"PLANNING THE PLANNING PROCESS":

A CASE STUDY

ERRATA

p. 35, paragraph 3, line 3:
"refused" should be changed to "sniffed out".

The whole sentence should not be in quotes.

Corrado Poli
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With this monograph Corrado Poli makes a contribution on several levels. A variety of themes, interwoven in the argument, command attention. At an obvious level, this is a study of the planning problems of the large, prosperous, and yet-uninformed region of the Veneto. Underlying this descriptive level, however, are analyses of the primitive structure of the Italian state, of the imperfect integration of the Italian "systems" of cities, of the many obstacles -- bureaucratic and physical -- to the efficient pursuit of everyday life, and of the tribulations of the struggle for national development. As a Venetian not long removed from the South, Poli is acutely aware of the contradictions in the Italian model of development, and brings that perspective to the analysis of this very northern area.

Read as a commentary on these themes as well as a depiction of the Veneto region, this slim monograph opens many vistas on the "problem" of Italy. In the warp and woof of his argument, Poli exposes flashes of color which illuminate the fabric of Italian existence. These glimpses call out for more extended treatment, as in the brief references to the importance of the informal or "black" manufacturing sector. While the region of Veneto is the subject, one cannot escape the impression that Italian development is the leitmotiv. In addition to giving us an insightful treatment of the physical planning problems of the region, Poli has produced some tantalizing commentaries on the broader problems of organizing development in Italy. It is popular in our country to think of Italy as an uninformed state with inchoate governance which somehow works very well. Poli's contribution is to demonstrate that it works, but at great cost and with many unanswered problems. We keenly await the more extended treatment of the larger landscape.

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I. Urban and Economic Analysis

1. Introduction

The later a country begins the transformation from a basically primary economy to an industrial one, the swifter its rate of growth will be during the period of the "big spurt." (1) The rate of change will not be the same in all of the production sectors, nor will the law, society and the environment be able to adjust simultaneously to the transformation under way. In this way, countries and regions that have reached their industrial stage relatively late will simultaneously display extremely backward and progressive aspects: the former due to society's reluctance to accept innovations; the latter due to the tendency, in areas affected by the "big spurt," to accept modern ways with ease. A large part of the territorial, economic and social unevenness of these countries derives from this phenomenon. Italy, with its "Southern question" and the dualism of its industrial system, presents just such a developmental picture.

The situation in "Middle Italy," however, including the Veneto region where industrial development underwent a period of intense transformation in the 50's, is more complex. Here, the transformation took place in an environment in which certain of those characteristics (2) which render spontaneous development more easily had already manifested themselves. Thus, the need for intense governmental intervention was obviated. In the Veneto region, the three factors which aided development were: (a) the presence of numerous urban centers, active both culturally and commercially as well as in skilled trade; (b) the agricultural systems of tenancy and ownership which could favor, if the opportunity were to present itself, primary accumulation (3), even on a limited scale; and, especially, (c) the presence of potential entrepreneurs. Other advantageous circumstances in this region with respect to other underdeveloped countries were its climate, its geographical position in a national and European context, limited war damages, the territorial morphology, and a society free of grave tensions. Nevertheless, the presence of conditions favoring economic development may not always serve to promote, but can even, as I have suggested, hinder a radical transformation. Two additional observations that are peculiar to the Veneto region would be the historical milieu of the transformation and its situation in a clearly dualistic national context.

These conditions explain why the regional problems in the Veneto were confronted on the basis of principles originated for the Mezzogiorno. In fact, many legislative measures designed for the promotion of southern development were applied to backward areas of the Center and of the North (several of them in the Veneto). As we shall see, the extension of the areas influenced by such laws decreased the differential effect at the expense of the more peripheral areas. However, in the long run, the Veneto itself did not benefit, since its problems were qualitatively different from those of the South.

*I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Naomi Smalakis for her help in translating this article.
While this region had not yet fulfilled the potential of the "big spurt" at the end of the 60's and in the beginning of the 70's, the economy of the more advanced European countries had already started a new transformation. The industrial sector, once pre-eminent with respect to income and manpower, was surpassed by the tertiary and quaternary sectors in all the advanced countries, to the extent that, even during times of prosperity, which usually favor the demand for industrial goods (such as the years 1970 and 1973), investments were superior in the services sector.

The breakdown of the monetary system of Bretton Woods and the new economic geography determined by the distribution of petroleum, tended to prolong the world recession and to modify commercial flux. A consequence of this situation is a tendency, still mild and undeclared, toward protectionism.

Although we are living through what Galbraith calls "the age of uncertainty," we can detect an unbroken line of evolution in advanced economic systems, with a tertiary trend. The region, and Italy in general, may lag behind if the attempts to eliminate the archaic elements present in its system or to utilize productively the progressive ones fail.

On the eve of their industrial transformation, government intervention functioned in those countries as a promoting agent in the process of development. In the industrially mature societies (and also in the societies in transition, as in the Veneto), government intervention must act today at the organizational level.

It is hard to tell now what the stimuli will be which will force society in this direction; but, if contemporary culture will recognize the stimuli and use them productively, the impetus will surely be such problems as the waste of resources, intellectual unemployment, inefficient urbanistics, and education, etc.

1. There was a 69% increase in the Italian population between 1951 and 1971 in townships with more than 100,000 inhabitants; Rome, Milan, Turin and Naples accounted for 36% of that increase (See Table 1).

These simple data show how the whole country experienced a strong move towards urbanization. However, the motivations, the effects, and the forms of the process should not be interpreted without first considering the differences among the various regions, especially between North and South.

The Veneto has experienced urbanization in a different way, especially with respect to the long-time industrialized North-West, or to the Mezzogiorno. No analogy can be drawn with regards to Emilia and Tuscany (regions which experienced the "big spurt" of development at the same time, and with many similar effects) as far as economic and urban geography are concerned.

The traditional, urbanistic setting and the contemporary urbanization process of these regions have been dealt with in a global fashion, as opposed to the monocentric structure of Piedmont, Lombardy and Liguria. A deeper examination of the situation reveals how each region displays its own profound differences, although these may be treated, at a general level, as an initially polycentric standpoint.

As a confirmation of this, it is enough to mention the percentage of regional population residing in centers with less than 25,000 inhabitants as opposed to the entire regional population. In 1971 the percentage was 66.8% while in Italy the figure was only 53.9%. One should note that this figure is also greater than that of Italy in 1951 (64.7%).

The percentage of the population of the Veneto in centers with less than 10,000 inhabitants is 49.8%; that is, 10 points above the figure for North-Western Italy.

One should add to these data the remarkable presence of scattered population which is the distinguishing feature of the regional settlement pattern. The data reported in Table 2 offer a quantitative confirmation (cf. Figure 3).

This phenomenon is found mostly in the central part of the region which corresponds roughly to a polygon having as corners Verona, Conegliano, Treviso, Venice, Este and Vicenza. We should add to this the areas of the textile plants in the Vicenza province and a few other areas which contain small businesses and sparse population, such as the valley of the Piave between Belluno and Feltre. This area — the largest, the most populated, and the most industrialized — characterizes the region.

The cumulative phenomena of spatial concentration in the cities (the term 'city' is here used to mean 'center' rather than "urbanized area") have been much less significant in Veneto than in the other Italian regions, to the extent that the cities in the Veneto have experienced an increase in a variety of small factories in their provinces serving to enliven and enrich the lives of many townships that had until 10 years before been considered depressed. In fact, such provinces had earlier been dependent almost exclusively on agriculture for their existence. The territories around Verona and Vicenza may already be called metropolitan. The latter urban area is joining the Treviso-Padua-Venice triangle. Even on the Castelfranco-Cittadella axis one can already discern the characteristics of a metropolitan area, although with a lower settlement density.

Generally speaking, the rate of growth of an urbanized population is related to the first industrial economic development, and the Italian case follows this rule.

