
NOTES

*Woad from Città di Castello 1476-1484**

Egmont Lee
University of Calgary

As we learn more of provincial life in central Italy during the fifteenth century, it is becoming increasingly apparent that isolation — in almost any imaginable sense — was hardly a significant aspect of the experience of small communities. Hamlets and villages, especially in mountainous regions, may perhaps have been cut off from the mainstream of events, but for even moderately-sized urban communities, settlements of between 2,000 and 10,000 inhabitants, this is no longer true. A frequent, and sometimes intense, movement of men and goods bridged distances and tied the fate of small communities to that of large centers, which in turn were intimately affected by the large-scale movements of European events. One need only place oneself into a strategic position in the traffic pattern traversing the hill region of central Italy, such as Arezzo, to be convinced of the intensity of traffic in all directions, linking centres east and west, north and south, into an interdependent whole.

For the latter part of the fifteenth century, the records of the Arctine *dogana*

* Research for this paper was undertaken with the generous support of what is now the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and the University of Calgary Research Grants Committee, which is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are due to Professor Domenico Sella of the University of Wisconsin and to D. P. McGinnis of the University of Calgary for reading drafts of the paper and suggesting improvements. I am also grateful to Dr. Maria Vittoria d'Addario Palli, the Director, and to the staff of the Archivio di Stato of Arezzo, for making research in their archive both rewarding and pleasant, and for providing microfilm, and especially to Prof. Giombini and to Mr. and Mrs. Michele Petruzzi of the Archivio Comunale of Città di Castello, who not only allowed me to explore their archive's wealth, but who with great personal commitment and *gentilezza* made us feel at home in their city.

afford us a particularly rich series of documents reflecting the movement of men and goods from the Val di Chiana to Florence, from Siena across the low mountain passes into the upper Tiber valley, and beyond into the Marche and Romagna.¹ Punctuated by the large seasonal movements of animals in transhumance between the Sienese Maremma and the higher pastures of the hill and mountain regions to the east, one can observe the regular traffic of goods, from paper of Fabriano to wool of Arezzo, lead of Lucca, or wax of Romagna, partly subjected to seasonal fluctuations and occasionally interspersed with fine, sometimes elaborate, goods issuing from the metropolitan hubs of commerce.²

Industrial raw materials formed a particularly important component in this steady and varied stream of goods. The textile industries of the large Italian centers of manufacture, above all Florence and Siena, were, of course, supported by products and materials deriving from almost all of Europe. But for one important commodity, vegetable dyestuffs, they largely relied upon the provinces of central and northern Italy.³ Woad was among the most important of these. Required in large quantities for the dyeing of wool and cloth, and regionally procured, woad also played an important role in the economic, and the political life of the producing areas. It is thus one of the commodities which tied provinces to industrial and metropolitan centers, and which served to dispel the potential for regional isolation.

Dyeing was an important phase of the textile industry throughout Europe, but especially in those Italian centers which concentrated on the production of highly-finished — and expensive — materials. In the Florentine *arte della*

¹ To a great degree, Arezzo owed its prominence to its location at the foot of the Scopetone, the lowest and gentlest pass leading from this region of Tuscany into the upper Tiber valley, with roads to Borgo San Sepolcro and Città di Castello, which continue, respectively, to San Giovanni in Vado, Urbino, and Pesaro, and toward Fossombrone and Fano. In the direction of Florence, the Chiana and the Arno provide easy communication by water, as well as a land route following the same river valleys. Siena was reached by a road which traversed the hill-country east of the Val di Chiana, passing through Ciggiano. See ALDO SESTINI, *Studi geografici sulle città minori della Toscana*, I, Florence, 1938, and cf. Archivio di Stato, Arezzo (henceforth = ASAr), Dogana - Statuti, tom. 4, f. 76. For the *dogana* of Arezzo, see the same volume (the *libro rosso*), as well as vol. 1 of that series (nicknamed the *Moisé*), which outline the major regulations in force from, respectively, 1387 to 1522 and 1352 to 1403. The detailed data for the following pages are derived from the series Saldi del Camerlengo (cited as SC), tomm. 58-80, for the years 1472-1484.

² Such as finished textiles from Florence, Siena, and Prato (*passim*), books from Venice (SC 74, f. 10v), or wood inlay work from Florence (SC 77, f. 21v), etc.

³ See FRANCO BORLANDI, "Note per la storia della produzione e del commercio di una materia prima: Il guado nel Medio Evo", *Studi in onore di Gino Luzzatto*, I, Milan, 1949, 298; PHILIP JONES, "Italy: The rural economy", *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, I, Cambridge, 1966, 386; ROBERT-HENRI BAUTIER, *The Economic Development of Medieval Europe*, trans H. Karoly, London, 1971, p. 198.

lana, dyers, organized into three guilds, played an important part in transforming cloth into a marketable luxury commodity. Among the three groups of dyers, the *tintori a guado* formed the upper and most specialized elite. Heavily subjected to controls and regulations of the *arte*, they occupied themselves exclusively with producing the shades of green and near-black which could be derived from woad, and which included a wide enough range of hues to be comparatively immune to the fluctuations of taste and fashion on the national and international market.⁴ Clearly, the *arte della lana* was more concerned with controlling the dyers in woad than the other two groups of dyers, the *tintori d'arte maggiore* and the *tintori d'arte minore*. Most aspects of dyeing in woad were of concern to the guild, from the season of dyeing, to the proper use of material, and particularly the procurement of first-rate woad. Prices and wages were subject to regulation, and during the fifteenth century the *arte* also maintained its own dyeshops.⁵ Woad, partly acquired by the *arte*, and partly by private entrepreneurs, was in the fifteenth century stored in the guild's *fondaco*, established in the early fourteenth century, and, beginning in 1338, subject to a firm set of regulations, which from time to time were updated.⁶

