Society in Filarete’s *Libro architettonico*
between Realism, Ideal, Science Fiction and Utopia

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The overall impression of Filarete’s *Libro architettonico* is determined by narrative passages that seem rather fantastic, particularly those dedicated to the description of his two ideal cities, Sforzinda and Plusiapolis. Filarete himself compares his «fantasy» of Sforzinda to the model of the spectacular city that Dinocrates proposed to carve out of Mount Athos in order to win the favour of Alexander the Great. This study shall try to differentiate between the various spheres of reality in which the work is located, a task that requires a clear separation between the two ideal cities created by Filarete. It is important to note that a certain idealization is almost inevitable in a treatise issuing general guidelines and should not, in itself, detract attention from realistic qualities. As far as architectural practice is concerned, it has become increasingly evident that Filarete provides insight surpassing all other treatises on architecture of the Renaissance.

Filarete’s most fantastic buildings, some of which were completely beyond the possibilities of the Renaissance, should not be considered in isolation from the rest of the treatise, as they might seem absurd from this perspective. Though many scholars signal out these creations, it is rarely mentioned that descriptions of such buildings are also to be found in Leon Battista Alberti’s *De re aedificatoria* and in other Renaissance writings, and form a part of the typical Renaissance claim for the revival of Antiquity. This maxim was not primarily incited by love for pretty capitals but rather was based on the desire to raise civilization to the level that it formerly had in Antiquity.

What was seen and read from Antiquity bore witness to a civilization whose level by far surpassed that of their own society. In ruins, extant buildings, and classical texts, one was faced with gigantic buildings that exceeded all contemporary measure. Public baths like those of Diocletian covered areas as large as whole medieval towns; a single arena like the Colosseum accommodated almost as many spectators as the largest cities of the occident had inhabitants in the early Renaissance; moreover ancient Rome had many such tremendous buildings for public spectacles. The aqueducts, that in spite of hills and valleys, with continuous minute gradient carried water across the country for a distance of over a hundred kilometres or more, reminded the otherwise very factual antiquarian Flavio Biondo of the magician Virgil. It is by no means an exaggeration to characterize the situation by saying that the Italian Renaissance, in looking back at Antiquity, saw science fiction in the past.

A typical trait of the renewal movement was the intellectual game now called ‘utopian’: the conception of an ideal, but

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Abbreviations

Magl.: Codex Magliabechianus, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, Ms. III.140;


unachievable, society. In order to identify utopian elements in Filarete’s Libro, we have to consider how he conceived society. It is almost inevitable that he touches on social conditions. The domains of architecture and society belong together. Vitruvius and Frontinus in their treatises on architecture and on hydraulic engineering, each include references to social conditions, whereas Aristotle reports that the architect Hippodamus of Miletus wrote a script on the best constitution. Even Alberti in his treatise on architecture frequently deals with social matters. From the other point of view, Renaissance literature on social conditions also tends to include reflections on architecture. It is treated in all utopian or similar writings of Antiquity and the Renaissance, as well as in Francesco Patrizi’s treatise on the state (around 1460).

Architecture expresses how the social conditions are, and it was often mentioned that buildings reflected the power of the state. According to Suetonius, Augustus adapted the shape of the city of Rome to the ‘greatness and dignity of the Empire’ by replacing brick with marble. Order in external appearance and order in social conditions were supposed to go together: according to Aristotle, Hippodamus of Miletus had «an excellent sense of symmetry; at first he designed regularly formed plans of towns. He then seems to have employed this ability to governmental institutions by drafting a systematically and regularly formed plan for a constitution». A similar coincidence is expressed in diverse medieval writings, too numerous to discuss in detail here. Leonardo Bruni in his Laudatio di Florence (ca. 1403) praises the appearance of Florence to be as orderly as her government. He explains time and again how social values are visible in the shape of the town: mainly the republican constitution is reflected in the palace of the priors (Palazzo Vecchio) rising higher than all the neighbouring houses so that it stood out like a flagship in a fleet. Of Milan it might have been said with equal justification that the Visconti castle shows the tyrannical constitution.

In the same sense, the disposition and the buildings described by Filarete reflect the society, and Filarete evinces a special interest in the subject. He indicates with what political measures Sforzinda should be populated (distribution of land, tax exemption). The government building in Sforzinda and the palace of the prince are decorated with frescoes that in the usual manner refer to the good regimen: the cardinal virtues, allegories of justice between truth and falsehood in the palace of the mayor, good advisors and traitors in the city hall, allegories of prudence in contrast to arbitrariness and of war and peace in the palace of the prince etc. Filarete compares the value hierarchy of the orders of columns and of precious stones with the social classes in full detail. He invents a miraculous sign and interprets it as a symbol of good government: an eagle that chases a falcon to protect songbirds represents the actions of a prince who protects the brave citizens. This kind of metaphor was not invented by Filarete, but was commonly used and understood. For example, the authority that Cosimo il Vecchio had in Florence was justified by the fact that the states needed leaders as much as construction workers needed architects to emit prudent guidelines. Likewise, Plato writes that legislators are to behave like construction workers who do not collect their material only when it is required, but build up reserves.

The Construction of Sforzinda Compared with Reality

Filarete’s Libro forms an integral part of the transition to the modern age. Immediately after seizing power in Milan Francesco Sforza introduced reforms in the new spirit. These included calling Filarete to the city in order to introduce the Renaissance architecture. The Libro offers guidelines to launch this project. It describes the beginning of the modern age with the fictitious example of the construction of a new city named Sforzinda.

The description of the fantastic city takes as its starting point social conditions that actually prevailed in Milan in the mid-Quattrocento. As in reality, a prince rules and society is divided into classes. The classes have the following assignments: an aristocratic or patrician upper class acts as support for the prince and as adornment of the state; a plain middle class of merchants or scholars is useful and to some extent also an adornment, whereas the simple folks exist for the convenience, needs and service of the prince. The citizens of Milan, perhaps motivated by a nostalgic longing for the freedom they had won in the high Middle Ages, once more formed a popular rule, the Ambrosian

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7 SUTTON, Augustus, 28.29.
8 ARISTOTELES, Politeia, IX, 8.1267b.
11 Magl., ff. 163v-164r; FILARETE, 1972, II, 608 et seq.
14 Magl., ff. 28v, 29v, 145v; FILARETE, 1972, I, 115, 120, 176.
16 PLATO, Nomai, I, 5.858a-b.
Republic, in 1447 to 1449. However, democracy ended in chaos and terror. When Francesco Sforza seized Milan he appeared as liberator to many. Milanese intellectuals complained about the popular rule. Francesco Filelfo describes the end of the Ambrosian Republic as a civil war in which an uneducated and criminal plebs fought against a wealthy elite and against scholars like himself.

The status of court architect celebrated by Filarete was indeed the best position an artist could achieve. To serve a republic was frequently less secure, less clearly focused and less remunerative. Filarete had experienced himself that the prince promoted the avant-garde whereas the citizens reacted in a rather conservative and reserved way. Francesco Sforza had managed that Filarete be given leadership of the masons' lodge of the cathedral, but the deputies threw him out a year later. The architect of Sforzinda suggests to the prince or hereditary prince what measures of construction should be taken and instructs them on the basic principles of architecture. The prince is willing to introduce the change in architecture but at the beginning does not know what standards to follow. The architect in the course of the Libro teaches him to understand good architecture. The strong position that Filarete gives the court architect was certainly no mere ideal. What influence he himself had is not known, but it is recorded that his successor, Bramante, was so firmly entrenched in power that he could permit himself to disappear for some time without losing his assignment. On the contrary, the prince searched for Bramante in Rome and Florence during the absence. At the Curia Bramante gained so much prestige that various circles even held him responsible for the destruction of the old basilica of St. Peter's and its replacement with a new church. Likewise, Filarete's account that the court architect introduces the hereditary prince to the foundations of architecture corresponds in general to what is known of the education of princes in the Renaissance. Princes needed this knowledge for their military tasks, and notably the prince of Sforzinda himself drafts the plan for the citadel of Sforzinda.

The cooperation of the architect with a man of letters at the court, the famous Greek scholar Francesco Filelfo, on whom Filarete reports more or less directly, is certainly realistic. Filarete did not even know enough Latin to understand Vitruvius well. The many Latin and Greek sources he refers to and the translations that he in part quotes literally, must have been made accessible to him by men of letters. This corresponds to what is concretely known in such circumstances. There are many testimonies of the fact that artists and humanists collaborated in order to renew antiquity. For instance Francesco di Giorgio Martini casually reports that scholars with knowledge of the Greek and Latin language on his request and that of his master, the king of Naples, had helped him in his studies on Vitruvius. Filelfo was apparently not the only man of letters who helped Filarete with his studies of antique literature. Recently it has come to light that the humanist Gianantonio Porcellio de' Pandoni who served Francesco

21 At the outset (Magl., f. 2r; FILARETE, 1972, I, 12), the prince referring to the cathedrals of Milan and Florence, defends the «modern» gothic style against the way of building in the ancient style. Before the discovery of the Golden Book of Plusiopolis (Magl., ff. 99v-100v; FILARETE, 1972, I, 380 seq.) the prince equally likes the «modern» gothic and the new antique style and he is not sure whether anybody should eventually decide according to his taste in what style to build. When the prince sees Sforzinda completed (Magl., f. 128v; FILARETE, 1972, II, 481 et seq.) he exalts in enthusiasm over the new way of building: »E non sia nessuno che ma i am ragioni più a questa usanza moderna«. One may be surprised by his judgement as he formerly had appraised and sponsored buildings in the «modern» style. But at that time he did not yet know the ragioni of architecture.
24 Magl., f. 37v; FILARETE, 1972, I, 147.
26 As for the limited knowledge artists had of the Latin language cf. H. GÜNTHER, Das Studium der antiken Architektur in den Zeichnungen der Hochrenaissance, Tübingen 1988, 157-162. The question as to Filarete's ability to read Latin has long been under debate. Some scholars argue that he lacked any real fluency, as I do here, and others have proposed that he must have at least achieved a competency. See for example Filarete's Treatise on Architecture: Being the Treatise by Antonio di Pierno Avetino, Known as Filarete, ed. and trans. by J. R. Spencer, New Haven - London 1965, I, 103, note 7; J. ONDAI, »Alberti and Filarete: A Study in Their Sources«, Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 34 (1971), 96-114.
Sforza from 1456 to 1459 had made Pliny’s *Natural History* accessible to Filarete in an extract\(^9\). Mainly Filliello seems to have been responsible for Filarete’s knowledge of Greek writings (see below) and probably also promoted Filarete’s interest in social conditions. He was much interested in this field and gave advice on good governance to many Italian princes\(^30\).