It has been noted that in urban centers with external economies of urbanization and localization, size is directly proportional to the initial dimension of the urban center. The localization of such centers is affected by the costs of transportation, which have been lowered in recent years, so that localization now takes place over wider areas.

The generalized use of the automobile and swifter means of transportation are thus transforming the morphology of the cities, as well as their relationships with the surrounding areas. The transformation of the urban structure and of the transportation systems has been much swifter, however, than the social and psychological evolution of the inhabitants, who are still tied to traditional behavioral patterns. (5)
In the same way, some specifically urban social and functional relationships will never be transformed by an increase in the velocity or the power of the mass-media, especially those close neighborhoods still existing in certain urban centers that may be compared in some aspects to 19th Century villages.

The areas with which urban functions and services are concerned have widened due to technological progress in the field of communications. Although the concentration of some quaternary activities can be noticed, the commercial and tertiary functions, including retail business and occupational centers, have spread out into "urban-rural complexes, with a radius of 12-30 km., within which the economic and social relations become as intrinsic as they can be inside a city."

For the inhabitants of towns which were, until recently, isolated, "the whole range of these activities is now more accessible than the services and shops of the central neighborhoods are for the inhabitants of the periphery in a congested agglomeration."

At one time the region made the city: does the city now make the region? This statement would underestimate the importance of historical factors and their relative social influence, particularly when the rural areas do not receive an influx of urban population (as, for example, in the United States) modifying customs, and therefore continue to experience a psychological and economic-organizational dependence on the city.

Today in the plains of the Veneto one can witness what has happened in the majority of nations which were involved in the industrial revolution: "administrative unity, economic centers and residential environments interwined, become stratified, giving birth to a unique and complex organism with a hybrid body and many heads. From this arises the need to adapt the judicial and administrative organization, the existing cognitive structures, and our own psychology to this new reality."

We should note that the form of urbanization here described is peculiar to the model of industrialization in the Veneto. It does not represent a historical leap from the phase of urban agglomeration directly into the phase that sees the spreading of urban functions over wider and less densely populated areas (a phenomenon which is often found today in more advanced countries). Actually this is a sign of regression in that it is neither balanced by the quaternary growth of cities nor by a true embodiment in a single urban union of several divided centers which would create an economy of urbanization, which could then overcome economic indivisibilities. One can hope, however, that if one becomes aware of such a discrepancy, it will be possible to bypass a phase, in order to fill the existing gap as soon as possible, and to be at a level congruent with the more advanced systems. The present urban asset of the Veneto is the result of a long series of errors and negligence, and of the lack of the will or ability to properly direct its growth. This shouldn't curb future actions; errors must be corrected by turning them to advantage, into positive action.

The genesis of the territorial asset started in the 50's, when many values and social behaviors underwent a deep change. The new entrepreneur of the Veneto, an emerging character of the post-war period, often belonged to the countryside's social milieu and sometimes was himself an ex-cultivator who possessed financial capital thanks to the sale of land on the work opportunities presented by a new factory. He might also have had artisan abilities. But even when he was a true bourgeois, it was convenient for him to establish his factory in the fertile, populated countryside where labor was easily available. And it was as far as the social peace was concerned, he could proceed without fear.

The technical level of the working process was simple and didn't require specialized personnel; the rich artisan tradition compensated for other deficiencies. Salaries could be kept low thanks to the large labor supply and to the presence of the small landowning system which afforded laborers, through part-time work, to reach a sufficient income, from the standpoint of their "traditional" values. Because of the growing internal demand, no need for new markets was felt at that time.

"The ideological tradition of the Veneto, at least from the time of the Counter-Reformation, is one of the most reassuring" (8) and is maintained through increasing incomes and Catholic organization tending to eliminate contrasts.

During the 30 years after the war, although the growth of cities in the Veneto hasn't been as great as that of the other Italian cities, lack of organization in construction created a large diffusion of residential buildings or production settlements throughout the peripheral areas of the cities. Speedy communication among the various centers is difficult in such areas, both by private or public means. Directional centers of every city appear to be surrounded by peripheral areas with difficult access and by industrial establishments scattered as if at random.

The convenience of moving from residences in the center of the city toward the suburbs, where one usually finds the advantages of clear air and lessened traffic congestion, is therefore very much reduced. We should point out that this situation contributes to the separation of the inhabitants of the countryside from those of the cities: the former maintain their entrepreneurial vitality, but, without social centers, cannot find any form of coordination and cultural growth, and thus now simply work as suppliers of manpower; the latter remain static as they do not receive any stimuli from the former (such as in economies of scale) that would adapt citizens' services to the new industrial development. This situation, illustrating a result of the physical separation of the cities from the more vital economic centers, is a consequence of historical, social and economic phenomena that do not facilitate inter-relations and exchanges between city and countryside. This is true in spite of the fact that the entrepreneurs themselves consider the geographical area of the Veneto valley as a unique urban area: factors which motivate a factory's locale are based upon the price of the land, the proximity to a communication route and possibly the spatial isolation from other industries so that the production establishment itself is easily noticed, in absence of other forms of advertisement. Its closeness to the city is not
considered a valid motivating factor in the establishment of industries, activities in the city. From this we can understand the popularity of the thesis that sees in the phenomenon a conscious design of "capital" to avoid the big labor agglomerations in any one area. In reality, the greatest part of industrial and artisan activities has developed autonomously and only later do we notice a development of big capitalistic, centralized establishments that do not diminish the importance of autogenous development.

No attempt will be made to place this reality into a theoretical category, as one does not consider this a useful practice at this point: social reality is to be analyzed in order to allow planners, knowing the causes, to act accordingly. Only later shall a theoretical expression of the actions described and the ideas developed be attempted. As an approach to a synthetic definition, political areas are discernible, which, in spite of a limited potential, manifest tendencies toward unity.

Unlike the reality seen in Anglo-Saxon countries, the role that the countryside, no matter how subsidized or economically backward, plays, is important in the sectors of occupation and production. Also, as the transference to the country aspect. In fact, the cities have continued to grow demographically until 1976, although at decreasing rates. (See Tables 3 and 4).

One is now presented with an industrialized countryside, as far as the sources of income and occupation are concerned, in which however, the population is still composed of ex-peasants and part-time agricultural workers.

Francesco Compagna (9) considers the Po Valley and particularly the Veneto, with its net of cities neither susceptible to conurbations, nor likely to generate monocentric phenomena, as "an urban tissue, rich with potentials." Such possibilities should favor the growth of a megalopolis of the type conceived by the inventor of the term: that is, a balance between urban and rural assets, which are contrasted to the conurbations and the metropolita areas, which have become synonyms for disorganization.

Along the Milano-Venice axis, in fact, one sees in the Veneto the cities of Verona, Vicenza, Padua and Venice. These cities, to which we may add Treviso, have had the function of provincial gravitational poles due to their history and geographical position which have determined their almost constant vitality. While the increase, without a solution of continuity, of the area in which they are located and, on the other, the development and emergence of alternative poles in the more developed or distant areas of the territory over which they should preside.

* * *

All this is generally termed "polycentrism." Until about 20 years ago, when the city was considered to have the traditional functions of a commercial center and supplier of normal services, the Veneto could have been considered a potentially polycentric system, but today this definition is only a dream or a slogan not conforming to reality. The urban definition is rather an incomplete urban hierarchy lacking either a single center able to perform regional and national urban functions or, at least, a system -- namely, a polycentric one -- that could distribute such functions among the various cities.

In fact the cities, which should be the centers of the pluralist system, have lost a great part of their aggregating ability and are subject to the power of the provincial centers.

The various proposals of some parties, of public and private institutions, and of the Regional Development Plan make constant use of the term "polycentrism," waving it like a flag and proclaiming it to be a "natural asset of the region." This "natural" polycentrism, for at least the last 15 years, seems to have failed. It was (and is still used now) as a valid ideological cover-up, as a senseless principle. In fact it is used to substantiate requests for intervention, whether they are production-oriented, administrative, or related to public services structures. All such requests purport to solve, locally, local problems; however, they entirely lack any coordination with the surrounding territory.