From the fourteenth century on, the region of the upper Tiber valley, especially the areas surrounding Borgo San Sepolcro and Città di Castello, appear as places of origin for a particularly high quality of woad, exported to the Tuscan centers of textile manufacturing.⁷ This may be reflected in the unusually high proportion of men from this region among the Florentine woad dyers recorded in the *matricola* of the year 1382, in sharp contrast to the guild's

⁴ For the early Florentine dyeing trades, see ALFRED DOREN, *Studien aus der Florentiner Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, I, Stuttgart, 1901, 77-81; R. DAVIDSOHN, *Geschichte von Florenz*, IV, pt. 2, Berlin, 1925, 62-65. For near-contemporary details on dyeing, see also such tracts as GIOVANVENTURA ROSETTI, *Pliatho de larte de tentori*, Venice, 1540, and frequently reprinted, most recently in facsimile of the 1548 ed. and with an English trans., Cambridge, Mass., 1969. Cf. also such general studies as Ch. SINGER, *History of Technology*, II, Oxford, 1956, 365, for dyeing in woad. For shifts in fashions in the late quattrocento, see JACQUES HEERS, "La mode et les marchés des draps de laine: Gênes et la montagne à la fin du moyen-âge", *Annales E.S.C.*, XXVI (1971), 1093-1117, repr. in *Produzione, commercio e consumo dei panni di lana (nei secoli XII-XVIII)*, ed. M. Spallanzani, Florence, 1976, pp. 199-220. For the early quattrocento shift in preferences from reds to blues, i.e., from madder to woad as colouring substances, see Borlandi, pp. 309-310.

⁵ Doren, I, 286-313, 364-377; for tariffs, see pp. 506-515.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 364-365, cf. pp. 528-529. A copy of the regulations is in Archivio di Stato, Florence, Arte della Lana (henceforth cited as ASF, AdL), tom. 14, which, f. 7v, includes the "reformatio" of April 15, 1474, and its later re-affirmation, which are also recorded among the "Promixiones, reformationes et ordinaamenta" of the *arte's* consuls, ASF, AdL 54, ff. 55r, 56v-57r.

⁷ BORLANDI, p. 303. F. MELIS, *Aspetti della vita economica medievale*, I, Siena, 1962, 475, illustrates the use of woad from the upper Tiber valley at Prato in 1399.

later membership, which consisted almost universally of Florentine citizens.⁸ More important, the *arte della lana* maintained in the late fourteenth century large stocks of woad in Città di Castello. We know of the storage there of 500,000 pounds of partially processed woad in the year 1377.⁹ Such deposits outside Florence seem to have shrunk, and eventually disappeared, as the lines of transport from what eventually became more securely a part of the Papal State grew increasingly tenuous. Simultaneously, the cultivation of woad in the *contado* of Arezzo seems to have expanded. Well before the middle of the fifteenth century, Arezzo appears to have acquired the lion's share of supplying Florence with woad, and during the period from 1472 to 1484, for which the records of the Aretine *dogana* have been analyzed, all shipments of woad reaching Florence from the south seem to have originated in the *contado* of Arezzo.¹⁰

But while the Florentine market for woad from San Sepolcro and Città di Castello seems to have disappeared, production in the upper Tiber valley continued. The growing requirements of the Sienese textile industry seem to have, at least in part, compensated for the loss of the Florentine market. At any rate, during the second half of the fifteenth century, woad from the areas surrounding Città di Castello and Borgo San Sepolcro was marketed, along with material originating in the Marche and Romagna, along lines of transport which traversed southern Tuscany from east to west.

Arezzo was the point at which this traffic, as well as the goods shipped to Florence from the Val di Chiana and the Aretine *contado*, were taxed under a system controlled by the officials of the Florentine *monte*. The records of the *dogana* of Arezzo have survived, for the period 1472 to 1484, in an unbroken series, including the detailed accounts of the *gabella portarum*, which collected imposts placed upon the transit of goods and livestock through Tuscan territories, along with import and export duties, and an array of local taxes, such as a sales tax on cattle, horses, mules, and donkeys, or an annual tax on mills of various types, etc. The rates of duty on goods in transit were set down in the *Libro rosso*, first compiled in 1387 and periodically updated. Like most commodities, woad was taxed by the mule-load (*soma*) or donkey-load (*somella*) in both ground form (*guado macero*) and shaped into loaves (*guado in pani*), but it is the only material for which there was also a rate by the cart or sledge-load (*carrata*, *treg-*

⁸ ASF, AdL 27, ff. 1r-5v. Among the 82 members recorded in 1382, nine were from Borgo San Sepolcro, and six from Città di Castello. Of sixty-eight names inscribed in the register between 1397 and 1490, only two indicate Aretines, and one member came from Urbino. No non-Florentines appear after 1456.