The shape of Sforzinda at the beginning of the description appears as completely ideal\(^1\). The city is founded in a paradisiacal countryside. Her contour has the shape of a regular polygon formed by two interlaced squares that are placed in a circle (figs. 1-2); the roads lead from the periphery to the geometrical centre that is also the economic, social and spiritual centre of the city. This disposition is given a special name: “disegno Averlano”\(^32\). It seems to be a counterpart to the system of Hippodamus that is disposed as grid over a rectangular ground plan. The advantage of Filarete’s system, beyond being symmetrical, is its reflection of the social structure: all traffic routes converge in the centre of trade and governance. In addition, the shape of the wall has advantages for defence. In the second half of the fifteenth century Francesco di Giorgio further developed that kind of disposition for military purposes. But the “disegno Averlano” is not an entirely new invention. It reduces the shape that Milan actually had to a regular geometrical form. Milan had a round contour (fig. 3). It is adapted to a circle in the plan of Milan illustrating the chronicle by Galvano Fiamma (ca. 1330) (fig. 4)\(^33\). Likewise, streets that converge in the centre like the rays of a star were also part of the structure of the city that in the comedy *The Birds* by Aristophanes is erected in the air. In Milan the streets also led from the city gates to the centre but they were irregular because they partly followed the grid of Hippodamus that determined her plan in antiquity (fig. 5)\(^34\).

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\(^30\) ROBIN, 1991, 42 et seq.

\(^31\) Book II: *Magli.* f. 1r et seqq; FILARETE, 1972, f. 52 et seq.

\(^32\) Magli., f. 11iv; FILARETE, 1972, f. 53.


Also the canals that accompany the streets, the places in the centre and the outer living quarters were similar to the situation in Milan. The allocation of the citizens according to their occupations and classes, if taken literally, seems very schematic\textsuperscript{35}. But it is, like the description of building types according to the three classes\textsuperscript{36}, only meant as a guideline. What was already prefigured in many Italian cities of the Middle Ages is merely put into a system here\textsuperscript{37}. There was good reason to do so: why should bathers be exposed to the odours the tanners produced or cloth merchants suffer the noise of the smiths? Alberti demands a similar allocation of citizens according to their craft in his treatise on architecture\textsuperscript{38}, and his plan for the Borgo Leonino corresponded to this conception\textsuperscript{39}.

The palace, in which the prince of Sforzinda makes his public appearances, is in the centre of the city, whereas the castle in which he lives is protected by the city walls\textsuperscript{40}. This was the

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\textsuperscript{35} Magli, f. 158r (Filarete, 1972, II, 589); f. 171r-v (II, 631-632).
\textsuperscript{36} Magli, ff. 84r-86g; Filarete, 1972, I, 323-331.
\textsuperscript{37} Cf. the contributions of D. A. Bullough, G. C. Mor and G. B. Pellegrini in Topografia urbana e vita cittadina nell’alto medievale in occidente, 2 vols., Spoleto 1974 (Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, XXI). Such a distribution of crafts as is reflected in the old street names of many cities was of course not consequently applied, and also the treatises on architecture at best offered guidelines as Alberti expresses in De re aedificatoria, IV,2; ed. by G. Orlandi and P. Porroghesi, Milano 1966, 276.
\textsuperscript{38} Alberti, De re aedificatoria, VII,1; ed. Orlandi, 1966, 536 et seq.
\textsuperscript{39} T. Magnuson, Studies in Roman Quattrocento Architecture, Stockholm 1958, 74-77; C. Thoenes, Jimdien zur Geschichte des Petersplatzes, Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte, 26 (1963), 97-145.
\textsuperscript{40} Palace: Magli, ff. 57v et seqq. (Filarete, 1972, I, 221 et seqq.); Castle: ff. 37v-42v (II, 147-164).
draft so that the building looks like a castle and resembles the palace of the head of police that should «terrify people» (fig. 11)⁴⁸. Such a disposition was most unusual in a town hall and actually contradicted what was appropriate for a free civil regimen. Patrizi, for instance, mentions that free citizens do not fortify the seat of their city government; only tyrants needed fortifications⁴⁹. Thus the action almost seems to allude to the terrible consequences of the Ambrosian Republic.

Filarete also considers the buildings of other institutions needed in a big city: the mint, the customhouse, magazines, guild houses, the butcher’s mall, the prison house, etc.⁵⁰. On the main square or nearby there were baths, pubs and brothels. The disposition is only described for the prison; for the other buildings Filarete merely indicates their function. He apologizes for the brevity of his remarks with the argument that these building types had to be adjusted on a case by case basis, and so no detailed model could be provided.

Public welfare shapes the appearance of Sforzinda. The most elaborate description in Filarete’s Libro is not that of a palace, a cathedral or another object of representative architecture, but that of a hospital⁵¹. In medieval and Renaissance Italy, the term «hospital» (ospedale) was used to indicate an asylum for people of all kind in need of help: the sick, orphans, the poor or travellers. Hospitals were special status symbols of Italian towns. At the beginning of the Renaissance, Florence led the way even in public welfare, and her Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova served as model for new hospitals all over Italy. It was highly praised for its practical comfort, but it was neither particularly beautiful nor extravagantly styled. The Renaissance in architecture began with a hospital: the Ospedale degli Innocenti built by Brunelleschi starting in 1419 (fig. 12). Antiquity provided the model for the form of the façade that became

⁴² ALBERTI, De re aedificatoria, V, ed. Orlandi, 1966, 346 et seq.
⁴³ Books II and VI-X. For the layout of the Piazza and its buildings see esp. Magl., ff. 14r-v, 42r-43v, 60v-61r; FILARETE, 1972, I, 63-64, 164-166, 235-237.
⁴⁵ Fabbriche, Piazze, Mercati. La città italiana nel Rinascimento, ed. by D. Calabrò, Roma 1997.
⁴⁷ Book X: Magl., ff. 79r-71v; FILARETE, 1972, I, 272-274.
⁴⁸ Magl., ff. 71r-72v, 74r; FILARETE, 1972, I, 275, 280.
⁴⁹ PATRIZI, De institutione... VIII.9.
⁵¹ Book XI: Magl., ff. 79r-83v; FILARETE, 1972, I, 298-322.
7. Filarete: Codex Magliabechianus, f. 73r. Traders place in Sforzinda. In the middle Palazzo della Ragione, below prison and palace of the head of police, above treasury, left below Palazzo del Podestà, right above customs office.

8. Filarete: Codex Magliabechianus, f. 73v. Market place in Sforzinda. With canals all around, in the middle parish church, above palazzo del Capitano, below places to drink (Casa di Bacco) and sale of wine, right below brothel (Casa di Venere), above baths and hotels.

9. Antonio Laferti: Perspective plan of Milan, 1573 (first ed. 1560). Detail. Middle cathedral, left of it representational palace of the dukes, above Piazza Comunale with offices around and the Broletto (city hall) raising in the middle, below Ospedale Maggiore.

famous for its new style, but antiquity was not the model for the building type, as very little was known of antique hospitals. It is for this reason that Alberti only briefly touches upon the subject.

A central element in Francesco Sforza’s program of Milanese renewal in the spirit of the Renaissance was the intensification of the care for the sick and the weak. Immediately after seizing power he began to implement the project of the Ambrosian Republic to centralize health care. The approximately thirty already existing hospitals of Milan were united in a single institution, the Ospedale Maggiore. Filarete designed its building (figs. 3, 9 and 13-17)\(^5\). Francesco Sforza wanted it as beautiful and useful as possible, so that it should impress the entire world and be a high point of his reign\(^6\). It was planned as the largest and most elaborate hospital in the occident. With its clear disposition and form it introduced the new style in Milan. However, on the exterior it did not demonstrate the new style as ostentatiously as the Ospedale degli Innocenti did, but preserved traditional elements (figs. 13-14). The practical and technical installations were the real highlight of its modern conception. A complex system of subterranean canals and water pipes in and between the walls provided maximum efficiency and hygiene. Next to every bed was a door that led to a latrine and a cupboard with a built-in refuse chute; the cupboard door could also be used as a table (figs. 15-17).

Filarete in his *Libro* describes the Ospedale Maggiore as the hospital of Sforzinda (figs. 14-15). Here fiction and reality are combined to a unity in the name of progress. Filarete hardly enters into matters of style of the building, focusing instead on the technical equipment and its benefits. In this spirit he indirectly criticizes the Ospedale degli Innocenti. Brunelleschi had placed the spectacular façade, like a standard of progress in the medieval townscape, upon a high base of steps, a status symbol that otherwise was reserved for the most prestigious public buildings, the cathedral or the city hall (fig. 12). Antonio Manetti in treating the Ospedale in his biography of Brunelleschi (ca. 1470) concentrates entirely on the façade, almost as if there were nothing behind it\(^6\). For practical reasons, the Ospedale Maggiore was raised on a basement, as well, but the lower level was destined for practical use. Steps were limited to the areas in front of the entrances. Filarete invents a programmatic debate about the situation: someone suggests putting the entire façade on a continuous base of stairs as at the Ospedale degli Innocenti\(^5\). The architect and the prince argue in contrast that this is unnecessary, unpractical and inappropriate, as a hospital is not a place for festivities, nor a theatre in which to watch spectacles.