In this way, favored by the traditional particularism of the townspeople, the centers have lost their appearance as poles of territorial equilibrium; in place of the possible polycentric one has now a "pulverization" of the activities in the territory.

The cities are tending more and more to become centers with a greater population density and with normal services, but they hardly become the point of reference for territorial politics.

The regional planning and prior choices, taking a global vision of the problem, have favored the duplication, the triplication, etc., of some investments in services and infra-structures with-bland waste of not only space and resources, but also of the opportunity to complete the regional urban hierarchy.

If polycentrism is desired as an asset of the territory, and since centers do not come together spontaneously but tend to multiply more and more, regional programming should intervene in order to delimit the converging areas of urban activities.

The almost megalopolitan asset of the central area and the presence of wide urban areas with low density is not only a negative phenomenon. One can consider the inevitable spatial transformation of the post-industrial city: demonstrated here are not only the difficulties problems determined by "the monster with the hybrid body and the many heads" but also the undeniable advantages, such as the economies of scale, for certain activities, or the diffusion of urban culture and the relieved congestion due to the lessened density of population.
This is the reason why polycentrism, as proposed in the plan of regional territorial coordination as a system of settlements, must serve to prevent any further fusion of urban areas, which can be easily traversed, through the contraposition of "green-belt" areas. Such fusion would actually, in time, bring the various centers closer together, would create agricultural and entertainment areas for urbanized populations, and would increase the density of the existing urbanized areas that now have too low a population density to be truly considered as "urbanized," and yet too high a density to be considered rural areas.

The existence of these urbanized areas (one of which, the Cittadella-Castelfranco, is formed more by scattered population than by the diffused functions of an urban center) should focus our attention on the meaning of polycentrism. One must agree with those who see polycentrism as the concentration of urban functions in certain important centers. Such centers, however, cannot be the Compressori's capitals, unless indiscriminate diffusion is favored: a minimum threshold limit should be determined before a center can be classified as such.

By "centers," those cities already supplied with infrastructures, communications systems and provision of services that perform stabilizing functions in the territory of the central Veneto, is meant. In addition to the provincial capitals, only 3 or 4 more need to be chosen, such as Conegliano, either Bassano or Schio, one other in the Southern Veneto (for example, Legnago), and one more in the South-West Veneto.

2. Economic Development and Economy

When the Central Veneto was undoubtedly agricultural and the boundaries of the townships were clearly identifiable, that is until the beginning of the 60's, the laws #635 of 1957 and #23 of 1959 concerning depressed areas had a positive effect, thanks to the small dimensions of the townships that could in that way avail themselves of sizeable incentives. One cannot deny that, after the industrialization, a new rationale must be found, even in a situation presenting a complex integration of various townships which demonstrates, on the whole, an example of urban life due to the number of existing or desirable activities and relations.

In July 1966, with the passage of law #614 concerning depressed areas, the definition was revised, resulting in a reduction of the number of townships favored by incentives. The number of benefiting townships, out of a total of 503 in the region, decreased from 450 to 389. The provision displayed a beneficial inversion of a tendency: that is, it initiated that concentration of interventions that had produced good results in the Mezzogiorno (10). This policy, however, has not been followed with the necessary decisiveness and clarity.

The formation and the maintenance of such a territorial asset seems to be derived from the political-cultural formation of the Christian Democracy which can be synthesized in the famous slogan: the factory beneath the bell-tower.

No conscious programmatic elaboration was necessary: the system proceeded in the desired direction and there was no need to overcome the force of inertia in order to guide it.

The parties of the left, blocked by ideological prejudice, focused their attention on the capitalistic concentration of Marghera and, if anything, on the economic imbalance of the Southern Veneto.

It is only recently that the weakness of interpretations of the development model of Veneto has become apparent, since they are lacking an adequate judgement of the territorial disorder of the settled central areas and of the economy that supports them.

The presence of urban functions of a low level, but with a raised number of poles swiftly accessible from every part of the territory, makes it convenient for the small industries to settle in localities which are included in the above-mentioned polygon. These industries would also enjoy the advantages both of the proximity of a few indispensable services and of a relative isolation. This isolation provides a labor supply which lacks those residential problems which entail commuting, and which is often satisfied with an income rounded off by agricultural part-time labor. In 1978 some L. 40.000 billion in non-official income was produced in Italy. Considering just the situation in Veneto, both the data and direct observation seem to validate that figure. It seems that a high percentage of this quota is proportionately concentrated in the sector of small firms that are located next to particularly fertile fields, which are then cultivated by the workers as second occupation.

The official recruitment of personnel is nowadays subject to very strict rules. However, community solidarity still has a function in the procuring of labor on the black market. This was a symptom of poverty just 10 years ago, and remains so today. In richer areas this situation favors those who already have a sufficient or discrete income, and want to round it off with a salary exempt from contributions and fiscal deductions, convenient to both laborer and employer. The reciprocal convenience, one of brief duration, clearly reinforces the continuance of the circle.

The evident damage is borne by the whole of the Italian economy and by the poorest areas, as this system prevents the distribution mechanisms of the fiscal systems and of public expense from working. The possibilities for producing public and collective works are thus eliminated and, as everybody has something to hide, the social participation indispensable for a government is inhibited, as well as that for any organization between such an elevated number of productive centers.

The small Italian firms are now the healthiest, most dynamic part of the industrial system. Thanks to this new type of entrepreneurship, we witness the spontaneous generation -- without state assistance -- of islands of economic well-being and social balance in some areas of Italy. Especially noteworthy is the characteristic entrepreneurial initiative that accompanies the laborer's participation and the laborer's identification with the factory and the society. Entrepreneurial ability is especially revealed in the
investments in technologically advanced productions and in the understanding of the changed social conditions, a consequence of which is the substitution for paternalistic management methods of organization schemes in which the formation and knowledge of the personnel display a deep understanding of the firm’s structure and activity, trade unions and other forms of participation are encouraged rather than fought.

Examples of modern industry can also be found in the Veneto, but not very following traditional methods the small entrepreneur of the Veneto can still ‘settle their accounts,’ although without realizing substantial growth rates or modifying the traditional social milieu that still displays an evident, deep-seated network of conflicting positions.

The economy of the Veneto today is characterized by a large number of both small and middle-sized industries. The process of basic capillary expansion of industry over the territory affected first the central area and the areas along the main routes of communication, then the marginal areas, in its search for convenient labor and facilities. Some areas have been excluded by this process, because they have been “condemned by geography,” that is, by floods, by harshness of the soil, or simply by the distance from the flow of traffic. Local social values related to historical factors also play a role in this context.

The structure of the productive system of goods shows a pathologic dependency on the final demand: there is in fact a large amount of production of “final” goods that are very affected by crisis situations and exchange rates, due to the large amount of foreign trade, both export and import, of machinery and intermediate goods.

Small and middle-sized industries display notable difficulties in administering services to the society in order to create economies of scale. Even in their legal position, they show a propensity for simple forms: individual enterprises prevail.

The possibility of multiple occupations for each individual works as an inhibiting factor to entrepreneurial initiative for part-time farmers as well: when there are many tracts of good land, it is best to use them for investment purposes, converting them to specialized productions with a higher added value. That principle is especially feasible in metropolitan areas where land is easily turned to residential or industrial use. In the absence of a fairly rigid and well-regarded system of planning and zoning, a highly productive agricultural property helps to lessen the temptation to evade restrictions: no agricultural production is able nowadays to earn enough money to dissuade the owner from converting the land into building property; but another earning aspect can weigh the balance on the side of the maintenance of the capital the land represents, of the profession as a tradition, etc.

The urbanized areas of the Veneto are not zoned; in addition, they are cultivated by part-time workers who dedicate their free time to crops which require little attention, rather than those which yield a lot of money. Grains are the crop best suited to these requirements, and indeed in the zone which offers the greatest possibilities for this type of work, the expanse of fields dedicated to this type of crop has increased: this concerns exactly that urban area between Padova, Treviso and Venice.