⁹ DOREN, I, 538, from ASF, AdL 57, f. 61.

¹⁰ ASAr, SC 58-80. The only exception was a shipment of 1,271 *libbre* of woad which passed Arezzo on April 18, 1483, directed from S. Lorenzo (presumably near Anghiari) to Florence: *ibid.*, tom 77, f. 19r.

giata), suggesting that transport, perhaps to Florence, followed easy roads.¹¹

The day-to-day accounts of duties actually collected treat woad, as they do other commodities, with considerable attention to detail. Its type, *guado macero* throughout, is specified, as are the name of the merchant (occasionally the mule driver) clearing the shipment, its place of origin and destination, and, of course, its quantity and the amount of tax imposed. Typically, though not without exception, shipments to Florence, which with only one exception originated in the *contado* of Arezzo, are described in Florentine *libbre* (equalling .346 kg). Woad shipped to Siena from several places of origin was normally measured in *soma* and *somelle*; in the tabulated summary of trade between 1472 and 1483 these have been translated into *libbre* at the rate of 450 *libbre* per *soma* and 280 per *somella*. The table summarizes the amount of woad taxed in Arezzo according to destination as well as origin, in annual, as well as in quarterly intervals. The latter amounts, reflecting not only volume of trade but seasonal variations, are also translated into graphic representation. Although of necessity incomplete, the resulting picture illustrates several aspects of the regional economic relationships at the turn from the third quarter of the fifteenth century to the fourth.

Apart from the very marked fluctuations in volume of woad passing Arezzo, the first and most conspicuous feature of this picture is that the wool industry in Siena as in Florence continued to require large quantities of woad. In fact, Siena consumed approximately as much woad as Florence, at least as regards material produced in southern Tuscany and northern Umbria, each city importing slightly less than 350,000 Florentine *libbre* between 1472 and 1484.¹² But quantity of supply was not the only concern of the wool industry. The statutes and regulations of the Florentine *fondaco* for woad are emphatic in their concern for maintaining high standards of quality. They consistently prohibited the mixing of different lots of woad, presumably in the interest of retaining the

¹¹ ASAr, Dogana-Statuti, tom. 4, f. 8v:

Ghuado macero chesichonduce difuori del contado darezzo paghi all entrare della soma a mulo di tre ballette	sol. 18
... soma d'asino	12
e per l'uscita la soma a mulo	18
et la soma dell'asino paghi	12
e per passo ... soma a mulo ...	18
et la soma dell'asino ...	12
Ghuado in pani ...	
...	
et se detto ghuado si chonducesse in charro o in treggiata paghi	sol. 18
et della treggiata paghi	sol. 12
et per l'uscita paghi la charrata	lb. 1 sol. 16
et della treggiata paghi	lb. 1 sol. 4

¹² Florence imported 344,647 *libbre* and Siena 347,518.

purity of each shipment. Merchants depositing their purchases in the *fondaco* were, beginning in 1474, under obligation to identify them unambiguously, and were strictly prohibited from mixing parts of different lots. Only the *arte* itself occasionally carried out and distributed *mescoli*, designed, it seems, to make large batches of woad, consistent in quality, available to the dyers whom it supplied.¹³

The growers and merchants of woad in Città di Castello were keenly aware of this concern with quality. It seems that, in their view, retaining a share in what by the late fifteenth century was a competitive market was directly tied to maintaining a reputation for quality. The statutory legislation of Città di Castello repeatedly addresses itself to the problem of maintaining purity in the initial processing of woad.

Woad is a herbaceous annual plant, native to many parts of Europe, whose leaves are used as the principal source of blue textile dye, although the roots also yield an inferior source of dyestuff. In order to use the plant industrially, the leaves are gathered, normally in fall (in Umbria, from September through mid-October), crushed into a pulp, which is then molded into balls or loaves, dried, and packed. It was the significant differences in quality between leaves picked early in the season and the last *collectae* which particularly concerned the producers of Città di Castello. In a revision to the statutes, passed on November 18, 1463, by a committee composed of the Priors and a specially constituted task force, the mixing of leaves gathered prior to mid-September with those gathered in early October, and especially with a lot gathered in late October was prohibited, and contraventions threatened with fines. The same concern is repeated, more emphatically and with greater precision, in the legislation passed in September, 1470.¹⁴ Attention focussed especially on the *sozaria*, the last collection of leaves in late October, when growers must have had a natural tendency to eradicate the plant, and, since the plant was no longer of much use, to throw stems and roots accompanied by dirt into the pulp from which the *impanatio* was made. It was here that quality could suffer most dramatically, and that the reputation of woad from Città di Castello was most acutely threatened. This explains the emphasis on these final phases in production, and also the concern with prohibiting the late processing of woad. After 1470, the bars (*stranghe*) which made woad mills functional were ordered removed on All Saints day, and could not be replaced until the following season. Woad wheels closely resemble oil mills, consisting of a heavy grinding wheel which turns on a horizontal axle, the *stanga*, perhaps some three metres in length,

¹³ See, e.g., ASF, AdL 54, ff. 56v-57r (August 9, 1474), and cf. DOREN, I, 539 (no. 61d).