In general, the utilitarian thinking that guides the description of Sforzinda reflects the political program of Francesco Sforza. This is also embodied in the description of other technical equipment. Thus Filarete takes into account pipes for sewerage installations in the bishop’s palace\(^5\). The construction of roads and bridges and even of an aqueduct is treated in detail\(^7\). Hydraulic engineering played an important role in Lombardy due to the large supply of water available. Indeed, this situation inspired Leonardo da Vinci to draft a futuristic two-storey city with subterranean canals (fig. 18)\(^8\).

In Sforzinda water is used for drinking, as waterway, as source of energy and for cleaning, as mentioned in the context of the hospital. The squares in the centre of Sforzinda are surrounded by canals from which other canals run to the periphery; each follows a slight gradient to the periphery so that all refuse is washed away (fig. 8). Moreover, streets and squares can be flooded\(^9\). These installations too, in an idealized way, render the actual conditions in Milan at that time and reflect the initiatives that Francesco Sforza took\(^9\). Hartmann Schedel relates in his *Welchronik* that the streets in Lübeck were clean because they dropped from the centre in all directions\(^10\).

55. Magl., f. 80r; Filarete, 1972, I, 306 et seq.
57. Magl., ff. 159v-162v; Filarete, 1972, II, 592-601.
Idealisation or Sforzinda as Panegyric on Milan

The report on Sforzinda comprises a vivid description of a Renaissance city such as Milan. By explaining the function of the buildings, it reflects the social life of the city. It shows what government bodies and offices existed, how trade was conducted, what simple pleasures were enjoyed and much more. In these ways the report corresponds to the realism of the insight into architectural practice delivered by Filarete. That said, however, the description is idealised in a way that resembles the panegyrics on cities common in the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance, including those that were dedicated to Milan by Bonvesin de la Riva (1288)⁶² and by Pier Candido Decembrio (1436, revised 1473)⁶³, as well as Bruni’s Laudeatio of Florence to which Decembrio provided an answer⁶⁴.

Following the model of the rhetorical compendium of Menander, they praise the location of the city, its foundation, the deeds, occupations and skills of the inhabitants of the polis, the constitution, the sciences, arts and abilities. Bonvesin already emphasizes the paradisiacal countryside of Milan and her greatness, exaggerating the number of inhabitants by at least double, interpreting her round contour as sign of perfection and indicating the ten hospitals as a special asset of the city. Even cleanliness was addressed as characteristic element of a well functioning city, particularly in the works of Bruni and Patrizi and in panegyrics on the renewal of Rome under Sixtus IV⁶⁵.

The idealisation of the government or the ruler is a element typical not only of panegyrics of cities, but even more commonly is found in the many «mirrors for princes». Actually, the whole epoch was often idealised. From the beginning of the Renaissance onward, humanists time and again proclaimed the arrival of a new Golden Age. Alberti, who said of himself that he considered hope to be the greatest thing on earth\(^\text{66}\), in his treatise on architecture celebrates the new beginning with the exclamation: «How many cities did I see as a boy entirely assembled of wooden planks that now arise in marble\(^\text{67}\). In reality, in his youth Alberti saw magnificent cities that were built of stone (Venice, Padova, Bologna etc.) and not one of them was rebuilt in marble at the beginning of the Renaissance.

**Megalomania and the Reception of Antiquity in Sforzinda**

The main monument of Filarete’s interest in technical equipment is the aqueduct that runs from a mountain ten miles away to the centre of Sforzinda (fig. 2, 19)\(^\text{68}\). It goes through a tunnel in a mountain and over high arcades in the plain. This is taken from Antiquity: the bridges of Sforzinda likewise follow ancient models (Ponte Sant’Angelo, Bridge of Augustus in Rimini). Filarete, moreover, seeks to surpass Antiquity in this field by adding an invention of his own: in Sforzinda the aqueduct does not end roughly at ground level but terminates at a level high as a house above it, and the cistern that collects its water lies above ground level, instead of underground as was customary in Antiquity (fig. 20). This made it possible to run

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\(^{67}\) ALBERTI, *De re aedificatoria*, VII.5; ed. Orlandi, Milano 1966, 699.

\(^{68}\) *Magl.*, ff. 158r-162r (FILARETE, 1972, II, 589-602).
factories with the falling water: iron and copper works, grinders, paper mills, etc. The water that was led under the hospital also served to operate mills.

Filarete's appreciation of practical benefits, his pronounced interest in technical equipment and on the other hand his criticism of the large basement of steps for a hospital as paradigm of an exaggerated staging of artistic values correspond to the position of many ancient Roman authors. Strabo and others saw the architectural achievement that was mainly typical for Rome in waterways, roads and the like. Pliny the Elder considered aqueducts and sewers to be the greatest wonders of the world. Cicero found it more important to build installations that served the public benefit like aqueducts, harbours or city walls than to donate theatres, porticos and even new temples. Because of their general value Frontinus preferred aqueducts even to the famous Greek works of art: "With these many and necessary waterways you can of course compare the superfluous pyramids or the other useless but widely praised works of the Greeks." The great antiquarians of the early Renaissance, Poggio Bracciolini, Flavio Biondo and, with considerable rhetorical softening, Alberti, adopted these judgements. Many of them could be

70 *Strabo, Geographica*, V.3.8.
71 *Pliny, Naturalis historia*, XXXVI, 15, 104, 121-123.
72 *Cicero, De officiis*, II.60.
73 *Frontinus, De aquaeductu urbis Romae*, 16.
74 Günther, 2008.
found already in Biondo's widely read guide to Rome of 144675. In spite of all utilitarian thinking, Filarete did not consider it prudent to be thrifty when planning buildings, «for never did a country become impoverished or perish because of buildings»76. After all, the money that is put into great buildings would stay in the country. This reasoning is confirmed by complaints raised during the Renaissance over the decrease of civic wellbeing when princely building activities slowed. In addition, towards the end of the Libro Filarete quotes Diodorus Siculus as witness that the antique rulers had erected immense buildings in order to invest their money safely77.

Sforzinda on the whole is built on a megalomaniacal scale. With a diameter of 6 km the city surpasses the contemporary size of Milan and perhaps of all other European cities. Several buildings are enormously sumptuous, not only representative ones like the princely palace but also the aqueduct and the hospital. The megalomania reaches a peak with the city wall that forms the prelude to the description of Sforzinda. It is approximately 35 km long, 14 m high and almost 4 m thick; every hundred meters there is a tower or a gate 40 m high, that is almost as high as the ridge of the cathedral of Milan. An army of 103,200 masons carries out the work; the amount of workers approximately corresponds to the population of Milan and the largest cities of the occident at Filarete’s time. The fabric is completed in just ten days.

Filaret did not freely invent what seems to us to be science fiction: it is based on ideas that flourished on Antiquity. The city’s diameter of 6 km approximates that of ancient Rome (which once had a million inhabitants), and the city walls can be compared to the Aurelian Wall. The unbelievably short building time complies with that of antique records: according to Flavius Josephus, Nebuchadnezzar had surrounded the city of Babylon by a triple wall in fifteen days, and Titus is said to have built a wall of approximately 8 km with his entire army in three days in order to conquer Jerusalem78. Diodorus affirms that it had taken Semiramis a day to build a stadium (ca. 185 m) of the huge city wall of Babylon, and that in seven days she had surrounded a lake with a very deep and high wall of almost 40 km length79. Alberti collected these and other such fantastic reports, noting them in his treatise on architecture80. The contours of the city wall of Sforzinda with «proruding and receding lines» are prefigured in the almost insurmountable city wall of Jerusalem as Tacitus describes it81. Tacitus points out that this disposition is militarily particularly advantageous because the flanks could thus well be protected against attacking troupes: Alberti mentions also this benefit82.

Sforzinda is also given buildings for spectacles based on the model of ancient Rome: an arena like the Colosseum and a circus that also was used for naumachia, as was supposed to be the case in the circus Maximus (fig. 21). Filarete here describes the antique models in exceptional detail and cites them by name83. In the introduction to the construction of Sforzinda he emphasizes that magnificent buildings like the theatre were not

75. F. BIONDO, Roma instaurata, I.95 and II.97 (after Pliny), I.95 (after Livy), also II.73, II.94, II.97 and II.101 (after Frontinus).
76. Magli, f. 61v; FILARETE, 1972, I, 238.
77. Magli, f. 168r (FILARETE, 1972, II, 621); DIODORUS, Bibliotheca Historica, I.71; cf. PLINIUS, Naturalis historia, XXXVI, 14.
78. FLAVIVS JOSEPHUS, Antiquitates Judaicae, X,224 et seq.; FLAVIVS JOSEPHUS, De bello Judeico, V,508 et seq.
79. DIODORUS, Bibliotheca Historica, II,7.3 and II.9.; CURTIUS RUFUS, De rebus gestis de Alexandri Magni, V,1.26 and V,1.28.
81. TACITUS, Historiae, V,11.3.
82. ALBERTI, De re aedificatoria, IV,3; ed. Orlandi, 1966, 294 et seq.
83. Magli, ff. 86v-98v; FILARETE, 1972, I, 332-342.
used anymore, but perhaps, in memory of Antiquity, he would introduce them nonetheless. Here Filarete clearly indicates that his motivation is a nostalgia for the lost past.

