1348–17 Jan. 1349, see fols. 1r–25v.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Atti Notarili, N. 66, rog. Ser Francesco di Pietro di Ferro, 5 Dec. 1343–22 Mar. 1345. During the spring–fall 1344 he worked steadily in the city and only took five brief business trips into the *contado*, always returning within a day or two. Although his clientele included many great nobles, among them Piccolomini, Bonsignori, Salimbeni and Tolomei, these men too spent most of their time in the city.

<sup>106</sup> Ser Francesco recorded only 15 acts in Talamone (17 Sept.–15 Dec. 1348): Atti Notarili, N. 67, fols. 7r–17r.

<sup>107</sup> E.g., 7 Sept. 1351 the IX appointed a commission of six men to hear and terminate legal cases involving orphans and their holdings: Concistoro, N. 3, fol. 14v. At least three of the commissioners were *Noveschi*. Buonaventura di Messer Manfredi served at least three times: Nov.–Dec. 1338 (Concistoro, N. 1, fol. 42v), Jan.–Feb. 1344 (Capitoli, N. 2, fol. 169v), Sept.–Oct. 1354 (Concistoro, N. 2562, fol. 5r; Dipl. Rif. 7 Oct. 1354). For Niccolo di Mino Vincenti cf. below, n. 143. He served at least twice: Nov.–Dec. 1350 (Capitoli, N. 2, fol. 255r), Sept.–Oct. 1352 (*ibid.*, fol. 266v). At the outbreak of the plague he was a Consul of the Merchant Guild: cf. MS. A. 99 *ad annum*. His father had served on the IX at least six times: Sept.–Oct. 1314, March–April 1317, Nov.–Dec. 1329, Sept.–Oct. 1331, Jan.–Feb. 1340, May–June 1341: cf. Dipl. Rif. 20 Oct. 1314, 5 April 1317, 30 Dec. 1329, 6 Oct. 1331; Capitoli, N. 2, fol. 141r; Concistoro, N. 2562, fol. 3r. Domenico di Guiduccio [Ruffaldi] served on the IX Sept.–Oct. 1352: Capitoli, N. 2, fol. 266v. His father Guiduccio di Cecco Ruffaldi had served May–June 1329: Dipl. Rif. 30 June 1329; cf. Malavolti, II, fol. 88v. Domenico’s brother Francesco served March–April 1339 (Capitoli, N. 2, fols. 102v, 104r), Jan.–Feb. 1344 (*ibid.*, fol. 169v). For Francesco see below, n. 159. For a similar lack of evidence of plague effects in Orvietan official documents see E. Carpentier, “Autour de la peste noire,” p. 1064.

from the lists of persons eligible to hold office on the IX.<sup>108</sup> The chamberlains of Siena's two most important financial magistracies, the Biccherna and the Gabella, had hitherto been selected from among the regular clergy, most frequently from the Cistercian monastery of San Galgano. But on 22 August 1348 these offices were opened to laymen, as because of the plague it "is difficult, nay, impossible, to have any monks from any order or monastery for the said offices . . . since so few remain that they are not even sufficient in number to celebrate divine offices in their own monasteries."<sup>109</sup> So severe was the crisis that *contado* communities received permission to select their own vicars to serve until 1 January 1349, filling out the terms of those who had died during the plague.<sup>110</sup> The greatest shortage, that of judges and notaries and of foreigners to serve in such high posts as those of *Podestà* and Captain of the People, remained acute throughout the regime of the IX.<sup>111</sup> Nonetheless, governmental machinery was rapidly re-assembled and was manned by the same type personnel as before the epidemic.

Many problems remained to be solved, including the resumption of communal income. The Black Death did not end the need to pay foreign officials and mercenaries. Siena required troops to protect her *contado* and to fight her wars. She had to maintain her commitments to Florence and her Guelf allies; particularly to resist the incursions of the Milanese Visconti into Tuscany. And in 1354 the pressures exerted by the fierce *condottiere*, Fra Moriale, dwarfed all others.<sup>112</sup>

To add to Siena's difficulties, officials and troops demanded higher wages than before the plague,<sup>113</sup> both because they were in short supply and to offset any

<sup>108</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 2r-3r. Tommasi, II, 315, errs in implying that new names were added to the basic list of those eligible for this office.

<sup>109</sup> CG, N. 143, fol. 4r: "Et cum Epidimia nuper lapsa adheo demerit numerus religiosorum quod difficile immo impossibile sit haberi aliquem religiosum de aliquo ordine vel conventu pro dictis offitiis vel eorum aliquo exercendis, quia remanserunt tam pauci quod non sufficient ad divina officia in ipsorum conventibus celebranda."

<sup>110</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 9v, 10v (5 Sept. 1348): "Cum urgenti pestifero tempore nuper occurso quo multi ex notariis Civitatis Senarum de hac luce fuerunt imperio creatoris exempti, non possit terre comitatus Senarum de civibus notariis de Civitate ad cernam solitam in consuetis offitiis et vicariatus reformari." It was provided that "quelibet Comunitas comitatus Senarum possit . . . per vicariatum ipsius comunitatis . . . [from today to 1 Jan. 1349] in ipsa comunitate et vicariatu eligere officialem et vicarium tam notarium quam aliam quamcumque personam . . . dum modo non possit eligi per aliquam comunitatem aliquis de ipsa comunitate vel in ea possidens bona Et dum modo omnes eligendi antequam acceptent vel vadant ad ipsa officia exercenda debeant approbari ydonei per dominos Novem" (fol. 9v). In briefly reporting this decision Tommasi (II, 316) fails to mention any time limit.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. CG, N. 143, fols. 3v (22 Aug. 1348), 13r (11 Sept.), 27v-28r (21 Oct.), 45v (18 Dec.); N. 144, fols. 20r-v (17 Feb. 1349); N. 145, fols. 18r (11 Sept. 1349), 51v-52r (30 Dec.); N. 146, fols. 42r-v (14 May 1350); N. 147, fols. 5r (16 July 1350), 27r (2 Nov.), 35v-36r (19 Dec.); N. 148, fols. 12v (22 Feb. 1351), 33r (15 June); N. 149, fol. 33v (7 Dec. 1351); N. 150, fols. 40r-v (8 June 1352); N. 152, fol. 27r (31 May 1353); N. 153, fol. 52r (20 Dec. 1353); N. 154, fols. 32v-33r (4 June 1354), 35r-v (19 June); N. 155, fol. 6v (4 Jan. 1355). For similar shortages in Orvieto, see E. Carpentier, *Une ville*, p. 129f.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. above, n. 23, below, n. 116.

<sup>113</sup> See Table. For legislation increasing salaries, see, e.g., CG, N. 143, fols. 14v (12 Sept. 1348), 28v (21 Oct.); N. 151, fols. 40v-41r (31 Dec. 1352); N. 153, fols. 19v-20r (9 Aug. 1353)—an increase of 40% over pre-plague salaries for the Three Priors of Grosseto, 35r (25 Oct.); N. 154, fol. 8r (10 Jan. 1354). See also below, nn. 114, 115.

increased cost of foodstuffs. Almost all measures providing monetary bonuses for communal officials or mercenaries refer to the “immensely” increased cost of “victualia” as well as to the shortage of personnel.<sup>114</sup> Legislation aimed at restricting the practice of augmenting salaries with frequent bonuses proved ineffective.<sup>115</sup>

Surprisingly, Sieneſe finances were quickly restored and even improved. 1349–1352 the Biccherna’s semestral expenditures averaged about £210,000. This was less than the 1341–1344 budgets (£260,000–£280,000), and not much above the £215,000–£195,000 of 1345–1348. More significant, each successive group of Biccherna magistrates needed to advance less to cover its predecessor’s debts. The Biccherna’s total indebtedness was less than it had been in 1330, while the total budget for that year was only half of that averaged 1349–1352.