¹⁴ See Città di Castello, Archivio Comunale (henceforth cited as CC, AC), Annali, tom. 46, ff. 148, 149r for 1463, cf. also f. 110v. The revisions of September 27 and 28, 1470, are in CC, AC, Annali, tom. 49, ff. 151r-152v; an excerpt is printed below in the Appendix.

and which in turn is fastened to a central pivot. Pulled in a circular track around the pivot, the wheel crushes the leaves placed beneath it.

There are good reasons why the quality of woad had to be preserved on a high level. It is evident from the records of the Aretine *gabella passus* that the amount of woad traded along the east-west axis from Città di Castello and Borgo San Sepolcro fluctuated sharply. Partly, this is in response to external factors. If trade languished in the period between 1478 and 1480 the reason was clearly the intense warfare subsequent to the Pazzi Conspiracy, which saw southern Tuscany invaded by Neapolitan and Papal troops. As will appear below, local conditions in Città di Castello may have contributed to the marked peaks and valleys in the shipments of woad through Arezzo. But the sharp revival late in 1480, and in 1481, was followed by a renewed slump, and, after 1483, by a period of more than a year in which no traffic in woad is reported from Arezzo. This pattern, moreover, holds not only for woad traded across the borders of the Papal State, from the upper Tiber valley or points even farther east to Siena, but also for the supply of woad which reached Florence from Arezzo. Perhaps the War of Ferrara and the subsequent conflict between the papacy and Venice hampered transport. But it also seems that more is at issue than can be explained on the basis of local or regional events.

Above all, the erratic pattern of shipments bespeaks the fact that the wool industry neither in Florence nor in Siena was exclusively dependent on supplies from the south. Woad was, in fact, available in abundance from other regions, especially from Lombardy, where in the course of the fourteenth century cultivation of the plant had mushroomed. In the first half of the fifteenth century, a large region between the Apennines and the Po, between Casteggio, due south of Pavia, and the *hinterland* of Savona, produced woad which not only supplied the regional centers of textile manufacture (including Milan and Genoa) but was exported in large quantities.¹⁵ Sometime between the third and the fourth quarter of the fifteenth century, the foreign markets for Lombard woad contracted significantly. For reasons we do not know completely, but which probably involved such developments as the end of the Hundred Years War, along with an increase in the price of woad exported from Italy, northern centers of production increasingly came to serve northern demands. In the face of growing competition from such areas as Picardy, Normandy, and the Garonne, merchants from Genoa and Savona found it increasingly difficult to sell Lombard woad on the markets of England, the Low Countries, and Spain.¹⁶ Producers and merchants jointly countered this development, not only by introducing quality controls and reducing local imposts, but by developing new export markets, including Tuscany, thus reversing the direction of

¹⁵ BORLANDI, pp. 302-305; cf. JONES, *Cambridge Economic History*, I, 386.

¹⁶ BORLANDI, pp. 314-317. See also BAUTIER, p. 198, and ROGER GRAND and RAYMOND DELATOCHE, *L'Agriculture au moyen âge*, Paris, 1950, pp. 368-372.

trade which had prevailed in the fourteenth century, when Lombardy imported Tuscan dyestuffs.¹⁷ In the face of such alternate sources of supply, the producers and vendors of woad in southern Tuscany and the upper Tiber valley could not count on a consistent market and had to be prepared to compensate for sluggish demand.

Part of the mechanism of compensation was simple and direct. Unlike madder, which requires from between eighteen to thirty months after seeding to yield a crop,¹⁸ woad is an annual plant and was often cultivated between seedings of grain. Production could therefore be halted, and that this was the case seems apparent in the marked fluctuations in the number of woad-wheels in the *contado* of Arezzo. Resembling olive presses, these wheels turned the harvested leaves into a pulp, the *guado macero*, which was traded. Their number fell from sixteen in 1475, to twelve in 1476, and eight in both 1477 and '78. By 1482 the number had dropped to four and further declined to two in 1483 before rising again to eight in 1484.¹⁹ This marked decline in the number of mills in operation confirms that there was indeed a temporary lull in production, as the evidence of the Aretine *gabella* records suggests. Probably this reflects a deliberate adjustment on the part of producers either to a decline in demand, or to increasingly keen competition from other suppliers.