In Book XIII a visiting lord from Mantua (presumably Ludovico Gonzaga), upon seeing the just-completed city of Sforzinda, enthusiastically proclaims that he feels reborn in the past seeing “again the noble buildings that were once in Rome and those that we read were in Egypt.” On the whole, however, Sforzinda should not be compared with a city like ancient Rome because Rome had ruled the world. The occasional borrowings from the megalomania of Roman Antiquity simply function to help idealise the city of Sforzinda, which otherwise bears fundamental traits of reality. They mean no more than the panegyric phrase that the Capitol and the Colosseum had lost their fame through Galeazzo Visconti’s buildings.

Filarete’s treatment of the subject is thus far different from Alberti’s. Alberti frequently, without any differentiation, presents guidelines for modern building that are far away from what was possible in his days: he recommends the construction of building types taken from Antiquity that, for reasons of tradition, economy or moral, could in reality have no place in society at his time. The private houses are huge buildings that were entirely beyond the means of even the most elite. The town hall follows Vitruvius’s precepts instead of real models. In contrast to the plain baths of Sforzinda, Alberti describes the baths of Diocletian as the paradigm of this building type, though they were far too large to be imitated in the Renaissance and, moreover, were criticized as a testimony of the vice of idleness. He treats at length antique theatres as models for modern architecture despite the fact that, as stated by Patrizi, for instance, theatres were no longer being built and antique plays were driven out of the cities because of their lack of morals and religious discipline. Though Alberti frequently states that he is concerned with modern architecture, he is referring equally to Antiquity. Writing about the house, he treats abruptly side by side where one would grab himself in the toga – in present not in ancient times –, and where oriels and merlons were to be placed or omitted. Surely these asides are works of science fiction from the past, after all.

The Account of the Golden Book on Plusiapolis

Filarete’s Libro changes its character when it deals with the city of Plusiapolis, i.e. “the rich town.” Instead of narrating how a city was erected in a story in which reality is rendered as a fiction in novel-like form, Filarete now adopts the mental distance typical of utopias. He accomplishes this shift by pretending to rely on an extrinsic source: an old account of a perished immemorial metropolis which was translated to him.

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84 Magl., f. 14v; Filarete, 1972, 1, 64.
85 Magl., f. 100r; Filarete, 1972, 1, 381.
86 Magl., f. 61r; Filarete, 1972, 1, 237.
91 Patrizi, De institutione..., VIII.14.
92 Alberti, De re aedificatoria, IX, 4 and IX, 2; ed. Orlandi, 1966, 809 et seqq., 791 et seqq.
93 Magl., ff. 101r et seqq.; Filarete, 1972, 1, 384 et seqq.
94 Magl., f. 104r; Filarete, 1972, 1, 396.
On the place where Plusiapolis once had risen, a «golden book» is found, containing a record of the city expressly intended to preserve it in memory after it is destroyed\(^95\). The text is written in Greek and Filippo acts as translator of it, which seems to indicate that he contributed to its conception.

One might argue, Plusiapolis must have lain in Liguria, because it is discovered by the sea in the territory of the lord of Sforzinda who is encryptedly identified with Francesco Sforza\(^96\). Genova at times fell under the rule of the Visconti. But as the perished metropolis has a Greek name and the record of it is written in Greek, another potential resonance would be with an ancient Greek city. Filarete did not yet know what Le Roy or Stuart and Revett would describe. His ideas might have been formed more by what Ciriaco d'Ancona or others said after their journey to the Aegean, or by what Filippo reported from his journey to Constantinople (1420 to 1427)\(^97\), and in his imagination an undefined Antiquity might have been mingled with late Byzantine elements. The shrine which preserves the Golden Book bears an inscription in «very ancient Greek, Hebrew and Arabic letters»\(^98\). Here vague ideas of ancient Greece and time immemorial seem to merge with those of Oriental, Arabic and generally foreign or strange regions. This spontaneous amalgamation was not unusual at that time, as is seen in pictures of the early Renaissance in which Christ, the apostles or the first martyrs are shown with antique Roman monuments as well as given Ottoman elements such as turbans, minarets and even the sign of the half-moon (Gentile Bellini, *Sermon of St. Mark in Alexandria* [1504-1507], or Vittore Carpaccio, cycle of the *Life of St. Stephen* [1511-1520]). According to the inscription of the shrine, the founders of Plusiapolis might come from the south-eastern part of the Mediterranean, i.e. from the region where the oldest cultures of the world originated, and many parts of the description of Plusiapolis can best be associated with old records of Babylon and Egypt. Alberti thought that high culture for the first time was developed in Greece, but Filarete assigned primary importance to the Egyptian culture: he, as already said, refers to Rome and Egypt as paradigms for the magnificent buildings of Antiquity\(^99\). He assumes that the Greek had learnt the human measure from the Egyptians, which in turn was applied to the order of columns, the most important element of antique architecture for the Renaissance\(^100\). In looking for a historic location for Plusiapolis the heroes of Antiquity also come to mind, who, after the fall of Troy, were said to have founded many cities in Europe. In Northern Italy Padova claimed as ancestor the wise Antenor. One might even think of the Phaician Protos who, as legend has it, founded Marseille. The Ligurians then also inhabited the region of Marseille. Strabo and Plutarch assume that the country of Phaiaia and specifically the Island of Scheria were located in the Atlantic. Odysseus is supposed to have landed there after his long period of wandering. This leads to the proximities of the archetypal utopias, i.e. Atlantis. These musings on the geographic and historic location of Plusiapolis serve the ultimate purpose of showing that there is no place to be defined. It is only clear that ancient Rome did not influence Plusiapolis. Roman architecture is referred to separately concerning only Sforzinda.

The treatment of Plusiapolis is not presented as a coherent story but is somewhat dismembered and inserted in the narration of the further circumstances of founding Sforzinda. Filarete now loses interest in buildings and the organism of the town. While the importance of architecture decreases, the social conditions come to the fore. Special laws and regulations are treated. While the report of Sforzinda is constrained to idealisation, in the context of Plusiapolis fundamentally new social conditions are invented, and prevailing ones are open to criticism (see below). Filarete concentrates his interest on the residences of the ruler, the school and the prison. The school and the prison, belonging to building types that rarely excelled in ingenious design, are distinguished mainly by the extraordinary concepts as to their functioning. The peculiarity of the main royal residence consists primarily in its unusual architectural traits as sign of an ideal constitution of the state.

The Royal Residences

By implication a monarchist constitution and class distinction are assumed even in Plusiapolis, but here the ruler had not merely the status of a tyrant such as the prince of Sforzinda and the leaders of most Renaissance Italian states. He was a king and was called «the Wise», as he was erudite in all sciences\(^101\). The Golden Book ends with an admonition of the king to the hereditary prince that is worthy of an ideal statesman\(^102\). In effect it resembles the letters that Filippo wrote to various Italian princes and also to Cosimo de' Medici reminding them that prudence and reason were the basis of their government\(^103\). Justice, according to the admonition of the king, was the noblest virtue of a ruler. Reason not emotions should prevail. The comparison of social conditions with architecture is resumed here. The state is seen as a wall: the patricians and

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95 Filarete, Libro architettónico, 171, 155r.
96 On this topic cf. Leila Whittemore and Mia Reinson Genoni's contributions in this volume.
97 Filarete, Libro architettónico, 171.
98 Filarete, Libro architettónico, 171.
99 Filarete, Libro architettónico, 171.
100 Filarete, Libro architettónico, 171.
101 Filarete, Libro architettónico, 171.
102 Filarete, Libro architettónico, 171.
103 Filarete, Libro architettónico, 171.
traders are like ashlar on the outside giving it strength; the plain people are compared to the layers of brick behind it and the others to filling material in between. The prince should erect the wall and take care of it. By practicing justice he would exchange washed-out stones or pull out roots that grew in the stonework and threatened the solidity:

Consider that you are the master builder of the wall. Protect it from evil! Tighten the loose stone; pull out the intruding root! Just as it is not allowed to break the stonework no circumstance should separate you from your people.104

The residence of the king in Plusiapolis was as magnificent as a Renaissance palace could be.105 Inside it was decorated with many cycles of mural paintings depicting great episodes from the oldest cultures, of Egypt, Babylon and ancient Persia. But the position of the building and its outer shape are more interesting than all the glamour inside. Plusiapolis resembled Sforzinda and real towns in that the royal residence and the main temple were located in the centre.106 But there was no castle, as it was needed elsewhere in reality. The palace in the centre demonstrates that it was the seat of an ideal ruler who, thanks to his virtues, was secure: the king lived there among his citizens and with no need to consider safely issues the palace was opened in arcades. Filarete normally does not comment on his description of buildings. Alberti, in contrast, provides general guidelines, to which he then adds the observation that the tyrant has to barricade himself, whereas the wise monarch whose rule is supported by affection of the people does not need to fortify his residence.107 Machiavelli writes that in times when good men ruled, when justice and peace reigned, the monarch lived «securely in the middle of his secure citizens».108 In the reality of Renaissance Italy it was only the doge of Venice who could dare to live as comfortably as the king of Plusiapolis in the middle of his city in a palace not fortified but opened in arcades. The other rulers and even the prince of Sforzinda, as was mentioned above, needed castles protected by the city walls far from the centres of their towns to live in security.

104 Filarete, Codex Magliabechianus, f. 110r. Building on the plan of a labyrinth, realized after the description in the Golden Book of Plusiapolis.

105 Magl., f. 168v; Filarete, 1972, II, 623.
106 Magl., ff. 105r-107v; Filarete, 1972, I, 398-408.
107 Magl., ff. 105r et seqq. (Filarete, 1972, I, 398 et seqq.); description of the temple: 107v et seqq. (I, 408 et seqq.).
108 Alberti, De re aedificatoria, V.1; ed. Orlandi, 1966, 333 et seq.
109 N. Machiavelli, Discorsi sopra la prima decade di Tito Livio, I; Bauer, 1965, 42 et seq.
In the country the king of Plusiapolis had a magnificent summer residence with hanging gardens and a labyrinth, obviously reminiscences of antique marvels, as the hanging gardens of Semiramis and the labyrinth of Daidalos. The Seven Wonders of the World fascinated Filarete as much as all the fantastic monuments of times long ago that are recorded in reports on Egypt, Babylon or even China (fig. 22)\textsuperscript{109}. Nevertheless Filarete’s utilitarian thinking did not disappear in these relations: writing about the royal residence and other buildings of Plusiapolis he did not forget to include the latrines and the sewers\textsuperscript{110}.