By 1353 Siena approached that rarity, a balanced budget. This it accomplished without resorting to a devaluation of coinage and despite remissions of fees granted to *gabella* farmers and renters damaged by the plague. In 1354 the new-found stability was abruptly jarred when the ravages of Fra Moriale occasioned the largest budget to date in Sieneſe history. The Biccherna spent over £300,000 during the first half of that year alone.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>114</sup> CG, N. 145, fol. 5r (17 July 1349): a £1,000 bonus for the Captain of War “Cum propter tempus mortalitatis occursum officiales stipendiarii familiares et famuli et omnia manuale obsequium [sic] et artificiale ministerium et etiam quam [sic] omnia victualia costent longe solito kariore.” *Ibid.*, fol. 19r (16 Sept.): a £200 bonus for the Captain of the People, because of his merits and “propter caritiam offitalium et familiarum et omnium victualium.” Cf. CG, N. 146, fols. 6r (27 Jan. 1350), 39r (28 Apr.); N. 147, fols. 8v–9r (30 July 1350), 24r (22 Oct.); N. 149, fols. 40v–41r (19 Nov. 1351), 41v (2 Dec.); N. 150, fols. 31v–32r (4 May 1352); N. 151, fol. 17v (28 Sept. 1352); N. 152, fol. 20r (19 April 1353); N. 153, fols. 28r (27 Sept. 1353) — 300 fl. for the *Podestà*, 31r (9 Oct.) — 200 fl. for the Captain of the People.

It is most difficult to estimate the degree of shortage or of monetary increases in prices 1345–1355, but cf. *Cron. senesi*, p. 561. Survival notarial chartularies (esp. *Atti Notarili*, N. 33, 34, 51–57, 66–70) include only 31 specific notices of grain prices. These are too few to be of great significance, and frequently occur in contracts that may reflect concealed interest rather than actual or projected grain values. With this caveat, we may note that this evidence indicates a marked rise in grain prices beginning in late 1351 or early 1352, but dropping off to pre-plague levels by the fall of 1354. The sixteen references to the price of oxen in the same chartularies (Sept. 1348–Jan. 1355) more probably reflect real values. In the late fall and winter of 1351 oxen almost doubled in value, and these high prices hold through the latest notice. It may be instructive to note that on 30 September 1348 Orvieto ordered that prices and wages be held down to no more than 25% higher than those of March 1348, though this legislation was liberalized in 1350 and proved ineffective (E. Carpentier, *Une ville*, pp. 150 f., 184 ff., 187, 200 ff., 223).

<sup>115</sup> See CG, N. 153, fols. 12r–v (19 July 1353) — an attempt to confine the authority to grant bonuses to the City Council alone. For bonuses granted see above, n. 114.

<sup>116</sup> These expenses necessitated staggering *preste* of over £90,000 (26,000 fl.) in the city—over half of which was paid as blackmail to Fra Moriale. The *contado* paid a *presta* of £12,000: Biccherna, N. 232, fols. 88v–89r, 89v. The *presta* of 20,000 fl. was imposed specifically “del mese di maggio e di giugno MCCCCLIII per cagione de la compagnia [sic]” (fol. 88v). July–Dec. 1354 other *preste* were collected of approximately £12,000 in the city, £3,000 in the Masse and £35,000 in the *contado*: Biccherna, N. 234, fols. 79r, 80r–v. The activities of Fra Moriale probably occasioned the sizeable decrease in income from the *Gabella* during the same semester. Biccherna, N. 234, fol. 79r (31 Dec.): £44,167/-/10 paid by the *Gabella* to the Biccherna. Cf. 20,237 fl. 18s. 1d., 30 June 1354 (Biccherna, N. 231, fol. 90r); £106,274, 31 Dec. 1352 (Biccherna, N. 230, fol. 72r); £117,166/4/-, 30 June 1352

Low *preste* and a very light tax were levied in the summer and fall of 1348.<sup>117</sup> 5 December the price of the salt that Sienese were compelled to purchase from the commune was increased 25%, from 16s. to 20s. per *stajo*, — the first such price increase in eight years.<sup>118</sup> 22 January 1349 the City Council enacted legislation that permitted the compounding of fines at 10% to 25% and the cancellation of all existing death sentences against any individual upon payment of 600 gold florins.<sup>119</sup> During the first half of 1349 alone over £23,600 was collected from 635 persons who took advantage of the discounts and composition.<sup>120</sup>

Two means were basic in the achievement of financial improvement. Indirect taxes (*gabelle*) were increased, and in many cases doubled.<sup>121</sup> More important, the commune exacted forced loans in larger amounts and more frequently than ever before. Most struck the wealthier inhabitants of the city and the Masse, and to a far lesser extent those of the *contado*. The Jubilee Year of 1350 brought new prosperity to innkeepers and others doing business along the routes to Rome. These were taxed with a *presta* of 4,000 florins.<sup>122</sup> In 1353 a thousand florin *presta* was imposed on foreign money lenders doing business in Siena.<sup>123</sup> During the second half of 1351 alone the commune realized over £75,000 in *preste*, more than £60,000

(Biccherna, N. 229, fol. 74v); £80,736/7/11, 31 Dec. 1351 (Biccherna, N. 228, fol. 87r); £68,918/3/11, 28 June 1351 (Biccherna, N. 227, fol. 78r); £51,304/10/- (+£21,932/7/-: *gabella* on wine), 23 Dec. 1349 (Biccherna, N. 225, fol. 67v); £55,430/11/7, 30 June 1349 (Biccherna, N. 224, fol. 86r); £38,012/16/7 (-£24,737/18/3: from *gabelle* and rents assigned to repay a *presta*), 30 June 1348 (Biccherna, N. 223, fol. 80r). [For the period 1 Jan.–25 June 1350 the *gabella* on wine yielded the Biccherna £20,142/4/- (Biccherna, N. 226, fol. 63v).]

<sup>117</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 24v–25v (8 Oct. 1348): “Item cum Cives allibrati in Comuni Senarum Et nobiles de la Massa et Montis Regionis et Fruosini solverunt pro presta starios octo grani pro miliario, et tres quartos floreni pro miliario, Cumque Comuni Senarum moneta indigeat . . . [provisum est] quod Cives Senarum et Nobiles de la Massa omnesque alli qui consuerunt cum ipsa civitate [solvere] allibrati a mille libris infra . . . solvant s. sex pro quolibet centinario” (fols. 24v–25r). Cf. CG, N. 143, fols. 38v–39r (9 Dec. 1348).

<sup>118</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 37v–38r (5 Dec. 1348).

<sup>119</sup> This “scomputo” was voted 270 vs. 50 on 22 Jan. 1349; CG, N. 144, fols. 12r–v; cf. fols. 20v–22v (4 March). See also Agnolo’s partially inaccurate report: *Cron. senesi*, p. 561.

<sup>120</sup> Biccherna, N. 224, fols. 87r–130v, record the collection of £23,633/4/6 from 635 persons of the city and *contado* and one commune (paying £4). This includes three payments of 600 fl. each, from a lord of Sticciano in the *contado*, a former signore of Grosseto, and a Sienese Tolomei (fols. 93r, 89r, 95r). 1 July–15 Sept. 1349 another £1,846/10/- was paid by 93 persons for the same scomputo (Biccherna, N. 225, fols. 70r–80v).

<sup>121</sup> Cf. CG, N. 143, fols. 32v–33r (4 Nov. 1348); N. 151, fols. 10v–11r (27 Aug. 1352); N. 153, fols. 13v–14r (19 July 1353): “capitulo radoppii kabellarum pro uno anno futuro.”