According to Corrado Barberis, “the double-occupied (farmers) take no work from the unemployed; rather they take land from other farmers. They are the price to pay for industrial development, for, were it not for them, in many areas of our country, deserts would have been formed.” Such a position, however, only serves to defend this system for a short time, or at an elementary level of economic organization: double occupation (agricultural or otherwise), in the greater perspective of the best use of resources, is always a destabilizing influence on the organizational and social aspects of the economic sphere. Beyond this, the loss of productivity can also not be neglected. In the case of the Veneto, given that the increase in productivity must be connected with many induced tertiary and secondary activities, an inevitable result is the further reduction of the expanse of cultivated lands. This frees space for residential, recreational and industrial use for which, for the duration of the development, there will always be greater request.

In the absence of a true territorial planning authority, the solution to the problem of urban agricultural relations can be resolved through the giving of incentives to farmers in such a way as to encourage them to become agricultural entrepreneurs. It must be carefully noted that investment in organization is at this point more important than investment of financial capital, the problem being that if one were to have real possibilities of greater gain, and a strong interest in them, the result would be a greater push toward organizing both cultural methods, and the distribution and commercialization of products.

The honesty level in the commercial sector of the Veneto is satisfactory. Consolidation into cooperatives or similar organizations is not hindered by Mafia or Canora organizations, which one finds established in other areas of the country, but rather only by the social and psychological restraints of the community itself. The principle obstacle does not seem to lie in economic reasons; one has only to consider that many of these social and psychological restraints have been overcome in the same context when, for example, it concerned working the land on Sunday, or after twilight. These actions, once considered blameworthy, are only considered shameful in certain areas of the Veneto where there are no factories in which workers are busy all day long. Economic considerations alone cannot produce this "eclipse of the sacred" or "secularization" of society; but the fact that it is possible to overcome these traditions indicates that certain entrepreneurs place more importance on financial gain than on community approval. An economic impulse toward better and greater production, however, does not exist. It is much less risky, less problematic, to find a factory job, and leave to agriculture (or other jobs) the secondary role in salary formation. To obviate this problem, considering its economic and organizational importance, derived from chopping the land into small holdings, the recourse would be to offer technical, legal and organizational assistance to the part-time workers, substituting this for their dormant environmental spirit.
Agricultural zoning, whether mandated or incentivized by provisions which would condemn soil wastage, can also contribute to the resolution of these problems. In this case, there would be someone to furnish technical-organizational assistance to the small proprietors who cultivate few lands. Those who have many lands and yet are part-time workers (or rather, bi-occupied) would be presented with the necessity to choose between jobs, thus liberating either an industrial or an agricultural position. The land would be put to its best use, and above all, there would be a policy of total utilization, integrated with urban needs.

It is the tertiary sector which is most implicated in this process. In fact, although neither backward, nor hypertrophic, nor characterized by evident forms of under-occupation, as in the Mezzogiorno, it nonetheless appears inadequate when confronted with the level of industrial development reached by the region, and with the complexity of the social-economic urbanistic problems that the transformation has stimulated. If, then, one wishes to call the sector of rare and progressive services quaternary, it becomes evident that this is the point where the economy of the Veneto presents its greatest precariousness.

Businesses of the Veneto region must turn to Milan if they wish to make use of the most advanced forms of agency administration, software services, marketing, assistance from banks, etc. The Veneto must also rely on Milan for the important task of personnel formation and selection. For the selection of qualified personnel in certain sectors, the Veneto companies also have recourse to other Milanese agencies. From the personnel sector, one may turn to others, with the same result: industries of the Veneto are incapable and not even aware of how to make use of financial consultants from agencies for commercial information, or of marketing studies, or of many other services.

Public administration participates less than it does in other regions. The dearth of adequate services furnished in large part by public enterprises reflects negatively in many fields. The inefficiency of public administration is only sometimes covered by people's parsimony and the discreet level of private consumption.

3. Backward Areas of the Southern Veneto

The industrial-urbanistic model of the Veneto is at its most typical in its central area. The presence in that region of economically weak areas can only with difficulty be imputed to cumulative processes which unduly favored the central Veneto; rather, the causes are intrinsic. The less dynamic areas are situated in the southern parts of the region: i.e., the province of Rovigo, and the southern areas of the provinces of Padova, Vicenza and Verona, as well as the eastern Veneto and a few other alpine or pre-alpine zones.

There are historical reasons dating back to the Middle Ages for the well-noted static quality of the rural countryside, as well as contemporary causes, such as the recent reclamation of lands and the regime of large agencies as landowners. The type of cultivation and the system of farm laborers favored, in the past, the growth of rural towns and agricultural markets tendentially more concentrated than in the central areas, where, indeed, the population tends to reside in centers of growth which have the characteristic, not always found in the central areas, of providing services to the outlying areas.

Although the sparse population is inferior to that of the central Veneto, the incidence of population residing in the capitals of districts is superior, as seen from the data (Table 2) and from the relatively prevalent tertiary function. Although history, geography and pedologic characteristics render the eastern Veneto similar to the southern area, differences due for the most part to the tourist economy and the industrial sector and, as a consequence, the general context, render it less markedly backward. The density is greater, but demographic pressure began to diminish long ago, thanks to the close proximity of the Marghera industrial pole, which has been present since the 1920's.

The problems of the backward zones of the Veneto, while presenting difficulties worthy of consideration, do not manifest any dramatic character. This is due both to their low level of backwardness, and to their proximity to developed zones which, even if they do not seem able to autonomously expand their areas of influence, are yet able to contribute to create a richness from which the slower areas are able to profit. The system of productive decentralization towards zones with overabundant labor resources also contributes to reduce the difference, even if in an unhealthy way.

Expansion of zones affected by industrial development occurs according to the main streets, which function as directional. One easily sees this when taking the road from Padova to Este and Cavazzere, or from Vicenza to the lower Vicenzan and Padovan districts, where the road points like a vector into the poor area of the Veneto.

In order not to fall into a sterile demagogy, one must be sure to ascertain the exact dimensions of the backwardness of the zones of the Veneto. This is especially important with respect to the Mezzogiorno where the problems are much more serious and of a different nature. Indeed, in programming the re-equilibrium between central and marginal areas, it would be easy to incur the danger of a further nebulous diffusion of industrial establishments, thus regarding or inhibiting the birth of aggregations which facilitate economies of scale and agglomeration.

Examining the data on migratory movements in the backward regions of the Veneto, one can, in fact, deduce how the exodus of recent years has greatly diminished and almost disappeared, and how emigration to foreign countries and to the region of the triangle has been losing its seeming necessity and permanency. At the same time, there is no verification of a true influx to the more developed regions such that Saraceno can claim that "the Veneto is no longer a
region of emigration, and is not a region of immigration. This means, in
the first place, that the process of capital-accumulation takes place in
the region that has reached the intensity necessary to either augment the
productivity of the already employed at rates corresponding to the in-
creased cost of labor, or to create a great enough number of working
positions to make the convenience of emigration diminish." (13)

There are two reasons for this: development has never exceeded (if
one excludes the industrial pole of the Marghera) the actual existing
occupational possibilities of the territory, and commuting presents no
dramatic problems, given the proximity of the factories to everything else.

Polesine and the southern parts of the provinces of Padova, Vicenza and
Verona were once areas of extreme poverty, as one sees from the
descriptions of Milone and others. After having witnessed the drama of
emigration and the slow aging of the population, one can reasonably presume,
as Fortunato said of the Mezzogiorno, that, while in Rome they were lost in
discussion, the people themselves silently resolved their own problems, seeking
fortune in less greedy lands. Today, this great presumed offer of work does
not exist; the countryside, expelling the elderly for reasons of age, and given
the number of young people that find work in ever-present industry, is be-
ginning to have quantitatively appropriate manpower for its expansion and its
economic activity. In Polesine and the eastern Veneto, capitals or major
centers have balanced a part of the provincial losses by population growth
(see Tables 3 and 4).