The Prison

Filarete treats the subject of criminal law with as little systematic attention as he had the public health care which was the frame of his hospital, but in his epic manner he paves the way for a preoccupation with it. The splendid presentation of the Golden Book reminds him of spectacular thefts of similar treasures that he had witnessed\textsuperscript{111}; parts of the treasure of San Marco and the reliquary with the heads of the Princes of the Apostles in the Lateran had been stolen in his time. The thieves were caught in both instances, gave back their loot and were executed. Afterwards Filarete mentions a characteristic trait of the legislation of Plusiapolis\textsuperscript{112} and cites literally in extenso what Diodorus reports on the legislation of the ancient Egyptians (see below)\textsuperscript{113}.

In Sforzinda, at first a regular type of prison is installed\textsuperscript{114}. The explanation of its functions reveals that it has comparatively pleasant chambers for debtors and gloomy cells for the condemned criminals, subdivided according to the kinds of their crimes: theft, murder, high treason, etc. It is tacitly assumed that the essential features of criminal law are known: the duration of imprisonment was much shorter than today. Prisons were meant for remand and coercive detention; infringers that had disturbed the peace or rioted were imprisoned briefly, debtors for a longer period; all other criminals, simple thieves as well as brutal murderers, just awaited their execution in prison\textsuperscript{115}. In the statutes of Milan imprisonment was envisaged only in exceptional cases\textsuperscript{116}.

In Plusiapolis, in contrast, the normal kind of punishment for all sorts of crime from theft to murder was lifelong imprisonment\textsuperscript{117}. The criminals were legally dead to the free society. As it was considered necessary provide deterrence from crime, punishment at the beginning of the imprisonment was differentiated accorded to the severity of the offence. But the penalties did not hurt incisively (not in relation to the terribly hard standards of that time) and they were lightened according to good conduct in the course of the imprisonment, and finally disappeared completely. The captives had to work in the prison, and were to be engaged preferably in the trades they formerly had practised. Their products were sold and the revenues used to finance their subsistence. Insolvents had to work off their debts\textsuperscript{118}. Innocent people were also admitted to the prison, if they wished, for instance people who were not able to earn a livelihood in freedom or the wives of captives. They could live and work in the prison, too, but they were permitted to sell their products on their own account. Children who were conceived during captivity grew up in the prison, were educated there and could marry free people. When they came of age and wanted to leave the prison they had to donate half of the wealth that they had earned with their work to the institution.

The motivation to give up the death penalty was, in the first instance, neither Christian charity nor the Platonic view assimilated by some Italian humanists that punishment should lead to improvement\textsuperscript{119}. Filarete was primarily concerned with efficiency: he specifies that only delinquents who were able to work should be saved from death; what should happen with the others remains open. He also planned terrible punishments through mutilation, but noted that the ability to work should not be impaired, as was often the case in reality. Obstinate violators of the prison discipline were threatened with death. The prince of Sforzinda considers the prison of Plusiapolis reasonable because it is a pity to lose irretrievably all the capacities of an able person who has committed a crime threatened by death penalty\textsuperscript{120}.

Since the beginning of the Renaissance humanists criticized the criminal law that was in force. The majority of them had studied law, as did Filofo and Alberti\textsuperscript{121}. Italy was then the centre for jurisprudence in Europe (as it was home to the University of Bologna) and was the most progressive country in terms of legislation and the penal system. Roman law, which at least theoretically determined jurisprudence and jurisdiction already in the High Middle Ages, contained the «utopian statement» (to use the words of Edward M. Peters) that prisoners were locked in for detention and not for

\textsuperscript{109} Magl., f. 7r (FILARETE, 1972, I, 37 et seq.) enumerates the marvels of the world; Magl., ff. 7r, 106v-107r (I, 38, 405 et seq.) refer to the monuments of Semiramis. Filarete above all enjoyed describing labyrinths: those in Crete, of Porsenna and in Egypt (Magl., ff. 2r, 38r, 7r, 151v; I, 13, 149, 36 et seq., II, 564), and some in or near to Sforzinda (Magl., ff. 37v-38r, 98v, 110r, 120v-121r; I, 148 et seq., 376 et seq., 417, II, 450-452).

\textsuperscript{110} Magl., f. 105r; FILARETE, 1972, I, 399.

\textsuperscript{111} Magl., f. 102v; FILARETE, 1972, I, 387.

\textsuperscript{112} Magl., ff. 164v et seq.; FILARETE, 1972, II, 609 et seq.

\textsuperscript{113} Magl., f. 169v-2r; FILARETE, 1972, II, 623-625.

\textsuperscript{114} Magl., ff. 71v-72v; FILARETE, 1972, I, 275 et seq.


\textsuperscript{116} BOHNE, I, 1922, 105 et seq.

\textsuperscript{117} Magl., ff. 164v-166v; FILARETE, 1972, II, 609-616.

\textsuperscript{118} Magl., f. 167r; FILARETE, 1972, II, 618.

\textsuperscript{119} DEMANDIT, 1993, 102 et seq.; VON BEOZOLD, 1898, 464 et seq., note 4.

\textsuperscript{120} Magl., f. 166v; FILARETE, 1972, II, 617.

\textsuperscript{121} G. ROSSI, Lo scuolfe giuridico nella biblioteca di Leon Battista Alberti, in Leon Battista Alberti. La biblioteca di un umanista, ed. by R. Cardini, Firenze 2005, 165-174.
punishment, and this ordinance was regarded the formal doctrine on the subject. In Roman law the death penalty was only envisaged for high treason. Long-since some critics had raised their voices against capital punishment. The humanists particularly disapproved of the unreasonable cruelty of punishments that were then applied. Alberti, in his treatise De Iure, advocates for a more humane treatment of crime. However, he, as was true of most other humanists, did not question capital punishment, and he did not even dismiss the punishment of theft with death.

The idea to punish crime through labour in a prison was utopian in Filarete's time. Nevertheless it was seminal. The initiative was not given by criminal law but by relief for the poor. The flourishing mercantile society of the cities, compared with the old rural feudal system, had the disadvantage of generating uprooted unemployed people, beggars and tramps. To avert the potential danger of crime that resulted, the idea emerged to create institutions, in which the socially weak could find housing and support, for which they had to work. This origin is seen in Filarete's regulation that innocent people may enter the prison if they cannot provide a livelihood in the free society. If one considers that hospitals were intended for the needy of all kinds one can assume that the reform of the public health care in Milan also influenced Filarete's ideas on prisons. The term for the prison in Plusiapolis «Ergastolon», Greek: «workhouse (according to Filarete: 'prison') for slaves» or the Latin borrowing established itself all over Europe. The first precursors of workhouses developed in Genova (Alberg dei Poveri, 1539) and particularly in Bridgwell (England, 1552). From the late sixteenth century onward, workhouses and workhouse-prisons spread over the Northern Netherlands and, following this example, in Northern Germany. In the middle of the fifteenth century an alternative to death penalty emerged in Italy and also in the rest of Europe: galley punishment, that is to say, forced labour as oarsman on galleys.

The School of Plusiapolis and its Integration in Sforzinda

Of all institutions in Plusiapolis the school is treated the most thoroughly. Filarete seems to have considered it to be as important as the hospital for Sforzinda. The architectural disposition was «practical» (commodo); ornaments are not mentioned (fig. 23). The garden «had only useful plants». As did the hospital, the school had a large subterranean canal system that provided water for the disposal of refuse and for driving mills, and as was true in the hospital the mills served to maintain the institution. The school rules are the decisive element, described in great detail. Filarete even mentions a collaborator, a certain Lorenzo da Corneto who, together with Filelfo and him, helped develop the conception.

Filarete presents the teaching courses and schedule for the day; even the administration and the financing of the teachers are considered. With no restrictions as to the social background, the pupils entered at the age of six to nine and normally completed their schooling at the age of twenty to twenty five. Children that did not board at school were also admitted to classes. Maintenance and teaching were free because, as the architect explains, «how many intellects are lost because they have not the opportunity to learn either because of poverty or lack of instruction». When they were employed later on, the former pupils paid back part of the costs.

The institution is based on the idea of a comprehensive school in a very broad sense. Everything was taught there, from primary education to handcrafts and to the upper sciences that normally were reserved for universities. To this were added exercises in dancing, fencing, music and the like that belonged to the culture of the higher society. Filarete specially emphasizes some education in the free arts. Up to the age of fourteen, education was not linked to a fixed profession. The boys should browse in all subjects. At this stage they seem to have studied similar subjects as children in public schools; elementary schools and abacus schools taught reading and writing, arithmetic and basic geometry; afterwards grammar schools educated its students in Latin, and via antique literature they provided historic and intellectual education. The boys of Plusiapolis apparently were supposed to become skilled in all of these subjects, as they remained in school until fourteen. After the basic education they chose a profession, according to their experiences and to their inclinations and abilities. He who wanted to work manually entered into one of the workshops belonging to the school and there could sit for his examination for master. He who studied the upper sciences could stay in the school until the age of thirty. Filarete seems primarily to have intended to raise the level of education for manual labourers: manual workers should at least visit an abacus school and possibly even learn some Latin. The

124 H. Hetzel, Die Todesstrafe in ihrer kulturgeschichtlichen Entwicklung, Berlin 1870.
125 G. Mancini, Vita di L. B. Alberti, Firenze 1911, 142 et seqq.
127 Book XVII; Mag., ff. 132r-142r; Filarette, 1972, II, 493-528.
128 Magl., f. 140r; Filarette, 1972, II, 512 et seqq.
129 Magl., f. 139v; Filarette, 1972, II, 500.
duration of the apprenticeship was unusually long (six years instead of the typical four to five years); the requirements were high (calling for a masterpiece, which was not customary everywhere).