<sup>122</sup> CG, N. 146, fols. 38v–39r (26 Apr. 1350). This *presta* was reduced to 3,000 fl. 25 June 1350 (*ibid.*, fols. 50r–v). See CG, N. 147, fols. 4v–5r (16 July 1350): postponement of the first payment until 1 Aug. 1350. Cf. *ibid.*, fols. 36v–37r (20 Dec.) for attempts to discover those evading this *presta*. Innkeepers and sellers of bread and wine in the city and *contado* overcharged pilgrims and defrauded them in exchanging money; CG, N. 146, fol. 8v (6 Feb. 1350).

<sup>123</sup> CG, N. 153, fol. 30v (1 Oct. 1353). On the same day a *presta* (of an unspecified amount) was imposed on the inhabitants of the Masse, and another of 6,000 fl. on persons receiving the benefits of certain improvements made at Montepulciano (fol. 30r). Another *presta* imposed in 1353 was that of 30 June for grain purchases; CG, N. 152, fol. 36r.



of which came from inhabitants of the city.<sup>124</sup> Other *preste* followed, accompanied by a *dazio* of slightly over .6% in the city.<sup>125</sup> This money could be exacted because the government guaranteed repayment of *preste* by obligating specific portions of communal income, especially the *gabella* on wine sold at retail in the city and *contado*.<sup>126</sup>

Voluntary loans ostensibly repaid at a profit of 8%–10% a year apparently accounted for a very modest share of the communal income. In actuality, though Siena recognized that many lenders received more than the legal interest rate, for the commune excused this practice if the lender paid an “excess profits tax” of 20% on the interest that he collected beyond the legal limit.<sup>127</sup> Interestingly, despite any new riches that were amassed as a result of the plague, the voluntary lenders to the commune continued to be drawn principally from the same *Noveschi* and great nobles as before.<sup>128</sup>

Siena did not try to strengthen itself at the expense of the *contado*. The annual *contado* assessment remained at the low £36,000 set in 1347.<sup>129</sup> This was only 50% more than the original assessment of 1291 even though expenditures had risen more than 200%.

Nor could the *contado* support heavy impositions. Almost all work ceased during the summer of 1348. Fields were neglected and animals left untended, as men were scarcely able to care for their own ill.<sup>130</sup> Mills closed down and most were still inoperative as late as February 1349.<sup>131</sup>

The death toll was high, but varied greatly from one community to the next. In 1353 the Maremma commune of Sassoforte numbered fifty men. Before the plague it had sheltered one hundred sixty men and their families.<sup>132</sup> Neighboring Montemassi, immortalized by Simone Martini’s fresco in the Sienese communal palace, was reduced to less than fifty men, from a pre-plague population of two hundred and twenty.<sup>133</sup> 19 April of the same year the commune of Cofreno was

<sup>124</sup> Biccherna, N. 228, fol. 87r.

<sup>125</sup> Biccherna, N. 229, fols. 68r, 74r; N. 230, fols. 71v, 72r.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. above, n. 116.

<sup>127</sup> Cf. CG, N. 145, fols. 10r–v (14 Aug. 1349); N. 147, fol. 26v (2 Nov. 1350).

<sup>128</sup> Biccherna, N. 219 (Jan.–June 1346), fol. 159r; N. 220 (July–Dec. 1347), fols. 138r–140r; N. 223 (Jan.–June 1348), fols. 164v–165r; N. 224 (Jan.–June 1349), fols. 189r–191r; N. 225 (July–Dec. 1349), fols. 108v–109v; N. 226 (Jan.–June 1350), fols. 89r–90v; N. 227 (Jan.–June 1351), fols. 129r–v; N. 230 (July–Dec. 1352), fols. 144v–145r, 146r.

<sup>129</sup> CG, N. 146, fol. 42v (14 May 1350). See above, n. 65.

<sup>130</sup> CG, N. 143, fol. 36r (17 Nov. 1348): “in lapsu fatalitatis tempore negligebatur comuniter ab omnibus custodia pecoris et brutorum, cum vix propinquorum infirmorum et deficientium cotidie habebatur custodia et cura.”

<sup>131</sup> CG, N. 144, fol. 23r (20 Feb. 1349): “ora per la mortalita sonno quasi tucte [le molina] facte inutili e una grande parte stanno serrata si per che non anno che macinare ne anno Mugnaio ne possono avere e quelle che macinano non guadagnano apena la spesa.”

<sup>132</sup> CG, N. 153, fols. 45r–46r (13 Dec. 1353). Because of this loss the City Council granted Sassoforte a partial remission of its rental fees to Siena for four years.

<sup>133</sup> CG, N. 153, fols. 16r–v (26 July 1353). Montemassi had rented all Sienese property and income in its district from Siena on perpetually renewable 29-year leases, for an annual fee of 50 *moggi* of grain and 100 florins. Because of its population loss this fee was reduced one-third for six years.

joined to that of Monte Santa Maria because it only contained four men and three *massarizie*.<sup>134</sup>

Migration as well as plague deaths accounted for these losses. Throughout the period that we are considering, and long after, many *contado* lands lay sterile, unworked because of the shortage of farm labor.<sup>135</sup> From 1354 on the incursions of mercenary companies increased the crime and disorder<sup>136</sup> that followed the plague.

As early as September 1348 communities throughout the *contado* barraged Siena with requests for financial assistance, particularly in the form of remission of rentals and fees owed the commune. The honesty of these petitions is attested by the fact that they were granted despite the loss of income to Siena.<sup>137</sup> Siena was solicitous of the *contado's* troubles. It immediately remitted the one-third of the annual *contado* taxation due in September 1348.<sup>138</sup>

Remissions and even the cancellation of contracts were also conceded to private individuals and groups of men renting communal properties in the *contado*. 14 August 1349 several Siennese Mignanelli who had rented the entire court, district, land, and castle of Marsiliana for eight years beginning 1 January 1348 for £5,950 (at the rate of £850 a year) successfully petitioned for the cancellation of their contract. They alleged that because of the plague they could not hold and use this territory, nor even guard it from Siena's enemies should the need arise. Two of the original renters had died, and, worse yet, it was impossible to find men to serve as either guards or as agricultural laborers.<sup>139</sup> In June 1349 renters at Civitella Ardennesca received a four-year reduction of one-third in the rentals due from houses and squares in the castle and from olive groves, and a 50% remission of farm rents. But even this aid was insufficient. Six months later all these Civitella contracts were cancelled at the renters' request upon the receipt of small payments.<sup>140</sup>

<sup>134</sup> CG, N. 152, fol. 21r. For *contado* losses also see below, nn. 142, 143.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. CG, N. 153, fol. 43r (10 Dec. 1353). 25 May 1352 Siena gave the parish priest of Santa Maria di Prata in the *contado* the use of certain communal property during his lifetime because since the plague the parish lands "propter laborum inopiam totaliter defecerunt in fructibus et redditibus et remanserunt steriles et inculte" (CG, N. 150, fol. 36v).

<sup>136</sup> Cf. CG, N. 146, fol. 22v (8 Mar. 1350). Siena and Florence agreed to appoint a common official to keep the peace against highwaymen and murderers in Monteriggioni and other border territories.

<sup>137</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 16r-v (19 Sept. 1348). Cf. CG, N. 144, fol. 40v (6 May 1349): "de excomputo faciendi comuni et hominibus Castri Plani"; and above, nn. 87, 132, 133.

<sup>138</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 21r-v (24 Sept. 1348). This measure passed 115 vs. 29. Cf. *ibid.*, fol. 24r (8 Oct. 1348).

<sup>139</sup> CG, n. 145, fol. 10v: "quod propter preterite mortalitatis occasum ipsi conductores non possunt terram predictam et castrum [de Marsiliana] a se conductione tenere et usufructare nec etiam custodire tum . . . duo ex conductoribus . . . mortui sunt et decesserunt post conductionem predictam . . . tum etiam quia non inveniunt nec possit reperire homines sive famulos laboratores sive colonos per quos possint eiusdem castri et eius curie et districtus fructus percipere nec ipsum castrum et cassarum custodire nec commode si casus accideret a comunis Senarum hostibus defensare." See also CG, N. 144, fol. 41r (6 May 1349): "excomputo facto domine Mandine pro possessionibus Arcidossi."