The effects of "spread" and "backwash," have behaved in the Veneto
according to particular schemes, as was to be logically expected. With respect
to the stronger areas of the industrial triangle, there existed for a certain
period (from the end of the war until the early sixties) a backwash in terms of
the manpower of the entire region including, therefore, the central areas and
occasionally affecting more the central area than, for example, the Polon-
mite area. The industrial pole of the Marghera constituted a precedent in the
decentralization of capital, but it was still a cathedral in the desert, the
exception which proved the rule.

When the central area began to undergo that more and more impetuous de-
velopment which led to transformation, the "ebbing" continued more markedly
from the marginal areas of the Polesine and the mountains, directed at first
ward the strong Italian zones, then prevalently toward foreign countries.
In any case, it was not directed toward the central areas, as one would have
expected, but rather toward the traditional western-Italian, central-European
occupational centers. If that was due to a conscious choice, it must be
proved with rigorous studies. It is hard to believe that the crippled polit-
ical system, finding enough difficulties in ordinary administration, could
have been able to execute such a complex plan. But then, one never knows.

The effects of the backwash are not limited to labor: the capitals and
commercial centers, however scarce, of the peripheral areas found in the
central region a place in which to increase their earnings. This part of the
region was thus able to enjoy a balanced development in terms of salary and
employment. In the end it was this which brought about its own sentence. In

fact, the effects of diffusion were fairly weak and, above all, as has al-
ready been indicated, the area received no external stimulus for a reconver-
sion of archaic structures. With respect to the national Northwest and to
Europe, it thus remained in other ways a zone of "backwash," of quaternary
capitals and functions. It would be dangerous to continue on the same path of
nebulous diffusion of residences even in the unaffected zones. Already
equipped areas can be useful if they do indeed serve to form industrial
centers and will not end up being situated in any little village through
"clientele" logic.

To concede too many incentives for industrial localization in the zones
in question could actually work to diminish the differential so as to bring
it to accord with the incentives predisposed for the South. This has al-
ready occurred here and elsewhere in the past. The problem is of greater con-
cern if it prejudices the reconversion of the central area.

What has been said thus far is not meant to imply the minimization of
problems, nor the advocacy of a sort of non-interventions; one ought rather
to take the problems into consideration, assigning to each its proper posi-
tion in the scale of priorities. Is it even proper to be concerned when a province
has a per capita yearly salary of L 1,278,630 when in the whole
Mezzogiorno the salary never reaches L 975,237? (see Table 6) Are not,
perhaps, the compilers of the Regional Development Plan among the chorus of
those who continue to say that any intervention policy must be conducted
with the aim of closing the gap which divides the peninsula?

Without actually aligning oneself with those sociologists who consider
underdevelopment to be a form of development, it should be affirmed that,
in the present case, the underdevelopment and backwardness which must be
feared and accordingly dealt with, are particularly those of the central
industrialized areas; that is, a cultural and economic underdevelopment
hidden by the profit margins many enjoy, be they sleepy entrepreneurs or
some category of workers, that weighs in the balance thousands of southern
families and those who are waiting to enter the working world.

The damages of this type of urbanization and economy appear inferior
if considered locally, as there does not exist, except in the Venice-Mestre
area, any gross urban-industrial concentrations with the related problems
of crowded traffic and the insufficiency (together with high production
costs) of social services. Building speculation is not so dramatic for
those who suffer from it, nor so enticing for those who practice it. But
the damages of the polarization of the centers are spread out over a large
portion of territory, and the monumental deterioration of the countryside
and of patrimony has been no less tragic here than elsewhere. This last
statement can easily be attested to by anyone who returns after 20 years
to travel along the Riviera del Brenta between Padova and Venice. It is in the
place of villas finds another culture which has not been able to unite the
undeniable activism of individuals with that sense of social cohesion which
could have saved the beauty of the past while producing a contemporary es-
thetic.
Any resolution to these negative aspects (to which a model of the Veneto is by no means limited) must pass through a very complex process of values and social organization before any modelistic programmatization occurs: results include elevated transportation, sewage systems, electricity, gas and telephone costs. The construction and management of other social and welfare services is costly, and the creation of spontaneous syndicates or cooperative unions among firms for the administration of some common service is difficult.

Schools present an apt example, whether one speaks of the state schools or the professional institutes (which recently came under the authority of the Region): the latter already enjoy enrollment levels among the highest in Italy, registering a real "boom" in the last school year. Thanks to a badly understood polycentrism, the scholastic districts just about coincide territorially with the "Compassori." But one can foresee that in each district there will have to be the greatest possible variety of superior classes. Apart from the waste of resources in the building of structures which are in close proximity, it would have been useful to concentrate the centers of instruction in order to render them more efficient. This would then qualify some centers with a typically urban function favoring the birth of a city atmosphere to improve transportation which would without doubt have cost less and would have been more suited to more people. Without uprooting students from their own ambiances, it would have permitted them to leave the parochial confines.

The money invested in fixed social capital and in other indirectly productive and socially useful structures is kept low by the territorial asset which allows the evasion of some public expenditures in the short run in the absence of evident collective problems. Those works which could only develop the economy to a useful level for the whole nation are not carried out. To praise the balanced budget or the advance of some communal budgets in the Veneto is to act as those did who praised the "healthy finances" of the Regno of the Two Sicilies which had at the time of the unification a balanced budget and a starved and illiterate populace.

The central area represents, both for good and bad, the fulcrum of the system and brings together a large part of the population. It does not yet have the characteristics of a mature system, as it lacks in the tertiary sector which is of small dimension due to the middle size of the firms and, as cause and effect of that, weak in technology. The localization of factories, agricultural agencies and residences and the middle size of the firms can at first sight seem to correspond to the most advanced sorts of urban-industrial ambiance models. This does not remain true once one has examined the urban functions and productions, but in any case, rather than turn around and retrace the conventional route, it is worth the trouble to functionally requalify the urban-rural system that we find here.

Technological improvements (the leap ahead which the system must strive to accomplish and which regional programs must foresee and stimulate) are necessary for the whole of the economy of the Veneto if it does not want to see its future tied to unstable balances (as well as for the Mezzogiorno and the national economy which are also already too dependent on the importation of intermediary goods and means of production).

To use the works of Saraceno, we hope that "the dramatic and costly experience that is today being completed in Milan, Turin and other centers which are highly industrialized and 'stupidly' indifferent until today to the exhortations advising them to take upon themselves, in their own best interests, the 'southern question,' might have convinced everyone of the necessity to be sure that the growth of industrial systems be diffused over the territory in such a way as to best conform to the territorial division of the labor forces."

What has thus far been said is not the result of some generic, southern-oriented philanthropy, but rather the only possible route for the Veneto model. In this way, it might be able to preserve that already precarious equilibrium which nonetheless allows it to face the crisis in spite of serious environmental damage; one is dealing here with cultural values, and that same occupational structure chock-full of injustices in both the internal ("black" work at home) aspect, and southern unemployment (double-employment, salaries raised to the net amount of contributions, and, above all, wastage of investments).

The Veneto potentially possesses the capability to carry out a further qualitative leap on the road of development. This description reveals both the existence of this possibility, and its limits. One can easily trace these limits in the inhibition that the crisis has engendered in the entrepreneurial class, which has not profited from the crisis to study and adopt alternative administrative methods, but rather has reacted by leveraging up the old methods of work organization and personal initiative; and this just where what was needed was a spur towards organization which alone could have favored the growth of technologies. The dispersion of residences and the impelling necessity for technical restructuring and requalification requires a more complex administration than the traditional one. It requires one which must bring the numerous communities and institutes of often incongruent territorial authority to agreement among themselves.