Filarete's draft for a model school is part of the efforts to develop a school system that accompanied the rise of science and education in the Renaissance. The demands that were made on education grew rapidly. Latin teaching expanded widely. Since the beginning of the fifteenth century, towns employed teachers for reading and writing, grammar and mathematics. At the same time the number of freelance teachers increased in the cities, composed in part by well-known humanists. Theoretically it was postulated that children of all social classes should be able to go to school. Practically the quality of education depended on the social position and the financial means of the parents. The orientation of professional careers according to the individual character of the pupils, as is provided for in Filarete's school, is also a reflection of the spirit of the time. It is discussed in contemporary treatises on education.

Right at the beginning of the Renaissance an abundance of literature on education and schooling was published. First Renaissance authors recommend education to help develop a good character and good manners. Then children should study the trivium and the quadrivium, that is to say, all basic literary and mathematical subjects. In addition children were advised to acquire general skills. However, they should not delve too thoroughly into a single area. Boys should not only be trained mentally but also engage in physical activities. Aristotle recalls that the ancient Greeks, beside teaching grammar, included gymnastics, music and sometimes drawing in the education of boys. This served as a guideline for the formation of a Renaissance curriculum. Alberti, in his treatise on painting, writes about ancient Greece: «Freeborn youths who had enjoyed a free education, were not only introduced to reading and writing, geometry and music, but also to the

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132 Cf. for example L'educazione umanistica in Italia. Testi scelti e illustrati, ed. by E. Garin, Bari 1959.

133 ARISTOTELES, Politics, VIII.3; DOLCH, 1965, 40-43; cf. PLINIUS, Naturalis historia, XXXV, 77.
art of drawing\textsuperscript{134}. Already Pier Paolo Vergerio in his treatise \textit{De ingenuis moribus et liberalibus studii adolescentiae} (Padova, around 1402/1403) presents as exemplary the custom of the ancient Greek to educate youth in the art of drawing or in fine arts\textsuperscript{135}. Matteo Palmieri advises in his treatise on social life that children should be guided to the sciences and should practice an art, like painting, woodcarving and «imagining good buildings» (\textit{imaginare digni ediﬁci})\textsuperscript{136}. Of course they should not immediately strive to be a perfect grammarian, or become a brilliant musician or try to advance to master sculptor or architect\textsuperscript{137}. The basic education in Plusiapolis conforms to the ideal standard that is set in the literature on education in the Renaissance. Filarete's immediate model was undoubtedly the famous elite school that Vittorino da Feltre founded for Gian Francesco Gonzaga, the ruler of, and, from 1432 onward, the margrave of Mantua\textsuperscript{138}. Filarete's humanist mentor, Filefo, was an admirer of Vittorino and sent his son to his school\textsuperscript{139}. Francesco Sforza and Gian Francesco's successor Ludovico Gonzaga were on good terms. Ludovico participated in the laying of the foundation stone of the Ospedale Maggiore. He had shortly before reformed the hospital system in Mantua and begun to build a hospital, whose disposition inﬂuenced Filarete\textsuperscript{140}. Vittorino's school was an ideal place for education. There the offspring of the Gonzaga were educated together with other children of all social classes, with children of other princes, humanists and merchants but also with children of simpler origin provided they were talented, honest and decent. Vittorino da Feltre taught a broad intellectual, literary and mathematical curriculum as well as physical disciplines like dancing or riding and activities in which mind and hand work come together, such as music and, in my opinion, the fine arts. Filarete worked out the regulations of his school in great detail, as if he seriously believed that Francesco Sforza would put his ideas into practice. The individual regulations were quite feasible, but such a comprehensive school did not exist anywhere\textsuperscript{141}. Filarete states himself:

This will be an affair that will last for eternity and, moreover, an affair that has never been done before, though there are places of study [universities] in this country where boarding students are living in the same way. But often they pay a certain amount and this applies only to students in letters, while other crafts are also necessary and noble, for there are good masters in them. Moreover, all intellects are not equal. Thus [in the new school conceived by Filarete] it will be possible for every mind to be trained\textsuperscript{142}. Basic education of children in municipal or private schools really had to be paid for. However, in Italy entry into a workshop was free of charge, and the practice was quite the contrary, as the master paid the apprentice a wage. Elsewhere Filarete emphasizes that the institution envisaged by him was more than a university because it included manual work\textsuperscript{143}. But this was just the reason why it was not feasible at the time. Social barriers, guild restrictions and academic privileges could not simply be cancelled. Until today the comprehensive school conceived by Filarete still appears to be utopian.

In Sforzinda the education system as well as the prison are adopted from Plusiapolis. The school in Plusiapolis was limited to boys; in addition the prince of Sforzinda founds a girls' school\textsuperscript{144}. It is a charitable organization: girls should come from poor but noble families. Apart from this, education follows what was customary: the children learn to read, sew, embroider, weave and the like, and they are permitted to play music, sing and dance. The emancipation of women is not one of the incisive innovations of the Renaissance. All the same, even in the girls' school of Sforzinda, individual inclinations and abilities, as with boys, should determine what became of the children.

The newly founded boys' school of Sforzinda was named «Archicodomus» meaning \textit{principio delle virtù}, foundations of abilities or virtues. The girls' school was named «Domus honestatis», house of honesty. The regulation on the admittance of girls says that they need not be aristocratic but only virtuous (\textit{virtuosa}) and honourable, because she who possessed capability or virtues (\textit{virtù}) would be noble too.

Next to the schools the «House of Virtues and Vices» is founded in Sforzinda (figs. 24-25)\textsuperscript{145}. \textit{Virtù} here is not only to be understood in the moral sense but also refers to abilities, knowledge. Vice is pleasure derived from manual and mental laxity. The institution serves «to acquire virtues and competence in sciences, physical arts and manual work, and even to practice all vices». Filarete here drafts less a real building than an architectural symbol for Xenophon's parable of Hercules at the crossroads\textsuperscript{146}, formed according to the words of Christ: «Go through the narrow gate! For the gate is large that leads to perdition, and the road leading to it is broad and many use it. But the gate that leads to life, is tight and the road there is narrow and only a few find it»\textsuperscript{147}.

\textsuperscript{135} P. P. VERGERIO, \textit{De ingenuis moribus et liberalibus studii adolescentiae}, in \textit{L’educazione umanista...}, 1959, 88; GRENDEL, 1989, 117 et seqq.
\textsuperscript{137} PALMIERI, 1982, 42.
\textsuperscript{138} W. H. WOODWARD, \textit{Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators}, Cambridge 1897.
\textsuperscript{139} A. LUZIO - R. RENIER, «Il Filefo e l’umanesimo alla corte dei Gonzaga», \textit{Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana}, 16 (1890), 119 et seqq.
\textsuperscript{140} P. CARPEGGIANI, «Congruenze e parallellismi nell’architettura lombarda della seconda metà del ’400» in Filarete e Luca Fancelli, \textit{Arte Lombarda}, 38/39 (1973), 53-69; \textit{Ospedali lombardi del Quattrocento...}, 1995, 73-91.
\textsuperscript{142} Magl., ff. 133v.-134r; FILARETE, 1972, II, 500 et seqq.
\textsuperscript{143} Magl., f. 132v.; FILARETE, 1972, II, 495.
\textsuperscript{144} Magl., ff. 140r-142r; FILARETE, 1972, II, 523-528.
\textsuperscript{145} Magl., ff. 142r-149r; FILARETE, 1972, II, 529-553.
\textsuperscript{146} XENOPHON, \textit{Memorabilia}, II.1,21-34.
\textsuperscript{147} Matthew 7:13-14.
comfortable road in the House of Virtues and Vices is accessible through a gate with the inscription: «Come in for your pleasure, that you will cry over afterwards» and leads to places of lust, brothels, pubs, cook shops and gambling dens that «unfortunately are in use» (benché la sua trista usanza)\(^{148}\). The less comfortable road is accessible through a door with the inscription «This is the road on which under pain you will gain virtù» and leads to the sciences respectively the seven artes liberales\(^{149}\). Lectures are held in various levels, and one can receive a doctorate. An allegory of virtù that conquers vice crowns the fantastic tower-like building\(^{150}\). Its peak is reached only by those who have studied the sciences or are experienced in the art of war. By experienced men of war Filarete certainly means princes like Francesco Sforza or Ludovico Gonzaga. As to the scientists he surely had in mind the type of modern humanist like Filelfo as opposed to the vain magisters and doctors that are unmasked in so many writings of the Renaissance. As idealized as the description of the House of Virtues and Vices is, the pragmatic sense of reality is kept: Filarete considers the vices, that «unfortunately are in use» adding a prison and a guard to control them, just as in Sforzinda he takes care that locations such as brothels, pubs, etc. are provided for in which one could live out the vices as far as the law permitted.

The schooling system conceived by Filarete fits with the broad spectre of abilities in the mental domain, the manual exercises and physical dexterity that belonged to the ideal of a cultivated man such as the one Baldassare Castiglione describes in the Cortegiano (1516). It corresponds even more to the ideal of a prince who rules as wisely as a philosopher but also has practical abilities that help him, particularly in times of war, so that he, like the prince of Sforzinda, is capable of drafting a citadel himself. Finally it is linked to the claim emerging with the Renaissance that the fine arts belong to the sciences. Erasmus of Rotterdam gave art education a literary meaning, because those that had learnt to draw contours would gain a more precise handwriting, as those who were practiced in music generally would pronounce more clearly even when they did not sing\(^{134}\). On that occasion he also states that most children were ‘naturally’ attracted to the art of drawing and painting. No wonder under such circumstances that the education of the painter came to be presented as model for education in general\(^{132}\).