<sup>140</sup> CG, N. 145, fols. 49r-50r (29 Dec. 1349). Kovalevsky published a small fraction of this deliberation (with several inaccuracies), but reported it incorrectly, in his "La législation ouvrière au XIIIe

In 1351 Siena went so far as to aid *contado* communities at the risk of slowing the rate of repopulation of the city itself. Wealthy men of the *contado* who wished to acquire Siennese citizenship were now required to notify the communities on whose tax registers they were enrolled of their intention. This was done so that the communities effected could, if they so desired, protest officially to the City Council. Nor could one obtain Siennese citizenship without first obtaining an official release from his community. This measure passed with almost no opposition, by a vote of 120 to 3.<sup>141</sup>

The Siennese government recognized that *ad hoc* relief to individual communities or renters was not enough. By October 1349 the City Council granted the leading Siennese magistracies authority to combine *contado* communities for the purpose of the taxes and services they owed Siena. This measure was needed because some communities had been completely wiped out and others decimated. The action was taken “since because of the plague that has occurred many *contado* communities are reduced to nothing . . . [it is ordered] from humanity and piety . . . so that they may be kept in the service of the commune of Siena with their customary devotion and faith.”<sup>142</sup>

In 1350 it was manifest that a complete new reassessment of the *contado* communities was needed in order that the annual taxation might be imposed in an equitable fashion:

Since from the fatality that has occurred all the *contado* communities generally have decreased in population, but their decrease is unequal. Some have decreased moderately, others immensely, still others have been completely wiped out. Hence there results the great inequality of taxation that exists today. And since whatever is unequal is intolerable the said taxation must be returned to fitting and tolerable equality, and must be made and done anew.<sup>143</sup>

In accordance with this measure the entire *contado* tax burden was reapportioned in relation to the damaged suffered by each community.<sup>144</sup>

et XIVE siècles,” *Annales internationales d'histoire. Congrès de Paris 1900*. Sect. II (Paris, 1902), p. 188 n. 1. Cf. also CG, N. 144, fol. 41r (6 May 1349).

<sup>141</sup> CG, N. 148, fols. 24v-25v. Cf. CG, N. 154, fol. 13v (24 June 1354)—the appearance in the City Council of the representative of a *contado* commune in order to assent publicly to a citizenship petition.

<sup>142</sup> CG, N. 145, fols. 24r-v (5 Oct. 1349): “Item cum propter fatalitatem decursam multe comunitates comitatus Senarum sint deducte ad nichilum nec possint respondere in debitis factionibus comuni Senarum quibus ex humanitate et pietate est miserand. et subveniend. ut manuteneantur ad servitia comunis Senarum cum solita devotione et fide.” (fol. 24r).

<sup>143</sup> CG, N. 146, fols. 42v-43r (14 May 1350). This measure passed 125 vs. 15, but with the restriction proposed by the councillor Niccolo di Mino Vincenti that the sum total of the taxation be no less than the present £36,000. (For Niccolo, a member of the IX, see above, n. 107.) This *contado* reassessment was followed by a new lira or tax evaluation in the city in 1351. Cf. CG, N. 148, fols. 9r (8 Feb. 1351), 19r-v (8 Apr.), 20v (20 Apr.); Concistoro, N. 3, fols. 17v (9 Sept. 1351), 19r-v (10 Sept.), 60r (17 Oct.), 69r (21 Oct.).

<sup>144</sup> Cf. CG, N. 153, fols. 46r-v (13 Dec. 1353), a petition by the commune of Santa Maria a Sesta concerning its taxation in 1347 and 1351.

The shortage of agricultural labor and the increased demands made by renters, sharecroppers, and farm laborers who survived the epidemic caused Siena to try to attract foreign farm labor into the state. In 1349 such immigrants were promised immunity from taxes and services until 1354 if they would farm specified amounts of land. At the same time those men aged fifteen to seventy who had customarily rented, sharecropped, and worked were heavily taxed unless they farmed the same specified quantities “ad usum boni laboratoris.” This law was necessary:

Since the workers of the land, and those who customarily worked the lands and orchards, because of their great extortions and the salaries that they receive for their daily labors, totally destroyed the farms of the citizens and inhabitants of the state [*districtuales*] of Siena and deserted the farms and lands of the aforesaid citizens and districtuales.<sup>145</sup>

While this measure may have driven some peasants into foreign lands others were probably attracted to Siena itself, augmenting the city’s population and labor supply. At least two other measures of 1348 and 1350 were aimed at restricting the mobility of farm laborers and compelling them to adhere to customary contracts, but they were not renewed and were apparently unsuccessful.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> This measure is nowhere clearly described in extant City Council deliberations. Dated May 1349, it is preserved in Biccherna, N. 1, fols. 299v–300r. Hitherto unnoticed, this major piece of legislation is the sole extant act to spell out clearly the financial coercion exercised upon Siennese farm labor and the exact nature of the attempt to attract foreign agricultural workers. It reads: “Item cum laboratores terrarum et qui terras vel ortos laborare consueverunt poderia civium et districtualium sen. propter magnas extorsiones quas faciunt et salaria que recipiunt ex laboreriis diurnis que faciunt singulis diebus totaliter destruxerunt et deserunt poderia et terrenum civium et districtualium predictorum, quod non est sine grandi periculo predictorum poderia habentium. Providerunt et ordinaverunt sapientes predicti quod quilibet cuiuscumque conditionis existat qui propriis manibus *laborat et laborare consuevit* teneatur et debeat solvere comuni Senarum pro cabella sex florenos auri quolibet anno, salvo quod si dictus laborator vel cultator laboraverit vel cultaverit suis propriis manibus et operibus octo starios vel laboraverit. VIII. starios terre vineate vel ortive bona fide sine fraude ad usum boni laboratoris ad dictam cabellam solvendam minime teneatur. Et quod quilibet qui cum bobus [sic] seu vaccis vel alio genere iumentorum laboraverit ad mercedem vel pretium teneatur et debeat singulis annis solvere duodecim florenos auri comuni Senarum pro cabella et nomine cabelle. Salvo semper et intellecto quod si predicti laboratores cum bestiis laboraverint coluerint et seminaverint viginti starios terre ad solutionem dicte cabelle minime teneatur. Et quod . . . barigellus communis Senarum teneatur et debeat saltem singulis duobus mensibus contra predictos laboratores diligenter inquirere et quos invenerit contra presentem provisionem laborerium facere . . . puniatur per dictum barigellum in decem libr. de sen. sen. [sic] Et nichilominus dictam cabellam solvere teneatur. Declarantes quod laboratores intelligantur qui fuerint etatis quindecim annorum et ab inde supra usque ad septuaginta annos. Et voluerunt et ordinaverunt sapientes predicti quod si post approbationem presentium ordinamentorum aliquae persone aliunde quam de Civitate et comitatu Senarum venire voluerint ad laborandum ad medium vel ad afflictum dictam quantitatem terre prout supra dictum est non teneantur conferre in aliquibus factionibus in illa communitate in qua laborarent et habitarent, et dictam immunitatem [sic] habeant et habere debeant per tempus quinque annorum post approbationem presentium ordinamentorum.” [Italics and omissions mine.]

<sup>146</sup> See CG, N. 143, fol. 10r (5 Sept. 1348) — described simply as ordinances aimed against sharecroppers, renters, farm laborers and servants of Siennese citizens and contadini; CG, N. 147, fol. 22r (7 Oct. 1350) states only “Contra mezauiolos” [apostil], “Quod nullus receperet mezauiolos afflictuarios vel pensionarios alienos.”