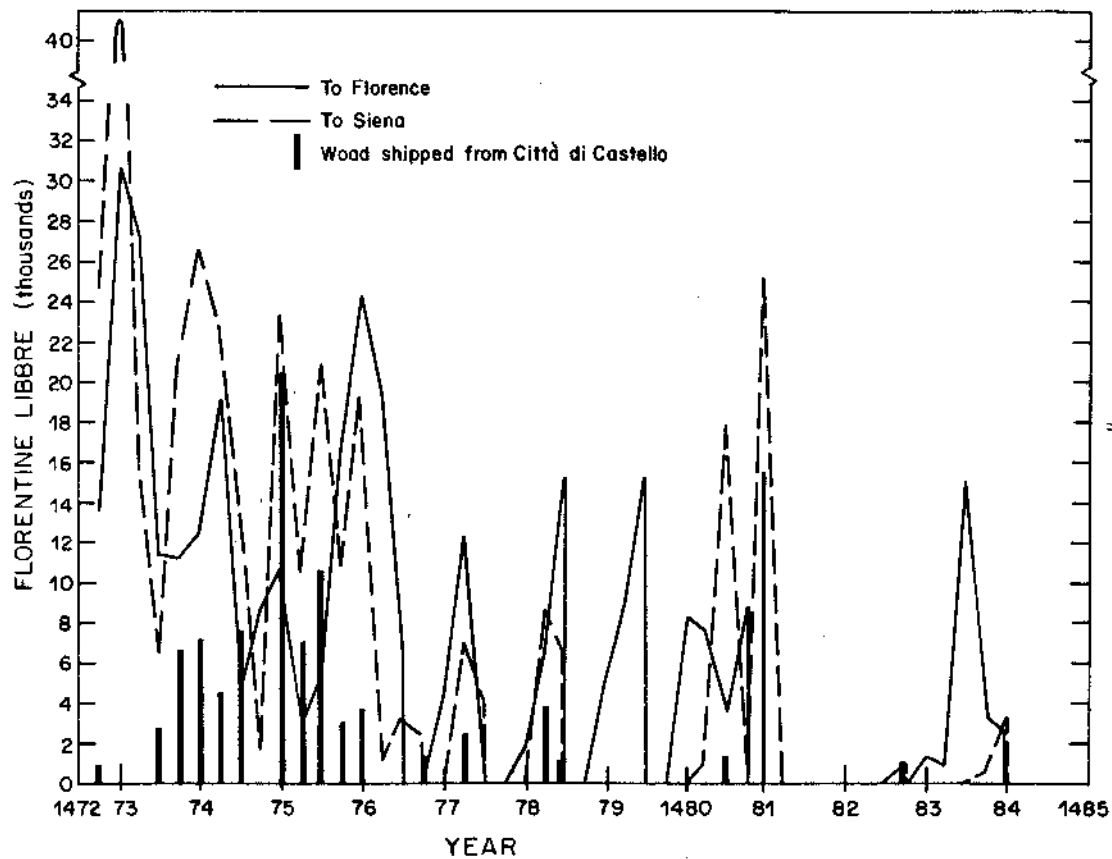
But the attractions of the woad trade must have been considerable, and too inviting to succumb for long to adverse market conditions. Furthermore, both in Arezzo and Città di Castello, the merchants engaged in the woad trade belonged to the economic and political elite of the community. In Arezzo, Bernardo di Mariotto del Camurrino also appears as one of the sixteen citizens entrusted with the reform of the city's statutes.²⁰ In Città di Castello, the *com-*

¹⁷ BORLANDI, pp. 315-317; cf. pp. 302, 304. For quality controls, see the documents published by BORLANDI, pp. 323-324, which in contrast to Città di Castello stipulate a maximum of four *raccolte*, none later than the first days of September.

¹⁸ See, e.g., the "Capitula Robbie" established in Città di Castello on April 7, 1462, in CC, AC, Annali, tom. 46, ff. 110v-111r, and cf. the later addition *ibid.*, tom. 49, ff. 151v, 152v.

¹⁹ For an illustration of a woad-wheel, see SINGER, p. 349. Such wheels were taxed in Arezzo, along with similar installations, especially water mills and oil presses. The number of wheels in operation each year can be derived from ASAr, SC 63, ff. 5, 6, 7v, 8, 9r, 10r, 11r (1475); SC 65, ff. 4v, 5v, 6, 7 (1476); SC 67, ff. 5, 6r, 7r, 8v, 10r (1477); SC 69, ff. 5r, 6r, 8r, 9v, 10r (1478); SC 75, ff. 6r, 9 (1482); SC 77, f. 8 (1483); SC 79, ff. 8r, 9v, 10, 11v, 12r (1484).

²⁰ ASAr, Statuti e Riforme del Comune di Arezzo, tom. 10, f. 1v. His activity as a merchant was extensive. In only one year, from July, 1472, through June, 1473, he sent 22 shipments of woad to Florence, as well as at least one shipment of madder. See ASAr, SC 58, ff. 2v, 3v, 5v, 6r, 6v, 8r, 15r, 15v, 17v, 18r, 18v, 19r; SC 59, ff. 2r, 2v, 3v, 4r. His last recorded activity occurs on August 9, 1480; almost three years later, beginning on April 18, 1483, a Mariottus Nicolai de Camurrinis, perhaps a nephew,



Shipments of Wood taxed in Arezzo, 1472-1484, in Florentine libbre (thousands).

Wood from Città di Castello 1476-1484

pratori de guati were listed along with cloth merchants and money changers as the most privileged merchants in the 1462 revision of the local *statutum mercantie*.²¹ The only merchant in woad known from the notarial acts of Città di Castello, Ser Girolamo di Ser Lorenzo de Lambardis, who in 1473 was engaged in a *societas guati* with the Sieneese merchant Gaspar de Piccolomini, was a prominent member of the governing committees of Città di Castello, on which he served twenty times between 1468 and 1475. He was a Prior twice, in July and August, 1470 and 1475, and in 1474 was sent as one of the city's ambassadors to pope Sixtus IV.²² In 1470, the chief spokesman in the large assembly of growers of woad and woad merchants which passed specific legislation on retaining the purity of various *collectae* was none other than Niccolò Vitelli, then unchallenged as Città di Castello's "first citizen".²³ Vitelli seems to have had a special interest in the woad trade, perhaps partly because he was a landlord with considerable holdings in the *contado* of Città di Castello, thanks both to his inheritance from his uncle Vitellozzo, and to his own deft manipulation of the city's tax laws. Città di Castello rewarded Vitelli for his initiative in forcing a new *allibratio* of taxable land, which resulted in the discovery of many unregistered parcels, which the city confiscated. From these, Vitelli was allowed to make at least two major land "purchases" at the symbolic price of one Florentine *grosso* in 1463 and 1464.²⁴