Polycentrism, as the exemplary case of Randstadt Holland shows (15), has a precise raison d'être: to improve the quality of life and the efficiency of the economy at exactly that time at which distances contract. In this case, it has been badly interpreted, and has given birth to various difficulties.
II. Planning a Quasi-Metropolitan Area

1. Relations Between "Center and Periphery"

The Italian system of government, notwithstanding a high degree of centralization of administrative bureaucracies, lacks authority at its executive center, which is gravely impeded by the power local notables exercise on it with an eye to the allotment of national resources retained in the capital for later redistribution. The bureaucracy, which by virtue of its centrality might be in a position to alleviate this problem by organizing rapport according to set rules, has always been distinguished for its ineffectuality: whether by cause or effect, it has become a voting reserve of the parties that subordinate appointments and that can easily get around the government when they want to promote a measure. Thus, the boundary line between administrative and political activity, always unclear, has been practically erased.

If this system has not, so far, led to regional inequities, it is perhaps for the reason that, while there is no going to heaven without a patron saint, every saint must find himself his own followers. Yet in spite of the passage of time, the most serious problems remain unresolved. Everything is surrounded by an aura of uncertainty, and those regions and groups which are in the most difficulty have no hope of regaining a position of parity with the others. The most serious drawback of this system regards territorial decentralization and the implementation of planning derives not so much from the decentered contraction and private pre-emption of every government subsidy or measure, nor even from the fact that the government is bound to heed first of all to the parliamentary representatives that prop it up. It grants its favors -- no one protesting -- to its electoral "tefts." Trouble finally arises from the fact that this is concurrent with a lack of direct responsibility on the part of the government's intermediaries for the collection and management of resources, and for the successful conduct of administrative tasks and local government. Nevertheless, an immeasurable political power accrues to these intermediaries by the very fact that they constitute the only possible link between the citizens and the central bureaucracy (16).

From a geographical point of view, the territorial configuration of the Veneto involves problems that are atypical as compared to many Italian and European regions affected by economic development. Elsewhere, a few metropolitan centers possessing regional or national importance choke off development in lesser centers, so that the problem consists in urban gigantism and acute, though localized, congestion; here, the provincial capitals have not succeeded in establishing a complete urban hierarchy with the power of direction, but find themselves in a state of siege amidst the surrounding communes. They are dis coordinator. the executive level, but economically strong, due to a number of favorable circumstances. This situation also represents the geographical result of territorial politics and of the current system of government and administration: a result corresponding not to an established plan, but to the spatial projection of an inability to discriminate among the demands of population groups headed by the "notables" of a party or other political organization. Indeed, it would be misleading to maintain that the situation conforms to any deliberate policy, as imposed from above. The nature of the system is such that any local politician can get a clear shot at some part of the resources of a government which is incapable of offering resistance. Moreover, the inefficiency of the administrative setup will not allow it to spend the funds allocated for major projects with the necessary promptness; one sees this in the very high residual passivi -- surplus funds allocated but not spent -- remaining in the budget, and in the fact that the actual time required to effect disbursement sometimes exceeds four years (17). Thus, the process of putting programs into operation is continued only at the level of theoretical elaboration, an exercise with which by now many have ceased to concern themselves.

Academics and more perceptive politicians have recognized the necessity of effectuating these plans, when they have been forced to confront numerous untraditional problems involving choices that carry commitments over considerable periods of time. The debate arising from this issue was well formulated and interesting; but, in the last analysis, the decision-making process made no headway against the not unreasonable fear of many that a political mechanism for the most part automatic, or at least depersonalized, would deprive them of the advantages to be hoped for through interpersonal relationships. Even if some enlightened politician -- some willing scholar -- should step forward to help, how could that person, advocating provisions of long or medium duration, retain the confidence of the electorate (whose will must be considered in general and not individually), if in the short run his provisions will provoke resentment over the distribution of resources, thereby exciting alarm even in those who have momentarily benefited?

The French administrative system, some superficial resemblances notwithstanding, presents in the main such major differences from the Italian model that we can, for all intents and purposes, regard the two as opposites. While in Italy, to request funding one must learn to maneuver among the numerous "influential parties" outside the bureaucracy, in France the trick to local politics is to prepare for every occasion complicated dossiers to present to bureaucratic officials possessing considerable technical-administrative expertise. One must keep in close touch with city planners, engineers, lawyers, and so forth (18).

The strong technocratic bias of the French state has resulted, among other things, in the formation of "alternative technocracies" such as the Communists set up during the sixties, in opposition to the "official" versions (19). It would be an oversimplification, however, to regard the French administrative apparatus as no more than a tool in the hands of some party or group, as we might easily be led to conclude.
It is the very organization of the administrators that forces them (indeed they have very little leeway in their choices) to give priority to administrative consistency and economic productivity. Accordingly, a way of thinking about policy arises which is autonomous and disinterested with regard to party ideologies and electoral competition, although it occurs within the institutions with which politicians must constantly deal.

In the United States as well, though by the contrary route of an extreme decentralization, an influential body of thought competes with that of traditional institutions. The large number of government centers possessing direct responsibility for the imposition of taxes on the supply and funding of a specific service practically guarantees that a city, county, or metropolitan area will establish and have recourse to partly autonomous planning offices. The function of these is to provide a total picture of the relations existing among the sundry authorities or to examine certain problems in detail, if only with the pedestrian aim of grabbing the maximum of advantages available through the various districts at the minimum of expense for their own areas of jurisdiction. The characteristic absence of such independent and politically disinterested thought within Italian institutions of government is a gap, the more difficult to close for being inherent to the system. It is but another of the causes for the failure to implement planning on the state and regional level.

The workings of territorial organs of regional intervention might be expedited if they could get an overview of local pressures which, even coming from "grass-roots" sources, could not be confused with democratic participation. In Italy it is necessary to establish a level in the hierarchy of government for the elaboration of political strategies on the basis of long range vision. Such a distinction would serve to enrich discussion rather than to replace the roles of elected representatives or grass-roots support. Acceptance of the urban goal would require the participation of the citizens, their considered adherence to the programs proposed, as an indispensable condition. This is one of the most effective means of insuring the success of the program, but only if it takes place on an informed basis: it will never be attained through haute cuisine or high-wire walking, that is, political or judicial artistry for the main purpose of preserving the power relations already solidly intact.

2. The Comprensori (districts) of the Veneto

The Comprensori of Regional Law 80-1975 of the Veneto exemplify a corporative organizational structure (20) which strongly contrasts with the conception I have outlined, being in perfect harmony with the system of clientalism prevalent in Italy. Apparently the chief preoccupation of legislators who have failed to consider the means for dealing with whatever problems should arise from the implementation of their decisions is conflicting negotiations. Things have come to such a pass that it is now difficult to pinpoint what their principal tasks should be, and only half of their fifty have been implemented. The character assigned in theory to the Comprensori at their institution, in an ample and well stated debate, raised hopes of obtaining some results: but at the moment of decision-making, everything was allowed to proceed along the customary lines: closed, contrived, and high-handed. This allowed for the quick solution of the most pressing problems, and all the problems brought forward by papers written and conferences held were ignored with the most perfect nonchalance.

The Comprensori thus born were invested with an infinity of competencies. Unfortunately, they turned out to be of such limited geographical extension that in a special number of the Review of Regional Government dedicated entirely to the Comprensori a study appeared which, criticizing the meager jurisdictional area envisioned as constituted by the law, called for the establishment of "area vaste" (wide areas) as the minimal level for the actual implementation of planning (21). This is a clear example of the way in which politicians and scholars live in separate worlds, where the politicians are deaf to the proposals of the scholars, while the scholars in turn are completely indifferent to the prospect of having their ideas even taken into consideration. Given a regional council of sixty members elected by direct suffrage, gifted with vast powers, and representing a little over four million citizens, the system for maintaining a constant rapport between the electorate and their representatives might be corrected and reinforced at that level. There is no need for the constant creation of new levels of territorial aggregation and deputations filled up with meaningless appointments. The existence, aside from the communes and provinces, of Comprensori, school districts, health and welfare bureaus, Comunità Montane, and traffic control authorities would serve a useful purpose if they were available to the region as specialists well trained and acquainted with local conditions, available for easy consultation and able to furnish the information necessary for the complex and indispensable task of planning and management. Regulations designed to protect the people and safeguard legitimate interests can be effected at a regional level; the licensing of too many intermediate organizations encumbers the representative system while it fosters that interdepartmental bickering that is a primary danger to healthy administration.