Those coming to Siena found a scene of considerable confusion. The epidemic was followed by an increase in the number of crimes of violence and in all forms of abandoned living. As late as 15 September 1350 the City Council lamented the ease with which culprits could evade justice merely by leaving the city.<sup>147</sup>

The Black Death brought about great social and economic dislocation. Severe legislation of 1349 aimed at gaining for Siena the properties, rights, and incomes of those who had died intestate during the epidemic and were not survived by close relatives. By law those legacies pertained to the commune, but many had been forcefully usurped. The new law provided that all who had occupied such estates denounce the fact to communal authorities within two weeks, upon pain of paying double the value of their usurpations. After the two-week grace period anyone could denounce such illegal occupation to the *Podestà* and receive 10% of the fine, while his name would be kept secret.<sup>148</sup>

Other inheritances too were illegally seized, leaving widows and orphans to petition the City Council for redress. So numerous were contested legacies that special courts, judges and commissions were appointed to hear and define such cases.<sup>149</sup> Extant testimony concerning contested dowries proves conclusively that many properties throughout the city, Masse and *contado* were acquired in the wake of the plague without regard to right or legal ownership.<sup>150</sup>

Not all inheritances were worth accepting. Some, burdened by debt, were rapidly repudiated. The forty-one repudiations of paternal legacies approved by the City Council in 1349 are almost double the number for any preceding year.<sup>151</sup>

A major cause for repudiation is found in another area of City Council activity: grants of moratoria, discounts, and remissions of fees to *gabella* farmers and rent-

<sup>147</sup> CG, N. 147, fol. 15r. Cf. Agnolo (*Cron. senesi*, p. 556).

<sup>148</sup> CG, N. 144, fols. 18r–v (11 Feb. 1349).

<sup>149</sup> See, e.g., CG, N. 143, fols. 12v (11 Sept. 1348), 16r (19 Sept.), 25v (13 Oct.); N. 144, fols. 35r–v (27 Apr. 1349); Biccherna, N. 224, fol. 144v (14 Jan. 1349). Cf. Agnolo (*Cron. senesi*, p. 557.) Of the twelve Sieneze appointed to this commission for the six months ending 1 May 1349, at least six were *Noveschi*: Biccherna, N. 224, fol. 165r (1 April 1349). The six are Davino di Memmo [Vignari], Pietro Bencivenni, Niccolo di Grifo, Bartolomeo di Mino Compagni [Agazzari], Salvestro di Niccoluccio, and Ristoro di Messer Fazio [Gallerani]. For similar legal controversies over inheritances in Florence, cf. Matteo Villani, I, 5.

<sup>150</sup> See, e.g., CG, N. 147, fols. 38r–v (28 Dec. 1350), legislation based on a “petitionem miserabilium viduarum. . . Cum itaque in Civitate comitatuque Senarum sint multe lacrimose vidue et debiles viduelle que a potentibus opprimuntur et de ipsorum . . . iuribus contra omnem humanitatem et iustitiam spoliantur, et maxime de dotibus ipsarum cum instrumenta et abbreviature suarum dotium propter mortis notariorum occursum nequeant reperiri.” Cf. CG, N. 148, fols. 10v–11r (11 Feb. 1351), the petition of the widow of a Tolomei whose husband and brothers died during the plague, leaving her defenceless to be robbed of her jewelry, cloth, linen, household articles, and legal instruments “per quemdam Magnatem impium et crudelem” (fol. 10v). See also CG, N. 149, fols. 23v–24r (23 Sept. 1351).

<sup>151</sup> For the repudiations of 1349 see CG, N. 144 and 145, and the general legislation of 29 May and 19 June 1349 (CG, N. 145, fols. 45v–46r, 46r). 3 Sept. 1351 the IX selected six men who with the Executors of the *Gabella* were to examine, define, and determine matters concerning the repudiation of inheritances in the city. At least three of the six were *Noveschi*: Consistoro, N. 3, fol. 9r. CG, N. 134, 135 contain a total of 21 repudiations of 1344, the second highest year on record.

ers of communal properties. The first half of 1349 saw over thirty-five such grants — more than for any previous comparable period.<sup>152</sup>

We need not merely surmise a connection between legacy repudiations and the relief granted distressed tax farmers and communal renters. For example, in a petition accepted by the City Council 23 October 1349<sup>153</sup> two sons of a late purchaser of the *gabella* of fish sold in the city stated that they had legally repudiated their paternal inheritance because their father had died burdened by this debt. Unknown to them at the time, however, their mother too had obligated her properties as surety for their father's debt. Hence they had lost both their paternal and maternal inheritances. They requested relief lest because of their present poverty they be forced "to leave the city of Siena and wander about other parts of the world."

So numerous were the pleas for relief that in September 1348 two separate measures were enacted establishing the administrative machinery for granting such aid to renters and *gabella* purchasers damaged by a loss of income caused by the plague.<sup>154</sup>

If post-plague Siena was marked by economic and social fluidity not all were losers. Sumptuary laws were quickly revived because many persons pretended to higher station than that of their birth or occupation. In legislation of 1349 knights, judges, and physicians, and their wives and children under twelve years of age were the sole groups permitted the most lavish and expensive modes of dress.<sup>155</sup>

Much legislation was enacted to protect the rights and properties of the multitude orphaned by the Black Death,<sup>156</sup> but two closely contested measures of 9 April 1350 merit special attention.<sup>157</sup> These hitherto unnoticed acts forbade the orphans of non-nobles, particularly female, from marrying nobles without the prior consent of their *popolani* kinsmen. This was probably an attempt to protect *popolani* legacies from magnates wishing to recoup damaged fortunes or to add to

<sup>152</sup> See CG, N. 144, fols. 39r-v (5 May 1349) — relief for two *gabelle* and one rental, fols. 40v-41r (6 May) — six grants, fols. 41r-v (8 May) — five grants, 42r-v (11 May) — relief for eleven *gabelle* and rentals, 43r (15 May) — seven grants. Cf. above, nn. 22, 137, 139, 140.

<sup>153</sup> CG, N. 145, fols. 33r-v. The petition ended with a plea to the IX: "si dicte indutie non fierent cogere[m] Civitatem Senarum deserere et ad alia mundi partes peregre transmeare. Dominus noster ihesus christus in statum prosperum et tranquillum diutius vos conservet." (fol. 33r).

<sup>154</sup> CG, N. 143, fol. 10r (5 Sept. 1348) — relief to *gabella* purchasers, fols. 16r-v (19 Sept.) — relief to renters. Cf. N. 145, fols. 23r-v (25 Sept. 1349), establishing a penalty of £500 for those whose petitions did not contain mention of all previous relief they had received.

<sup>155</sup> CG, N. 145, fols. 41v-43r (2 Dec. 1349). This measure is not included in A. Lisini, "Le Leggi prammatiche durante il Governo dei Nove (1287-1355)," *BSSP*, N.S., 1 (1930), 42-70.

<sup>156</sup> See, e.g., CG, N. 147, fol. 37r (20 Dec. 1350); N. 148, fol. 18v (5 April 1351); N. 149, fols. 18r-v (29 Aug. 1351); and above, n. 107. Siena was not alone in enacting such legislation after the plague (cf. E. Carpentier, *Une ville*, pp. 146 and 190).

<sup>157</sup> CG, N. 146, fol. 32r: "quod nullus filius vel filia alicuius popularis Sen. existens in pupillari estate contrahat sponsalitates cum magnate sine consensu duorum proximorum ex latere patris et unius matris" (approved 184 vs. 166); "quod nullus nobilis vel magnas possit contrahere matrimonium cum aliqua popolare non habente patrem que foret minor .xx. annis sine consensu duorum ex latere patris et unius ex latere matris" (approved 186 vs. 164).

existing riches. The closeness of the votes indicates clearly that not everyone accepted the new economic and social fluidity as a blessing.