The distinction between the private interests of a profiteering small town despot and his public concerns is difficult, if not impossible, to maintain, and perhaps not particularly meaningful. It is characteristic of such regimes that the despot's personal wealth, prestige, and power are inextricably interwoven with his public role. Similarly, the distinction between the economic welfare of Città di Castello's leading citizens, on the one hand, and on the other the fiscal well-being of the city, and its political fate is, to a large degree, artificial. Not only would significant change in Città di Castello's ability to produce and market woad have had immediate implications upon the city's economic welfare. One may also expect such concerns to be quickly translated into public policy, if only because the individuals concerned with the woad trade were also the city's lawmakers.

The surviving documentation does not make it easy to distinguish clearly

appears in the accounts as, at least temporarily, the only merchant shipping woad to Florence: SC 76, f. 6v; SC 77, f. 19r.

²¹ See the published *Statutum Mercantie*, Città di Castello, 1898, p. 31.

²² Città di Castello, Archivio Notarile, Notary 29, tom. 6, ff. 57v-58r: act of January 22, 1473, in which Ser Girolamo turns 309 gold florins over to his partner. For his *cursus honorum* in Città di Castello, see CC, AC, Annali, tom. 49, ff. 101r, 129r, 134v, 139r; tom. 50, ff. 24r, 27v, 34r, 47r, 49r, 62v, 66r, 72v, 73r, 78, 79v, 99v.

²³ *Ibid.*, tom. 44, f. 151v; see below, Appendix.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, tom. 46, ff. 163r-164v; 168r-169r.

the full dimensions of economic matters in the public life of Città di Castello.²⁵ Clearly, however, the fact that the city, rather than a guild such as the Mercanzia, accepted the task of devising specific means for salvaging the woad trade by maintaining the reputation which woad from Città di Castello enjoyed in Florence and Siena suggests a close association between the two. This impression gains strength in the light of the circumstances which accompanied the city government's intervention. The legislation of September 28, 1470, which spelled out the details to be observed in collecting and milling woad was, of course, an act of the city's Priors and their chief advisory committee of eight citizens. But its passage was preceded by a large assembly called by the Priors and attended by a "magnus numerus" of citizens, who earnestly and "longa disertatione" considered a matter manifestly "pertaining to the public weal and the advantage of the entire people" and finally unanimously ("una voce") supported the views voiced by Vitelli, as well as the specific measures which he proposed.²⁶ Even the formal language of the chancellor's minutes cannot conceal the sense of urgency which pervaded this assembly.

Not only the mood of the meeting reflects concern. The legislation which it prepared was passed the following day, September 28, 1470, and unlike many other statutes enforced immediately and on a large scale. Between October 15 and February 3 of the following year, but chiefly in November, 1470, the city's *podestà* imposed the standard fine of five *lire* upon eighty-two citizens and *contadini*, whose names we know. Some of them belonged to Città di Castello's officeholding elite. They were accused and condemned either for extracting the entire woad plant ("... quia collegit gutatum cum cespitibus et radicibus contra formam reformationis Civitatis Castellii"), or for mixing the various *raccolte* of leaves, or else for delaying the *impanatio* beyond November 1, the terminus established by the statute.²⁷ Clearly, concern with the quality

²⁵ As in many Italian cities of this period, the notarial records do not normally include commercial contracts, the formation of partnerships and companies, or evidence of the management of land. Something can occasionally be learned from the records of the Apostolic Chamber, described by L. Fumi, "Inventario e spoglio dei registri della Tesoreria Apostolica di Città di Castello dal R. Archivio in Roma", *Bollettino della Deputazione di Storia Patria per l'Umbria*, VI (1900), v-xiv, but their greatest strength, the summary records of the *gabelle* leased by the city, on behalf of the *camera apostolica*, to private farmers, does not furnish enough detail to gauge the fluctuations in the supply or trade, let alone the price, of most commodities.

²⁶ CC. AC, Annali, tom. 49, f. 151v.

²⁷ Archivio di Stato, Rome, Camerale III, Busta 772, tom. 19, ff. 34r-38r. The citizens fined included such notables as Andreas Michaelis, who was a Prior of Città di Castello in January and February, 1474, twice served on the city's Council of Sixteen (in May/June, 1471, and March/April, 1479), and three times on the *Consilium Auctoritatis* of thirty-two citizens (January/February, 1471, July/August, 1471, March/April, 1472): see CC, AC, Annali, tom. 49, ff. 162r, 180v; tom. 50, ff. 8r, 27r, 64v, 165r. Even more distinguished was the record of Guido Venturutii de Magalottis, who between July,

of woad was not merely a private matter, but was quickly and decisively translated into effective public policy.