Filarete’s conception of education suits the high demands that lay on architects in particular. Already Vitruvius had asserted that the architect should combine artistic abilities and practical experience with basic knowledge in most of the sciences\(^{153}\). Filarete, and many others who followed him, repeated this conception\(^{154}\). The «House of the Architect» of Sforzinda is linked to the «House of Virtues and Vices», and shows the same allegory of virtù that conquers vice\(^{159}\).

There was no special education for architects in the Italian Renaissance\(^{156}\). The charge to project and supervise important building enterprises was entrusted to artists, painters, sculptors and mainly to goldsmiths like Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, or Filarete. This honour was connected with their social position. In Florence, where Filarete grew up, building workers belonged to the lower guilds, whereas painters and goldsmiths were members of the upper guilds. Goldsmiths held the highest position because they dealt with precious materials and also

\(^{148}\) Magl., f. 143v; Filarete, 1972, II, 535.

\(^{149}\) Magl., f. 143v; Filarete, 1972, II, 535.

\(^{150}\) Magl., ff. 142v-143r; Filarete, 1972, II, 532-534.


\(^{153}\) Vitruvius, De architettura, I, 1.

\(^{154}\) Magl., ff. 113r-114r; Filarete, 1972, II, 427-430 (as part of the Golden Book, but with explicit reference to Vitruvius). Alberti treats the subject with some reservations concerning Vitruvius: De re aedificatoria, IX.10; ed. Orlandi, 1966, 852-862. He intends here not only to outline the large array of knowledge needed to the architect, but to establish architecture as a genuine science of its own.

\(^{155}\) Magl., ff. 142v-143r; Filarete, 1972, II, 532-534.

traded them. They were members of the guild known as the Arte Por Santa Maria, along with the rich manufacturers and merchants, the silk weavers. Thomas More in *Utopia* treats them as typical moneybags. They had to afford a higher education, and they were able to do so, because they normally came from wealthy houses.

**Utopian Traits of the Account on Plusiapolis**

The treatment of Plusiapolis bears distinctive utopian traits in the literal sense, i.e. it resembles in some respects the *Utopia* of Thomas More (1516). The fictitious pretension to rely on an extrinsic account complies with the records of a sailor invented by More. The geographic and historic location of *Utopia* remains as vaguely defined as that of Plusiapolis. In both cases an ideal government is adopted. In detail the constitution of *Utopia* is different from that of Plusiapolis, but in all Renaissance utopias autocrats rule and division into classes prevail. Though *Utopia* is dissociated from reality by irony, it is supposed, as Filarete's *Libro*, to be considered together with the image of society defined by reason and usefulness. *Utopia* in its title is described as "useful and entertaining". Both authors adopt a pragmatic view of society.

The relation of *Utopia* as well as that of Plusiapolis are equally based on considerations on legislation, and they both focus on similar points, though this commonality is obscured by Filarete's somewhat confused narrative style. For example, Filarete mentions that in Plusiapolis there were "not as many laws as nowadays". This sounds like an answer to the humanists' complaint, dating back to the days of Coluccio Salutati, in regards to the unmanageable amount of legal commentaries. The *Utopians* had only few simple laws and More motivates this constriction with the argument that "they think it completely unjust to bind men by a set of laws that are

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158 The entirety of More’s title is provided in the note previous.

159 Magl., f. 167r; FILARETE 1972, II, 618.

too many to be read and too obscure for anyone to understand.\textsuperscript{161}

In \textit{Utopia}, as in Plutarchos, capital punishment is replaced by detention. The fictitious report on \textit{Utopia} given by the fictional sailor Raphael Hythloday is preceded by a discussion on good governance and good legislation. A focal point of the discussion is the customary practice to punish thefts with death. The avant-gardist denies the adequacy of so hard a punishment. Firstly, he argues, it is unjust because no earthly good is worth a life. Secondly, capital punishment is inefficient. In his opinion theft is inevitable in the existing capitalist class society, as those who have nothing to live on sometimes have no other choice than to steal to gain the means of subsistence. Moreover, the destruction of labour by capital punishment merely harms society. From this pragmatic point of view evolves the vision of a community that secures the livelihood for all its members. Already in the foregoing discussion the existing social conditions appear as cause for theft and their revision as the ideal solution to avoid it. The avant-gardist proposes to punish thieves with forced labour as this gave society a real benefit. Afterwards this kind of punishment is described as an essential element of the utopian society\textsuperscript{162).

More criticized selfishness and greed for riches that do not consider the wellbeing of the community and the moral order. However, he does not take as his starting point a discussion of moral ideals, philosophical speculations or romantic dreams, but rather begins with a pragmatic analysis of reality and with concrete legal considerations. He was trained as a lawyer and active as a politician. More justifies this conception rather like Filarete:

Generally, the gravest crimes are punished by slavery, for they think that this deters offenders just as much as instant capital punishment, and is more beneficial to the state. Slaves, moreover, are permanent and visible reminders that crime does not pay. If the slaves rebel against their condition, then, like savage beasts which neither bars nor chains can tame, they are put instantly to death\textsuperscript{163}.

Foundation in Antiquity: Philosophy, Historiography, and Pragmatism

The idealization of society was backed by Antiquity. Plato has created the most prominent antique model of utopia\textsuperscript{164}. The basis is formed by the theory of the state, presented in his dialogue \textit{Politeia}, commonly known today as \textit{The Republic}. Already in this work class distinction and autocratic regiments were favoured as an ideal. Even Aristotle, Cicero or Plutarch advocated them. Plato criticizes democracy because excessive freedom, that is to say, permissiveness and lack of restraint, led to injustice and could fast revert to undue slavery. Plato's ideal was that monarchs or an upper class who governed the state behave like wise philosophers or inversely that philosophers direct the government. Plato demonstrates his theory in the fictitious example of Atlantis. Atlantis is a mythical island that may have existed in prehistoric times and «beyond the Pillars of Hercules» in an unattainable distance. The account of the philosophically reflected myth is said to derive from a holy script of the Ancient Egyptians that was translated by a priest. Plato's theory of the state was not completely unknown in the Middle Ages\textsuperscript{165}. Immediately at the beginning of the Renaissance it was discussed in-depth. Philosophers adopted it with enthusiastic admiration. Marsilio Ficino called Plato's ideal state the Heavenly Jerusalem on earth. The panegyrics on cities, states and princes readily made use of Plato's conception. Bruni paraphrases it in his panegyric on Florence, Decembrio in his description of the Milanese society. Decembrio and others transferred Plato's idea that philosophers should rule the state or that kings should be philosophers to the prince whom they served\textsuperscript{166}. Alberti in his treatise on architecture often refers to Plato\textsuperscript{167}.

These references mainly stayed in the domain of panegyrics and theory. In practice humanists had little use of purely theoretical principles; the pragmatists rejected them. Plato, the Neo-Platonists and Aristotle were predominantly discussed in traditional philosophy as systematic thinkers. In general, systematic philosophy did not much contribute to the new accomplishments of the Renaissance\textsuperscript{168}. To guide their thinking about society, the humanists preferred conventional wisdom or historical reports that started from individual examples. Filelbo and others agreed with Plutarch that a good regiment depended far more on the moral quality of the individual legislator than on the general political mechanisms that were created with the laws\textsuperscript{169}.

Francesco Patrizi in the introduction to his treatise on the state argues against radical mental constructions that disregard actual conditions: «Plato has as result that the good architect prefers to tear down badly built constructions or constructions made of bad materials than to build new ones»\textsuperscript{170}. Later on he says:

\textsuperscript{162} \textit{More}, 1992, 62 et seq.
\textsuperscript{163} \textit{More}, 1992, 62 et seq. Historians and literary historians have long ago pointed out that Filarete's thoughts on the penal system resemble those of More, but this, to my knowledge, has had no response in art history; \textit{von Bezold}, 1898, 465 et seq.; \textit{von Betme}, 1968, 226 et seq.
\textsuperscript{164} \textit{Deamont}, 1993, 71-108.
\textsuperscript{165} E. Garin, \textit{Scienza e vita civile nel rinascimento italiano}, Bari 1965, 38-47.
\textsuperscript{166} For the debate over Plato in Milan cf. \textit{Storia di Milano, VI: Il Ducato Vicentino...}, 1955, 601 et seq.
\textsuperscript{167} \textit{Bauer}, 1965, 32-42.
\textsuperscript{168} A. Bock, \textit{Die Rezeption der Anzie in den romanischen Literaturen der Renaissance}, Berlin 1976, especially 90 et seq.
\textsuperscript{170} \textit{Patrizi}, \textit{De institutione...}, I.2, cf IV.1; \textit{von Bezold}, 1898, 448 et seq.
I do not believe that every city is qualified to get a perfect government that is sustainable. One must choose carefully so that nothing is lacking, or, if opportunity and means are available, rather build a new town. For it is far more difficult to adjust an old town to modern civilization or to rearrange a badly built one than to found and build an entirely new town.171

The fundamental renovation of Rome accomplished by pope Sixtus IV at the beginning of the Renaissance was celebrated with an inscription on the entrance to the Vatican ending in the sentence: minus est condere quam colere (it is less to found than to maintain).172

Sometimes the humanists even mocked systematic philosophy. One example is Filelfo's Convivio mediolanensis of 1443, in which, among other things, Plato's 'idea' and Aristotle's critique of it are discussed.173 In The Praise of Folly (1509) Erasmus of Rotterdam shows how distant pure logic is from life and mocks Plato's idea that philosophers should control government: «But if you look into the histories you will find beyond question that states were never worse off than when the kingship fell to some philosopher or bookworm.»174 In Utopia philosophy incidentally comes off badly, too. The scholars of Utopia are very well-versed in all the liberal arts and in the sciences. But of the famous philosophers in the real world of More, they do not know anyone, not even from hearsay.