Many *Noveschi* and great nobles were plague victims or bankrupted.<sup>158</sup> A notarial act of 7 January 1351, for example, shows three creditors of the bankrupt Francesco di Guiduccio Ruffaldi selling some of his landed properties at Ampugnano for 1,085 gold florins as the result of a compromise arranged by the Consuls of the Merchant Guild.<sup>159</sup>

But all wealth itself did not disappear. Some men enriched themselves with little heed to legal niceties. Others legitimately inherited sizeable fortunes. And *Noveschi* and magnates continued to lead Siena, and to lend to it, as before.<sup>160</sup> Biccherna records do not bear out Agnolo di Tura's contention of 1349 that "all money had fallen into the hands of new people (*gente nuova*)."<sup>161</sup>

By the fall of that year, however, enough *nouveaux riches* had come into existence, or gained sufficient strength, to cause the conservative City Council to enact a revolutionary measure: it ended forever the strict monopoly held by Sienese bankers — the core of *Noveschi* strength — over the right to act as sureties for *gabella* purchasers. Henceforth non-bankers too could participate in this lucrative business, provided that the leading Sienese magistracies approved of their suitability by a two-thirds vote.<sup>162</sup> Nor were all so unlucky as a dyer and a shoemaker who soon languished in prison for backing an insolvent purchaser!<sup>163</sup>

The attack on bankers' privileges was pushed further. By 1355 they were forbidden to hold two key financial offices to which laymen had gained access in 1348 because of a shortage of monks.<sup>164</sup> Like the law protecting *popolani* orphans, this measure originated in the Council of the Military Companies, where lesser gildsmen held greater power than they commanded in the higher echelons of government.

Among those who gained most in social and economic status after the Black Death were the notaries.<sup>165</sup> The few remaining notaries of both the city and *contado* profited from their scarcity.<sup>166</sup> For the first time they assiduously avoided communal offices and vicarships, devoting themselves to profitable private prac-

<sup>158</sup> Cf. CG, N. 148, fols. 34r-v (24 June 1351).

<sup>159</sup> Atti Notarili, N. 54, fols. 34r-35v. For Francesco see above, n. 107.

<sup>160</sup> See, e.g., above, nn. 107, 128, 143, 149, 151.

<sup>161</sup> *Cron. senesi*, p. 560.

<sup>162</sup> CG, N. 145, fols. 17v-18r (11 Sept. 1349). The apostil reads: "Kabelle Communis Senarum posunt satisfieri per non bancherios."

<sup>163</sup> CG, N. 146, fols. 50v-51v (25 June 1350).

<sup>164</sup> CG, N. 155, fol. 8v (16 Jan. 1355): "Nullus bancherius potest esse Canerarius biccherne vel kabelle" [apostil]. For the opening of these offices to laymen, see above, n. 109.

<sup>165</sup> The relation of the Sienese notaries to the government during the regime of the IX is a complex problem that has not yet been systematically studied, and I plan to treat it *in extenso* separately. Cf. Bowsky, "The *Buon Governo* of Siena," pp. 370, 374-375.

<sup>166</sup> For the shortage of notaries, see, e.g., above, nn. 110, 111. CG, N. 150, fols. 21r-v (21 March 1352), "contra notarios" [apostil] is legislation caused by the complaint that since the plague notaries had disdained city offices because they did not need the money or did not wish to fatigue themselves. Notaries refusing such assignments without justifiable excuses were henceforth subject to a £20 fine for each refusal.

tice and to service in the entourages of those called to high office as *Podestà*, Captain of the People, or War Captain. Notaries ignored both old and new ordinances regulating their fees. They even went so far as to draw up documents that were contrary to the wishes of the contracting parties, and to mock those who employed their services.<sup>167</sup> In October 1352 the commune was forced to abandon its traditional policy of prohibiting clerics from practicing as notaries, even in those cases where the Guild of Judges and Notaries wished to continue the prohibition. This measure was enacted for the explicitly stated reason that notaries were in too short supply.<sup>168</sup> As late as June 1354 the City Council empowered the IX to draft notaries for service in *contado* offices.<sup>169</sup>

Plague survivors with special skills or in very short supply not unnaturally tried to improve their lot by demanding higher wages and prices, beyond what was justified by the increased cost of alimentary products. Stonemasons and others in the building industry were particularly scarce.<sup>170</sup> Like other communes such as Orvieto and Pisa,<sup>171</sup> Siena enacted wage and price regulations. Detailed Siennese ordinances have not survived, but there is proof that on 1 October 1348 the Consuls of the Merchant Guild received authority from the City Council to set both rates and the fines for contravention. The alleged reason for this measure was that artisans and workers were demanding far more than the customary amounts for their wares and labors.<sup>172</sup> Of greater interest, though, is the fact that Siena apparently enacted only three such regulatory measures — two immediately after the plague and a third in March 1350.<sup>173</sup> Even these were not renewed.

<sup>167</sup> See, e.g., a petition accepted by the City Council 9 Dec. 1351 complaining at length against the excesses of notaries. This document is on fols. 91r–92v of a volume of Statutes of the University of Judges and Notaries acquired in 1961 by the Archivio di Stato of Siena from the Archivio Notarile and not yet cataloged. [L. Zdekauer published the first portion of this petition in *BSSP*, 1 (1894), 287–288, *q. v.*] Cf. the following (unpublished) passage: “multi notari e cherici e laici in Siena e nel contado fanno larte della notaria e quali non sonno sottoposti ne esaminati alluniversita de giudici e de notari ne ne la matricola . . . e fanno le carte spesse volte per non sapere piu o per altra cagione chesia la quale si tace, che non anno alcuno effetto e se llanno tallora non quello che le parte credono, di che tutti e notari ne sonno infamati e per none stare bene le carte e per troppo grandi pagamenti che tolgono” (fols. 91v–92r). See also CG, N. 147, fols. 17r–18r (17 Sept. 1350): “contra notarios” [apostill]. Cf.: “E che notari checie sono rimasti doppo la mortalita sono si ingranditi e insuperbiti che non curano e non volliono rendere scripture chessi abbiamo [sic] o che adimandate li sieno, ancho menano li adimandatori per parole e de termini in termini e fannose beffe di loro dicho infiniti danni per li sopradetti serecuono.” (fol. 17r).

<sup>168</sup> CG, N. 151, fols. 22v–23r (6 Oct. 1352). For the prohibition against clerics serving as notaries, see, e.g., Statutes of the University of Judges and Notaries, dist. I, r. lv (fol. 31v).

<sup>169</sup> CG, N. 154, fols. 32v–33r (4 June 1354).

<sup>170</sup> Cf. above, nn. 113, 114, 115, Table. See CG, N. 143, fol. 17v (19 Sept. 1348) — allegations in two separate petitions for citizenship that because of the plague no masters in stone or wood could be found to construct new houses. See also Agnolo di Tura (*Cron. senesi*, p. 557).

<sup>171</sup> For Orvieto and Pisa, see M. Kovalevsky, “Die wirtschaftlichen Folgen des schwarzen Todes in Italien,” pp. 418–420. According to Kovalevsky (p. 416), Florence and Perugia enacted no such legislation because there artisans enjoyed a significant share in government. See also n. 114 above.

<sup>172</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 23r–v: “ponatur frenum per consules artificibus et mercenariis” [apostill]. This measure passed 102 vs. 18, with at least 10 abstentions.

<sup>173</sup> CG, N. 143, fols. 23r–v (1 Oct. 1348), 33r–v (7 Nov.); N. 146, fols. 23r–v (13 March 1350) — a measure referring specifically to the absence of restrictive legislation, especially since 1 Jan. 1350.