The urban and economic system of the Veneto needs above all to be administered as a single, homogeneous area; each successive division represents a factor of the whole that is acceptable only as long as we require it for some service of an economy of scale; each is too entangled in the fortunes of all the others to provide independently for its own programs. The Veneto fortunately does not lack examples of creative vitality on the part of local government bureaus and other institutions in the formation of spontaneous intercommunal affiliations, often in very atypical forms. All the same, provincial and communal obstacles to this process. These can be overcome according to the political aptitude of enterprising citizens (22) and thanks to the ineptitude of the bureaucracy. Though this state of affairs does not increase one's confidence in the system, which should rest on assured information and conformity to the law, one can yet reasonably affirm that in Italy, for all its laws and bureaucratic regulations, the state, centralized or not, counts for little, since its power has been pirated away by parallel institutions.
Once one is adequately cognizant of a problem, one should be ready to resolve it; sometimes, however, one is aware of some difficulty, although incapable of giving it appropriate expression. Sufficient preparation is needed; otherwise even if one manages to confront it squarely, the solution will not be coordinated with relevant circumstances. Again, even where problems are acute the sensitivity to recognize and confront them opportunely, may be lacking.

It has been seen how a "sector of evolution" and technology is conspicuously absent from the society of the Veneto, where intensive industrial development is still quite recent. This absence is reflected at the level of public administration. The compilers of the regional plan for development have come to realize the low level of tertiary productivity in a public sector that is substantially protected from competition. The loss of that drive for expansion in a system of production that once took grand strides towards reducing the gap which separated it from developed economies has also become evident.

To proceed thus in the direction of decentralization which is merely formal and effected by and large through the creation of horizontal levels of intervention results in a group of institutions which are incapable of active participation by reason of their artificial constitution. From the point of view of efficiency, they are disfunctional, since the primary concern of those who legislate for them has been to create new levels of representation as much as possible like those already in the Regional Council. An administrative system whose only concession to a presumptive process of democratization is to increase the levels of representation, with no regard for the necessary qualitative change required of the public administration, merely compounds the confusion and indirectly justifies those critics who denounce the mystifications practiced by representative democracies. In politics, of course, there exists an ample margin for discretion; in other cases, however, decisions must be reached that are at once unequivocal and the result of syntheses not always comprehensible to unspecialized politicians (such as are generally found in the local government). These decisions by their very nature demand consideration in a techno-administrative center, and at an upper level of the hierarchy. One can add that in Italy certain areas of essentially social and economic importance (i.e., housing, schools, public assistance) have become major political problems (23).

In those countries where planning is established, there has been an increasing tendency on the part of professional planners in the last ten years to find problem-solving agencies in ever wider spheres of jurisdiction. The principle aspect of the new phase of American federalism is a series of vertical hierarchies that intersect with the various levels of government (24); similar developments may be observed in Great Britain, France, and Japan (25). To rule out discussion of this phenomenon, calling it undemocratic, nonparticipational, or falsely apolitical, would be premature. One should not establish whether these systems that promote centralization are really uncontrollable. The English experience seems to suggest the contrary. Indeed, even in France the "alternative technocracies" represent the generation of an instrument as much for controlling as for stimulating high-level thought along alternative lines (26).

In Italy, on the other hand, discussion over the last ten or twelve years has favored popular, mass participation, rather than authoritarianism. The designated targets, however, was never there to hit. The fact is that the dispute, being set for the most part in Marxist terms, has identified the enemy to be combated in the bourgeoise state endowed with authority and inclined to technocracy. Such a bourgeoise state has never actually existed in Italy, nor has Italy's administration seen as much as the ghost of a technocrat (27). Thus, through the fomentation of a mystifying and confused self-determination of local needs and choices, and through the overlooking of the possibility that these might be determined at a level of higher perspective, there resulted a de facto alliance between a populist system of clientage and extreme leftist groups. By the end of the sixties, this alliance had swept away what little remained of the planning ideology. In fact, "revolutionary" demands were strictly limited to requests for subsidies and resources, for ven social problems. The state generally conceded these, providing for new expenditures without being able, on account of its weakness, to reduce old ones. It was thus obliged to augment its revenues, thus provoking new discontent. More serious still, it was obliged to forgo a definitive solution to any of its problems. Augmenting the total budget also meant there would be more resources to distribute among party men and clients, thus augmenting the power of the state. One must presume that the parties tried to ride the storm of the controversy. It is otherwise difficult to account for the fact that the demands of outlawing areas never called for direct collection and management of resources. This, even if carried out in stages, would have represented the only truly radical change.

There is no real novelty in the proposal that regional government be supplied with an effective technical apparatus directly serving the president and the vice-president, since they are already explicitly in charge of putting planning into effect. There have been efforts at the national level in the National Commission for Economic Planning, aimed at the formation of a "planning authority." That planning authority would have been placed directly at the service of the Council of Ministers, which means in the sphere of activity of the president of the Council. This was a proposal which would have given planning a push, however slight, in the direction of efficiency. The fact that it failed makes one doubt that similar proposals may easily gain a hearing. In the Forti Commission of the provisory parliament for establishing the constitution, proposal also came up for the creation of a functional administrative body, but the project fell through due to hostility at top bureaucratic levels (28).

It is at least understandable, if not justifiable that, given the ideological content of the nation's decisions, such proposals failed at the national level. It is less understandable at the regional level, where positions of authority need not be as ideologically binding. But it is precisely at the local level where the populist clientage system is strongest; like a dense web it ensnares every act. One must not re-hash the old discussion about the primacy of the political and the inevitable concession to it of the technical. The "technocratic heresy" has been so rooted in Italy that today one is no longer in danger of passively accepting whatever any technocratic positivist
wants to pass off as scientifically proven; some have even endorsed the opposite, an obscurantism which eclipses all claims to objectivity: accepting the pronouncement that everything is politics, they sell themselves to the highest bidder.

Institutions on the model of the Consiglio di Comproporio in Council that are based on the secondary representation of the communities and provinces, according to population, are unlikely to have much significance from other standpoints as well. Turning from the experience of the Americans with their Council of Governments -- an experience more extensive than the Italian, but, likewise, a failure -- to the sub-regional system of the Veneto, one discovers still stronger premises for an even more disastrous failure. Since the communal councils will be the only ones to be elected directly, the comprensori, acting as a consulting body nominated by those councillors, will not have substantial influence on their decisions. Let us suppose that the communes meeting together in comprensorio according to the Regional Law, are controlled by majorities formed by different parties: competition will be the ultimate aim of their political activity, since the first responsibility of each representative (given his place in the clientele system) is to his party and to the policies it conducts at the national level. His sense of responsibility to the people is less. The people, while aware of the problem, are reduced to passive rejection or compliance. They do not see the possibility, or even the hope, of making any real impact on the situation. In this way, even local politicians are motivated towards policy-making, not problem-solving. This situation is reinforced by the fact that their election depends, for the most part, on the party rather than the electorate, which, nonetheless, enjoys all the conveniences of having a mayor and councillors with well-wishers and connections "in Rome."

The final success of the party can only come at the level of the central administration, from which all resources are actually derived. Success in the administration of a particular locality, such as Bologna, can gain some recognition for one party (the P.C.I.); there will be a few more votes, a few more steps in the climb towards possession of the government. But there will be no change in the general equilibrium of the system of connections that influence all policies even at the local level. The personal abilities of a given politician will permit him, at best, to appropriate a larger share of the available resources; but he will have no power to promote reforms.