Conversely, the pattern in Città di Castello's woad exports to Siena also suggests some link with political conditions in the city. As revealed in the records of the Aretine *dogana*, the two largest shipments of woad from Città di Castello to Siena follow immediately upon the major turning points in the city's political allegiance. In 1474, the expulsion of Niccolò Vitelli from the city after a prolonged siege by papal troops was followed by a massive export of woad. Similarly, sales close to 16,000 pounds of woad were made in 1481, when the papal opposition to Vitelli was beginning to relent, in preparation for his return to Città di Castello in June, 1482. The generally low level of sales to Siena in the period between 1475 and 1481 coincided, for Città di Castello, with a period in which factions of citizens shared the government of the commune with representatives of the papal government in Rome, more often in disagreement with the foreign power than not.

We do not know in detail and in sufficient breadth how such conditions affected the several aspects of life in Città di Castello, nor can we gauge their specific bearing upon the production and sale of woad. But in general terms it is clear how closely the city's political, economic and social interests were linked to one another. Although the evidence is fragmentary, there is some indication that after 1481 this identification became, at least temporarily, particularly intense. At some time between June, 1482, and July, 1484, the city itself seems - unsuccessfully - to have entered the woad business. Niccolò Vitelli, then securely re-established in Città di Castello under an agreement that he was to be regarded as the city's *principalior civis*, appears to have headed a consortium of merchants who, on behalf of the commune, invested the sizeable sum of 250 Venetian ducats in woad, purchased from two merchants of Borgo San Sepolcro. It also appears that in the same period, some time before 1484, the city supplied itself with woad by confiscating the stocks belonging to private merchants, such as Francesco di Giovanni Antonio, who on June 12, 1484, secured reimbursement for his property from the *gabella* he was then leasing from the city. Vitelli's investment in woad was lost in warfare, as were similar investments by Ser Girolamo de Lambardis and Ser Tommaso de Broziis to the tune of 60 florins of local currency.²⁸

Neither the Florentine *arte della lana*, nor the Sienese dyeing trades, depended

1468, and his death in October, 1478, held appointments on sixteen governing committees, among them the Priorate in January/February, 1475, and in November/December, 1478: *ibid.*, tom. 49, f. 91r; tom. 50, ff. 77v, 81v, 102r, 114r, 121r, 129r, 142r, 147r, 151r, 153v, 154v, 155v, 158v, 162v, 163v. Also fined was Francesco Sepolini, who served as a Prior in May/June, 1469, July/August, 1474, and July/August, 1479, and in addition served twice on the Committee of Sixteen, as well as once on the Council of Thirty-two: *ibid.*, tom. 49, ff. 109r, 132v; tom. 50, ff. 13r, 19r, 55v, 168r.

²⁸ CC. AC, Annali, tom. 52, ff. 100r, 104v.

upon Città di Castello for an adequate supply of woad, which was readily available from other sources. But a realignment of the normal patterns of supply and procurement surrounding a major industrial center was of great consequence to cities like Città di Castello. Here the links between trade and politics, public concerns and private life, communal policy and personal welfare were more immediate than in a more diversified and institutionally more highly articulated industrial metropolis. In this smaller world, change was typically perceived more directly and as more dramatic than elsewhere, and response to new conditions was likely to be, at least in the short run, more immediate and more comprehensive than on the other side of the urban spectrum. These are key differences, which then as now distinguish provincial life from the reality of large cities. But despite such differences, Città di Castello and its neighboring communes, along with Arezzo, Siena, and Florence are part of an unbroken web of relationships whose dimensions often surpass regional limits, and sometimes extend as far as England, the Low Countries, and Picardy.

APPENDIX

Città di Castello:

Assembly to recommend the Revision of Statutes regarding Woad and Madder.
(From: Città di Castello, Archivio Comunale, Amali, tom. 49, ff. 151v-152r)

Die Iovis xxviii^a Septembris (1470)

Convenientes Magnifici domini priores populi et Octo custodie Civitatis Castelli in solita audientia eorundem dominorum priorum una cum magno numero convocatorum civium coadunatorum ex ordinamento dictorum dominorum, et attendentes ad ea que ad utilitatem publicam atque commodum totius populi pertinere manifesto constat, cum perspectum sit magnum proventum et introitum multe pecunie nostre civitati provenire ex guatis et robbiis que fiunt in territorio dicte civitatis, que guate et robie apud eos qui emunt et operantur ea seu eas reputantur longe meliores perfectionis quam que in aliis locis fiunt, et quia in ipsis et negligentia et data opera per eos qui faciunt ipsa et ipsas guate et robbias potest accidere, propter quod non sint in opere et bonitate tante perfectionis, ad obviandum huiusmodi inconvenienti quo ipsa guate et robbie predictae non perdant reputationem suam et civitas ipsa non recipiat detrimentum in proventu dictorum guatorum et robbiarum procurato defectu et culpa eorum qui causam inferunt talis incommodi, inter se consultantes quid super hoc providendum videretur