If unlike many other European communes and states Siena did not rely heavily upon such controls to restore normalcy, another avenue was open: encouragement of immigration to the city. Possibly on 13 October 1348 the government extended Sienese citizenship to those foreigners who came to Siena with their families and remained for five years. But this is only hinted at in an apostil and in a brief phrase recording a City Council vote — although this is the sole evidence upon which Kovalevsky bases his argument that after the Black Death Siena adopted a liberal citizenship policy, similar to that of Venice.<sup>174</sup> These phrases are not open to so broad an interpretation as that which Kovalevsky gives them. His assumption that the measure applied to those settling in the *contado* as well as in the city is gratuitous, although the inclusion of such persons in similar legislation enacted 18 October 1348 by Orvieto should not pass unnoticed.

If the Sienese government wished to attract new inhabitants to the city this allegedly was not to be at the expense of the *contado* communities, as we have seen from the legislation of 1351 restricting the ease with which wealthy *contadini* could obtain citizenship.<sup>175</sup> Yet the law itself was probably occasioned by *contado* complaints against just such an exodus.

What of actual figures? In point of fact the number of new citizenships granted from September 1348 to April 1355 soared 22.5% over the total number granted during the eighteen years from 1330 to 1348. Enjoyable though it is to deal in percentages, the numbers at stake are a modest eighty and ninety-eight citizenships.<sup>176</sup> After the plague, as before, over half of the new citizens came from the *contado* and most of the remainder from neighboring Tuscan states. Prominent among those whose occupations are known were notaries, merchants, and wool manufacturers.

Any major influx of population after the Black Death came not at this citizen level but from the lower economic and social strata, the strata hardest to trace in

<sup>174</sup> M. Kovalevsky, *Die ökonomische Entwicklung Europas*, v, 295, 301; *idem*, “Die wirtschaftlichen Folgen des schwarzen Todes in Italien,” p. 421. The following is the sole extant evidence (CG, N. 143, fol. 25v): “Ordinamenta franchisie venientium ad laborandum, et quod conferentes cum comuni habitant in civitate, et forenses habitantes quinquennio cum familiis suis sint cives manu Ser Sozi Francisci”; and (fol. 26r) the votes on these ordinances, i.e., “ordinamento franchisie concedende venientibus ad laborandum et cetera”; “quod Cives Civitatis Senarum et Nobiles teneantur in Civitate habere domum,” and “quod forenses venientes et stantes per tempus V. annorum et cetera.” The first measure does not indicate the nature of the privileges to be granted, the types of persons to receive them, nor the limitations and terms of the grant. The second measure is merely a repetition of traditional legislation regulating *contado* nobles and so-called *cittadini silvestri* for well over half a century for tax purposes. See, e.g., CG, N. 137, fols. 50r–v (9 Dec. 1345). In all three instances we do not know what time limits applied, if any. (For the inclusion of time limits in citizenship legislation, see above, n. 39.) In Orvieto the act of 18 October 1348 granting citizenship to foreigners coming to live in the city during the next ten years (including tax exemption for that period) specifically included foreigners coming to settle in the *contado* (E. Carpentier, *Une ville*, pp. 148, 237).

<sup>175</sup> See above, p. 25.

<sup>176</sup> These figures result from a count of the grants of citizenship 1 Jan. 1330–April 1348, in CG, N. 109–N. 155, fol. 16r, and from a study of payments by new citizens recorded in Biccherna volumes of income and expenditure (cf. above, n. 38), and of the entries in Biccherna, N. 1058 (cf. above, nn. 36, 37). Because of the few lacunae in the CG and Biccherna series there is a margin of error. It is worth noting, however, that while Orvieto granted but a single citizenship in 1349–1350 (E. Carpentier, *Une ville*, p. 191), Siena conferred thirty-one in the same two years.

extant documents. Substantial indirect evidence points to just such an influx, and to a considerable repopulation of the city perhaps as early as 1351 — recalling Kovalevsky's findings for Venice.<sup>177</sup> Such a population increase might explain in part the rapid restoration of Sieneſe finances. Similarly, the farm labor legislation of May 1349 was conducive to driving agricultural labor off the farms, and, to some extent, towards Siena itself. The legislation of May 1351 assisting *contado* communities to control the exodus of wealthy *contadini* wishing to acquire Sieneſe citizenship would not have been necessary had there been no such phenomenon. Noteworthy too is Siena's rapid abandonment of wage and price regulations for city artisans and workers, particularly as other communes such as Pisa and Orvieto long continued their use.<sup>178</sup> While as late as February 1350 applicants for Sieneſe citizenship requested exemption from the statutory requirement that they build new houses in the city or suburbs for the specific reason that many houses were empty because of the plague and "the city needs inhabitants, not houses,"<sup>179</sup> such statements appear in no later applications. Not to be overlooked are the hitherto unnoticed expenditures for several new gates and walls for the city totaling almost £3,000 during the first half of 1352.<sup>180</sup> By March 1353 the Council of the People, reduced one-third after the plague, was restored to its original size.<sup>181</sup> This, coupled with the fact that the *Noveschi*-dominated City Council remained reduced, may indicate the social and economic level of many of the new arrivals.

Returned refugees may account for some of the repopulation. Some immigrants came from the Sieneſe *contado*, still others from outside the state. But while post-plague Siena housed both *nouveaux riches* and newcomers of modest means these groups were new and unstable elements in the city's political life. And they shared in certain attitudes, if not a clearly formulated program. Neither group accepted with equanimity traditional *Noveschi* methods of government — *nou-*

<sup>177</sup> M. Kovalevsky, "Die wirtschaftlichen Folgen des schwarzen Todes in Italien," p. 422 (*re:* October 1351).

<sup>178</sup> Cf. M. Kovalevsky, "La législation ouvrière au XIII<sup>e</sup> et XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles," pp. 191–198.

<sup>179</sup> See, e.g., CG, N. 146, fol. 9r (5 Feb. 1350): "considerat. quod domus in dicta Civitate et Burgis superscriptis in maxima copia . . . propter mortalitatem preteritam et alia." *Ibid.*, fol. 12r (12 Feb.): "Et quod ex fatalitate decursa immense domus dicte Civitatis remanserunt habitantibus destitute, adeo quod opus est incolis dictam Civitatem non domibus restaurari"; fol. 13v (19 Feb.): "Nec oporteat Civitatem Senarum domibus sed incolis restaurari."

<sup>180</sup> Biccherna, N. 229 (Jan.–June 1352), fol. 82v (16 Jan.): £338/6/8 to three officials "ad faciendum transmutare et . . . tattare muros comunis" [one or two letters illegible]; fol. 89v (11 Feb.): £341/13/4 to the same "offitalibus faciendum remurare portas e muros civitatis"; fol. 96v (28 Feb.): £680/15/8; fol. 105r (26 Mar.): £695; fol. 131v (13 June): £342/10/ — to the same for expenses in the construction of "porte nuove." This construction is not noted in W. Braunfels, *Mittelalterliche Stadtbaukunst in der Toskana*.

<sup>181</sup> CG, N. 152, fol. 15r (15 March 1353): "Consilarii populi .CL." [apostil]. "Cum in consilio Sotietatum retento de presenti mense per dominum Vicarium Capitanei et defensoris Comunis et populi Civitatis Senarum fuerit reformatum quod Consilium populi ad solitum numerum .L. consiliariorum pro quolibet terzerio per inantea reducatur. Si igitur videtur et placet dicto consilio [Campane] reformare quod in posterum semper tempore electionis consiliariorum populi eligantur et eligere debeant .L. consilarii populi pro quolibet terzerio Civitatis Senarum ut in totum sit numerus Consiliariorum populi .CL. Et sic debeat perpetuo observari." This passed by the comfortable margin of 105 vs. 21 (fol. 16r).

*veaux riches* from a desire for political and social perquisites commensurate with their improved economic status; newcomers to the city because they had not grown up under the rule of the IX.