But while they equal the ancients in almost all other subjects, they are far from matching the inventions of our modern logicians. In fact they have not discovered even one of those elaborate rules about restrictions, amplifications, and suppositions which our own schoolboys study in the «Small Logicals». They are far from being able to speculate on «second intentions», that not one of them was able to conceive of «man-in-general», though I pointed straight at him with my finger, and he, is as you well know, bigger than a giant, maybe even a colossus.175

It is mainly practical moral philosophy that arouses interest in Utopia.

Alberti, in his treatise Momus seu del principe (before 1450), for the first time in the Renaissance transfers the subject of an alternative society to literature.176 In the preface he announces that the work deals with the prince who, as he says based on Plato, «like the rational soul rules the entire body of the state» and thus stands for the ideal regimen.177 However, the subject is treated ironically. This attitude had a precedent in the comedy The Birds by Aristophanes and was afterward adopted even by More. As in Poggio Bracciolini's treatise De infelicitate principum (1434), reality turns out to be the contrary of the ideal. Jupiter has decided to create a better new world. The plan fails because of the weakness of men and gods. Nobody is capable of delivering a usable conception. Jupiter at the beginning wants to join the philosophers to find out what the new world should look like. He assumes that they were wiser than the gods.178 He has the «divine Plato» searched to follow his advice. But Plato cannot be found. Someone says that he was far away in the invisible state he had built.179 Finally the philosophers turn out to be useless: they quarrel among each other over almost everything, they act up as omniscient but only speak incomprehensibly of what is known to everybody.180 The conviction arises that painters by observing contours gain more knowledge than philosophers through profound speculation.181 This dictum evokes Erasmus's idea on the advantage of art education cited above and in general reflects the typical position of the Renaissance, which is expressed by the sentence ascribed to Prolemy: «A spirit capable to discern the things follows the truth more than he who strives for the supreme in science».182 As it is known that Filelfo borrowed a manuscript of Momus from Alberti, Filarete might have had notice of it.

Antique literature on history sometimes was a better basis than mere theory for reflections on the ideal state as it offered individual examples. More derived his idea to abolish private property and some rules that were applied in Utopia from Plutarch's account on the reform of society that Lycurgus enforced in Sparta. The accounts of Euhemeros and Jambulos on two islands in the distant Indian Ocean influenced Utopia as well as Tommaso Campanella's La città del sole (written in Italian 1603 and published in Latin in 1623 in Frankfurt). Diodorus Siculus has handed down these records in his Bibliotheca Historica.184 This work was widely read in the Renaissance. Alberti often quotes it in his treatise on architecture and mentions it along with Atlantis as an example.

171 Patrizi, De institutione..., VII.1 and VIII.1.
175 More, 1992, 49 et seq.; cf. 57 et seq.
177 Alberti, 1993, 11; Plato, Politia, 441e.
178 Alberti, 1993, 237 et seq.
179 Alberti, 1993, 241, 297 et seq.
181 Alberti, 1993, 335.
183 Manzini, 1911, 269 et seq.
of the accounts on ideal states. Around 1450 Diodorus' 'world history' was translated from Greek to Latin; the translation was printed in 1472.\textsuperscript{185} In the introduction Diodorus states that historiography serves to teach how to act rightly. His conspicuously frequent accounts of societies, such as those of India and Ancient Egypt, which are apparently ideal but are described as reality, seem to fulfill this function.\textsuperscript{186} In particular the conventions and laws of Ancient Egypt clearly appear as exemplary: Diodorus maintains that Lycurgus, Plato and Solon absorbed many of these ideas in their concepts of legislation.

Diodorus reports that Egypt was a monarchy and had a class society. The pharaohs could not rule without restrictions and even in their political decisions were tied to laws and regulations. Legal certainty was emphasized to ban the fear of arbitrariness. Laws should educate, they should lead to a comprehensive, auspicious formation of the character to the goal. In Diodorus' opinion good laws are not those that make man wealthy in the easiest way but those that make his character the most valuable for his fellow human beings and at the same time are best suited for life in the community.\textsuperscript{187} Moreover, the laws should be efficient. For instance, in collecting debts only wealth could be drawn on, not life and limb; Greek laws are criticized for allowing debtors to be put in jail while at the same time they forbade the taking of things indispensable to life, like ploughs.\textsuperscript{188} Diodorus reports that one of the kings as sign of humanity even wanted to abolish the death penalty and replace it by forced labour. The condemned had to help build dams, canals and the like. This had given society great benefit instead of useless satisfaction.\textsuperscript{189}

The laws on theft paradigmatically show the spirit that Diodorus attributes to the Egyptian state order.

There was a very strange law in Egypt concerning the practice of theft. It stipulated that whoever wanted to practice this activity had to be registered in a list of the chief thief and had to deliver all the stolen goods immediately to him. Accordingly the victim of theft had to deposit a list of the missing goods there and report place, day and hour of the loss. In this way the stolen goods were easily found. The victim of theft got them back, but had to pay a quarter of their value to the chief thief who on his part remunerated the thief.\textsuperscript{190}

The law itself may have seemed odd in the Renaissance but the pragmatism with which Diodorus accounts for it corresponded to the new mentality: As it is impossible to abolish theft the legislator found a way to retrieve all the stolen goods for a small fee.\textsuperscript{191} The reflections on how to deal legally with theft that stand at the outset of the fantastic communist society which Thomas More opposed to reality is based on a similar foundation as in ancient Egypt according to Diodorus.

Filarete often quotes Diodorus and mentions him by name three times.\textsuperscript{192} Filelfo probably translated Diodorus into Italian for him.\textsuperscript{193} There are only two antique authors on whom Filarete relies more: Vitruvius and Pliny the Elder who both concern architecture. Diodorus' name merely appears in the context of Plusiapolis. There it serves for instance as confirmation that one should not try save on costs when building, as mentioned above. Primarily Filarete cites literally in extenso what Diodorus reports on the legislation of the ancient Egyptians.\textsuperscript{194} Diodorus prefigures, beside individual measures as the treatment of insolvent debtors, the idea to replace capital punishment with forced labour and in general the pragmatic view on the purpose of punishment. The best example for this is the regulation of theft instead of its punishment, because it could by no means be eradicated. It is evident that this mentality also influenced Thomas More although he does not explicitly refer to Diodorus. Plato on the other hand is less present in Filarete's Libro. Because Atlantis is the most famous, it has of course been examined, in terms of ways it could have served as model for Filarete.\textsuperscript{195} But such research produced only general parallels that can be explained as well or even better in other ways.\textsuperscript{196} These parallels include the form of dialogue, the interest in the geographic position of the town (related to Sforzinda), the distinction of classes and the like. Filarete never quotes Plato.

That Filarete treats education is natural if one considers the high importance the subject had in the Renaissance. In addition it had, as already mentioned, always been customary in city panegyrics to emphasize how much talent, prudence, culture, competence and performance honoured the citizens. Bruni and Decembrio address this, too. The Florentine chancellor Coluccio Salutati in his polemics against Antonio Loschi, Gian Galeazzo Visconti's secretary, boasts about the culture and knowledge of the Florentine people.\textsuperscript{197} Giovanni Villani in his Florentine chronicle (until 1364) enumerates in all detail how many schools there were, how many children learnt to read, how many learnt to calculate and how many

\textsuperscript{186} DIODORUS, Bibliotheca Historica, I.69 et seqq., II.35-42.
\textsuperscript{187} DIODORUS, Bibliotheca Historica, I.93.
\textsuperscript{188} DIODORUS, Bibliotheca Historica, I.79.
\textsuperscript{189} DIODORUS, Bibliotheca Historica, I.65; also HERODOTUS, Historiae, II.137.
\textsuperscript{190} DIODORUS, Bibliotheca Historica, I.80.
\textsuperscript{191} DIODORUS, Bibliotheca Historica, I.80.
\textsuperscript{192} By name: Magl., II. 168r.; 169r.; 176v (FILARETE, 1972, II, 621, 623, 649); indirectly: Magl., II. 106r.; 107r.; 153r.; 159v.; 179v (FILARETE, 1972, I, 404, 406, 407; II, 571, 572, 593, 660).
\textsuperscript{193} Poggio Bracciolini and Pier Candido Decembrio were the first to translate Diodor into Latin for pope Nicholas V. BORSI, 1893.
\textsuperscript{194} Magl., I. 169r-v; FILARETE, 1972, II. 623 et seq.
\textsuperscript{195} ONIANI, 1971.
\textsuperscript{197} LENTZEN, 1986, 14 et seq.
learnt grammar and logics. The population of *Utopia* and other countries far away from reality is cultivated, prudent and well educated, too. Therefore it might be assumed that drafts of ideal schools are a typical element of the utopian genre. But this is not the case. In *Utopia* whosoever wants to may listen to scientific lectures, but there are no further links in the training of as different professional categories as in Plutapiolis.

Utopias perpetuate class barriers. The authors of them, in contrast to Filarete, were men of letters, and the association between university and workshops of artisans under the same roof contradicted their elevated rank. In spite of all convergence, a certain distance usually remained between brain workers and manual workers, especially when the artists concretely dared to compete with men of letters. This is dramatically evident in Leonardo da Vinci's reproach:

I am fully conscious that, not being a literary man, certain presumptuous persons will think that they may reasonably blame me; alleging that I am not a man of letters. Foolish folk! do they not know that I might retort as Marius did to the Roman Patricians by saying: That they, who deck themselves out in the labours of others will not allow me my own. They will say that I, having no literary skill, cannot properly express that which I desire to treat of; but they do not know that my subjects are to be dealt with by experience rather than by words...  

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199 G. Villani, *Cronica fiorentina*, XI.93-94.

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