pro futuris temporibus ut consultius, maturius, climatius, cautius et salubrius in oportunis consiliis possit publico ordinamento provideri, et tandem redditus super his maturis rationabilibus iudiciis atque consiliis et re ipsa longa disertatione examinata, conclusum est ad effectum suprascriptum consultatis Magnifico milite domino Nicolao de Vitellis et multis alijs singulariter et tandem omnibus una voce confirmantibus et approbantibus ipsius consilium tamquam salubre et necessarium, quod in futurum singulis annis in perpetuum observetur quod omnes prime collecte guati colligentur usque ad dies octo mensis Augusti debeant cum effectu appanari usque ad diem octavum mensis Septembris. Et penultima collecta debeat appanari per totum mensem Septembris et ante quam incipiatur colligi ultima collecta, videlicet sozzaria. Et ipsa separate debeat appanari, imponendo convenientes penas in predictis, prout videbitur consilio. Et insuper provideatur et reformetur quod ultima collecta non possit neque debeat decoronari, sed colligi solummodo folium guati, sicut colligitur in primis collectis, pure et sine cespite sive radicibus et terra, sub pena quinque librarum, solvendarum de facto a quolibet contrafaciente et qualibet vice. Cuius pene medietas applicari debeat camere apostolice, et alia medietas accusatori, si per accusam habeatur notitia, vel officiali inveniendi et esequenti. Et quilibet officialis possit procedere et habeat locum preventio. Et quod stanghe molendinorum guatariarum levantur et levari debeant et ulterius non liceat molere guata secundum formam statuti ad festum Omnium Sanctorum, sub pena statuti. De robbiis autem, quia ut dicitur si ille effodiuntur et colligantur ante trigesimum mensem postquam fuerint seminate, non habent perfectionem suam. Ideo ordinandum esse quod ante illud tempus effodi et colligi non possint neque debeant, nisi ex causa legitima, hoc est, quia ut dicitur in illis oritur et accidit certa infirmitas sive infectio, ob quam deperditur robbia nisi effodiatur. Et ideo dicto casu adveniente, habita licentia a dominis prioribus pro tempore consulentibus, cum presentia et consensu ac voluntate quatuor officialium civium pro communi super robbia deputatorum, qui pro tempore erint, liceat patronis ipsas robbias ita infectas colligere, ut tota non perdat. Sed ne prius inspecta et habita certitudine per ipsos dominos priores quod ita sit, et non postuletur talis licentia si placuerit consilio reformentur etc.

SALDI DEL CAMERLENGO, AREZZO
Shipments of Wood Taxed in Arezzo, in Florentine *libbre*

	Arezzo- Florence	All Points ¹ -Siena	Total ²	Città di Castello -Siena
1472 July-Sept	13,704	24,740	38,444	900
Oct-Dec	30,606	41,125	71,731	900
Total 1472	44,310	65,865	110,175	1,800
1473 Jan-March	27,245	15,735	42,980	—
April-June	11,468	6,295	17,763	2,755
July-Sept	11,078	20,580	31,658	6,410
Oct-Dec	12,430	26,770	39,200	7,195
Total 1473	62,221	69,380	131,601	16,360
1474 Jan-March	19,032	22,890	41,922	4,330
April-June	4,355	13,772	18,127	7,642
July-Sept	8,898	1,860	10,758	—
Oct-Dec	10,771	23,170	33,941	20,470
Total 1474	43,056	61,692	104,748	32,442
1475 Jan-March	2,783	10,685	13,468	6,975
April-June	5,570	20,195	26,485	10,285
July-Sept	16,435	10,455	26,890	2,985
Oct-Dec	24,224	19,230	43,545	3,710
Total 1475	49,012	61,285	110,297	23,955
1476 Jan-March	19,186	1,180	20,366	—
April-June	6,406	3,020	9,426	2,120
July-Sept	—	2,080	2,080	1,180
Oct-Dec	4,388	—	4,388	—
Total 1476	29,980	6,280	36,260	3,300
1477 Jan-March	12,230	6,860	19,090	2,250
April-June	346	4,050	4,846	—
July-Sept	—	—	—	—
Oct-Dec	1,930	1,630	3,560	1,180
Total 1477	14,506	12,540	27,496	3,430
1478 Jan-March	6,405	8,660	15,065	3,880
April-June	15,067	6,300	21,367	900
July-Sept	—	—	—	—
Oct-Dec	5,820	—	5,820	—
Total 1478	27,292	14,960	42,252	4,780

		Arezzo- Florence	All Points ¹ -Siena	Total ²	Città di Castello -Siena
1479	Jan-March	8,894	—	8,894	—
	April-June	15,163	—	15,163	—
	July-Sept	—	—	—	—
	Oct-Dec	8,036	—	8,036	—
	Total 1479	32,093	—	32,093	—
1480	Jan-March	7,514	900	8,414	—
	April-June	3,361	17,836	21,197	1,056
	July-Sept	8,710	900	9,610	—
	Oct-Dec	—	5,340	5,340	3,710
	Total 1480	19,585	24,976	44,561	4,766
1481	Jan-March	—	25,140	25,140	15,520
	April-June	—	900	900	—
	July-Sept	—	—	—	—
	Oct-Dec	—	—	—	—
	Total 1481	—	26,040	26,040	15,520
1482	Jan-March	—	—	—	—
	April-June	—	—	—	—
	July-Sept	—	900	900	900
	Oct-Dec	1,246	—	2,246	—
	Total 1482	1,246	900	3,146	900
1483	Jan-March	813	—	813	—
	April-June	14,969	—	14,969	—
	July-Sept	3,200	450	3,650	—
	Oct-Dec	2,364	3,150	5,514	—
	Total 1483	21,346	3,600	24,946	—
1484	Total	—	—	—	—

¹ Including Città di Castello, Borgo San Sepolcro, S. Giovanni in Vado, Urbino, the Marche and Romagna.

² Including isolated shipments from and to points other than those covered in the other columns.