Their attitudes coincided most closely in hostility to the special privileges and advantages that the *Noveschi* assumed for themselves. Some of these had been criticized occasionally in the past. Now the attacks became so severe that the government took cognizance of the protests and yielded in part. In June 1349 the chief magistrates of the Biccherna were attacked for favoring their friends in the priority of repayments to communal creditors and for allowing speculation in the public debt.<sup>182</sup> It was less than three months later that the bankers lost their monopoly over the right to act as sureties for *gabella* purchasers.<sup>183</sup>

Pressures increased noticeably during the next three years. In the fall of 1350 the IX were ordered to stop receiving and giving gifts.<sup>184</sup> 22 April 1351 the City Council enacted legislation aimed at eliminating suspicions that the tax assessors were favoring members of the IX, the chief magistrates of the Biccherna and the Gabella, the Consuls of the Merchant Guild, and their families.<sup>185</sup> The following 8 July the IX were denied the right to elect themselves or any other incumbent leading Sienese magistrates to any public office.<sup>186</sup>

So great was the pressure that eleven days later the City Council considered a proposal to enlarge the base from which members of the IX were selected — the first such proposal to reach the council floor in fifteen years. But the IX were not prepared to admit defeat. Although this measure was sponsored by a leading *Noveschi* it failed by a vote of 82 to 45.<sup>187</sup> This reversal is all the more significant when we recall that the council approved over 99% of the measures that it considered.

The IX continued to see their position threatened. Accused of mismanagement of the public mint, in June 1351 one group of the IX was even deprived of its special immunities against ordinary criminal prosecution.<sup>188</sup> Two months be-

<sup>182</sup> CG, N. 144, fol. 49v (25 June 1349): “multi ex dicti creditoribus [comunis Senarum] pretextu amicitie et singularitatis dominorum quattour provisorum biccherne comunis Senarum sua credita consequantur et alii plurimi sua consequi nequeunt vendant iura sua et cedant actiones contra comune pro multo minori et pauciori quam recipere debeant ab eodem, que in grave dispendium dicti comunis dictorumque creditorum suorum redundant noxia ac resultant.”

<sup>183</sup> See above, p. 29.

<sup>184</sup> CG, N. 147, fol. 23r (7 Oct. 1350).

<sup>185</sup> CG, N. 148, fol. 20v. This measure was necessitated “Ad hoc ut impositio nove libre pure absque ulla suspitione procedat.” It passed 173 vs. 83 (fol. 21r). For the relationship between the IX and the Biccherna, Gabella, and Merchant Guild officials, see W. Bowsky, “The *Buon Governo* of Siena,” *passim*.

<sup>186</sup> CG, N. 149, fol. 4v: “quod nemo de dominis Novem orbiniibus et executoribus kabelle possit eligi ad illud offitium cuius electio commicteretur ipsis dominis Novem facienda.” This passed 174 to 3 (fol. 5v).

<sup>187</sup> CG, N. 149, fols. 8v–9r. The sponsor of this measure, “Johannes Ture,” was Giovanni di Tura di Geri dei Montanini. He had unsuccessfully sponsored a similar proposal in the Council of the Military Companies on 15 Nov. 1347: Concistoro, N. 2, fols. 12r–13v. For Giovanni and the Montanini, see W. Bowsky, “The *Buon Governo* of Siena,” p. 372.

<sup>188</sup> CG, N. 150, fols. 39r–v (1 June 1352). This measure passed 173 vs. 30.

fore the fall of the government Sienese bankers were explicitly excluded from two important financial offices.<sup>189</sup>

The Black Death did not directly precipitate the overthrow of the IX. But it was instrumental in creating demographic, social, and economic conditions that greatly increased opposition to the ruling oligarchy. At the next major crisis, the arrival in Siena of the Emperor Charles IV in March 1355, newcomers and new rich were important elements in the revolution that felled a government that had weathered the storms of nearly three-quarters of a century<sup>190</sup> — ending the era of Siena's greatest stability and prosperity.

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TABLE

*Comparative Salaries, 1346-1354.*

The following salaries are for six-month terms of office unless otherwise indicated, except for the military constables of cavalry whose monthly stipends for themselves and for each of their men are listed. It should be recalled that the constables did not all have the same size troops nor serve for the same lengths of time. Stipends for which rates are not given are not listed. Biccherna volumes are not extant for omitted semesters. Some minor variations in salaries are caused by fluctuations in the value of the florin.

Abbreviations: p. = *Podestà*; w. = Captain of War; m. = *maggior sindaco*; c. = constable(s).

- 1346 Jan.-June. Biccherna, N. 219. p. = £5,000 (fol. 152r); w. = £10,000 (fols. 120v, 145r); m. = £370 (fol. 152r); 3 c. at £80 + £20 per man, 6 c. at £50 + £20, 2 c. at £60 + £20 (fol. 120v).
- 1347 July-Dec. Biccherna, N. 220. p. = £5,500 (fol. 128r); w. = £10,000 (fol. 82r); 4 c. at £66 + £22, 3 c. at £55 + £22 (fol. 115v).
- 1348 Jan.-June. Biccherna, N. 223. p. = £5,500 (fol. 154v); w. = £11,500 (fol. 153r); m. = £508 (fol. 154v); 17 c. at £66 + £22 (fols. 143r, 145v, 146r, 150r).
- 1349 Jan.-June. Biccherna, N. 224. p. = £5,000 (fols. 148v, 155v, 173v); w. = £11,500 (fols. 154r, 161v, 176v); m. = £509 (fol. 185r); 5 c. at £66 + £22 (fols. 177r, 178r, 180v).
- 1350 Jan.-June. Biccherna, N. 226. p. = £5,000, w. = £9,890, m. = £586/15/- (fol. 85v); 9 c. at £66 + £22 (fols. 71v, 74r).
- 1351 Jan.-June. Biccherna, N. 227. p. = £6,000, w. = £9,890 (fol. 120v); m. = £508 (fol. 121r).
- 1351 July-Dec. Biccherna, N. 228. p. = £6,000 (fol. 135v); w. (a) 3 months = £4,845, (b) 4 months = £8,666/13/4 (fol. 135v); 13 c. at 24 fl. + 8 fl., 1 c. at 32 fl. + 8 fl., 2 c. at 30 fl. + 10 fl. (fols. 92r-93v, 95r, 98r-99r).
- 1352 Jan.-June. Biccherna, N. 229 [final folios are missing]. w. = £13,000 (fol. 90r).
- 1352 July-Dec. Biccherna, N. 230. p. = £7,000, m. = £535 (fol. 137v); 1 c. at 24 fl. + 8 fl., 2 c. at 50 fl. + 10 fl. (fols. 84v, 108r). [Rates for most constables are not given. Due to certain difficulties there was no w. during this period; see fols. 98r, 109r, 130v.]
- 1354 Jan.-June. Biccherna, N. 231. p. = £8,000, w. = 6,000 fl. (fol. 202v); m. = £750 (fol. 203r); 11 c. at 24 fl. + 8 fl. (fols. 127r, 128v, 130r-v).
- 1354 July-Dec. Biccherna, N. 232. p. = £8,000, w. = £21,250, m. £750 (fol. 135r); 12 c. at 24 fl. + 8 fl. (fols. 98v-99v).

<sup>189</sup> See above, p. 29.

<sup>190</sup> The fall of the IX has still to be the object of a modern historical investigation. For now, see, *Cron. senesi*, pp. 149-150 (anon.), 577-578 (Donato di Neri); Malavolti, II, fols. 111v-112v; Tommasi, II, 336-340; A. Luchaire, *Documenti per la storia dei rivolgimenti politici del comune di Siena dal 1354 al 1369* (Lyon, 1906), pp. xxix-xxxii; P. Rossi, "Carlo IV di Lussemburgo e la Repubblica di Siena (1355-1369)," *BSSP, N.S.*, I (1930), 13-18.