In the U.S., the Councils of Governments (29), designed to coordinate the activities of the different levels of local government, have not had much impact on the problems of intergovernmental planning. In contrast with the comprensori they have had the advantage of representing local governments with full territorial and/or functional responsibility as well as fiscal power, and the electorate is more directly concerned to see that they fulfill their proper tasks. This indicates that the line to be taken by legislative authorities in defense of their prerogatives is professionalism rather than the election of nominees. This can, at times, have an unexpected result: the professionals' cultural authority by virtue of their technical competence and their representation of groups and ways of thinking that are differently aligned from those of traditional institutions. Over the figure of the planner-technocrat, directly dependent on the citizens' franchise, is super-imposed that of the planner-politico. His comprehensive approach, based on a new manner of conducting politics, contrives to join the scattered ideas of others into effective social groupings (30). The outcome is the opening of the way for new ideas and new channels of access to political representation. More importantly, the presence of newly allied groups favor a shakeup of the existing elite, to the extent that they gain awareness of their proper right to govern.

3. The Department for Urban Affairs

One way to inaugurate the idea of planning is the organization of an "office for local services" with a limited scope and a general competence simply in order to furnish technical assistance. A facility of this kind would bring the local bureaucracy together with highly qualified specialists. They, in turn, would be motivated to train new members of the group. Establishment of this office would proceed along lines of the greatest possible discretion. There would be difficulty in finding a political figure or institution to initially back the project (the intention of such a person would probably be to turn it as quickly as possible to his own advantage). But this problem need not be exaggerated. Under the present conditions, new ideas are accepted with difficulty; after all, the machinery of state can be operated even by hands not particularly expert. It is an arduous task to introduce new methods in government and administration.

Such an office ought to have at its disposal the knowhow to make up for the deficiencies of the local governments. Any tendency to transform itself into another of the many existing "centers for study" must be counteracted by an emphasis on the professional qualifications of those chosen to set it up. They will direct the office to perform tasks which by way of a brief summary one may enumerate as follows:

1) The office will act as a drawing-board to formulate regional programs. For this purpose it should promote the widest possible consultation and interaction among political and social forces; these will regard it as a disinterested intermediary with policy-making responsibilities for planning.

2) It will establish a rapport with assessors and regional councillors who could turn to it for information about the problems they need assistance to solve: problems of law, on the preparation of the budget, on relations with other communes and Enti. Here again the Office for Local Services would promote cooperation, while its continuous research would serve automatically to stimulate the adoption of particular measures.
3) The first two duties would be carried out at the level of the regional center; the third, meanwhile, would concern promoting the participation of local enti and private citizens. In the former case, it will once again be a matter of furnishing technical-administrative assistance, and even serving a propagandist function where local inertia or ineptitude have tended toward partial solutions to problems of general relevance to the community. For private citizens, it will facilitate a dialogue with the institutions, inform them of goings-on, and try to interpret their needs and desires.

At first it will inevitably be the office itself which will seek out those with whom it is to deal; in other words, it must carve out its own "market" to which it can sell its services. If this initial activity succeeds, it could transform itself into a true Department of Urban Affairs, to which people would automatically turn for assistance (31). The ability to bring about the greatest possible flow of information from the bottom to the top, through meetings and reports designed to bring together several conflicting interests would be essential to its success. Proceeding then, from the top back down to the bottom, it would inform the people of what has been and is being done. Another key to success would be keeping sights low, and the use of a familiar and acceptable terminology. When the time comes to put plans into operation, the initiative would wherever possible pass into the hands of the local government, although the office would continue to monitor their progress and repair their deficiencies. By thus exploiting extant resources, it would revitalize languishing institutions and recreate them with a determined scope of activity. Compress, Aree Vaste, Consortia, and so forth would then no longer be like empty boxes, built without thought as to what they should contain, but would be filled, each with an appropriate content.

The idea of a Department of Urban Affairs provides for a concentration of administrative technology and public enterprise in a context that requires a qualitative improvement in economic structures. Presently, these structures, if not necessarily in a production crisis, are yet impaired from the standpoint of stability and prospects. The Department, as it is not tied to any territorial subdivision, either of the region or of the central state, could intervene with positive results in any of the bureaucratic set-ups being proposed in connection with the reform of the local government; indeed, this office would have the task of overcoming any obstacles to realizing the reform.

4. Government of Densely Populated Areas

The primary matter is not really the juridico-administrative one of dividing the region into factors in order to find territorial units suitable for the conduct of certain set functions of planning and management. This step can be taken once an active regional planning program has already got under way, in order to make it more efficient, more detailed, and more intrinsically promoting the participation of local enti and private citizens. As things stand, what is necessary is rather the initiation of a certain process of planning implementation; as to the method of effecting this, the procedures for carrying it out, one is still quite in the dark, and therefore must proceed by trial and error. The vehicle to be set in motion must therefore be as simple as possible. One must not be unduly distracted by side issues, the impact of which, be it pro or con, will never be felt if the vehicle stays rooted to the spot. Once under way, it will already be something of a success not, indeed, to eliminate all problems, but simply to decry on the horizon one possible, approaching solution.

Here one might object that the contrary procedure, that is, of allowing the agencies farthest from the center to initiate the implementation of planning directly, might have the advantage of confronting only minor problems from which it would be possible to pass to those of a higher order. This would be a viable solution only where a very sophisticated level of political and administrative organization existed, and where the units of local government possessed a really considerable degree of autonomy. This is not the case in Italy. The addition of the Compress (and even of the Aree Vaste), intended as coordinating units for the activities of the communes and as the privileged spokesmen of the region, only serves to pile one insufficiency on top of another. If the region cannot manage to carry out territorial and planning policies, neither can it construct lesser units to deplore for it in this regard.

The institution of a new agency affords one the uncertain gratification of believing one has made provision and freed oneself of inconveniences by handing them over to others. It does not confront the problems. When those provisions fail, logic requires one to retrace one's steps and follow the route of direct management of territorial policies. This is not, unfortunately, the course which has usually been elected; it is politically difficult to remove an institution once established, idleness and diffidence abound, and it is difficult to make radical changes in an approach that is popularly supported and is commonly believed to be just. Instead, the already scanty stock of creative initiative in the administration has been modified and further tapered.

There are two ways of integrating the governmental units that supply services: 1) through authorities with a mainly territorial competence and a wide range of functions, and 2) through agencies invested with competence over a specific task. If one uses a governmental unit designed for a particular job, one has the advantage of efficiency, but loses to the most part the possibility of achieving adequate coordination with other activities. The converse applies when the matter concerns territorial units that must carry out many activities. One can speak of vertical integration, as opposed to horizontal. With respect to the latter, a problem of economics replaces that of coordination. One speaks of an economics -- or diseconomies -- of scale or of externalities, since an area of optimal size to handle one service
will not necessarily be so for others which it is nonetheless obliged to supply. In addition, the areas of competence assigned to territorial governments are the result of centuries of historical or political calculation rather than research into the dimensions appropriate to various functions. There will be competition and hence reciprocal adjustments between area and function.

In attempting a solution to this problem, two divergent tendencies can be traced: The first is to consider each function separately and, having identified the optimal area for each, to effect some coordination from above. The second, emphasizing the interrelation of the functions, sacrifices the areas to an adjustment that is perfect with respect to function; then seeking, by a process comparable to the search for a smallest common denominator, to create areas where there will be the smallest possible impairment of this optimum.

The Department here proposed represents an intermediate figure between the two theoretical extremes just described. It would only be a concentration of technical expertise, lacking any actual power to coordinate, or any judicial authority. But it will not be dealing with centers of power accustomed to launching dynamic, independent, and incisive policies; rather it will deal with governments and institutions of no particular brilliance in making decisions and solving problems. It would be the only facility in existence equipped to develop creative policies and propound dynamic solutions. In this sense, it could make itself a niche at the center from which to operate. But the communes, provinces, and other institutions would still be necessary in order to carry out the outlined program into effect, and to make decisions in their own areas of competence. There would then no longer be any need for preconstituted aggregations of territorial authorities—they will consolidate according to the directions and advice of the Department.

The primary advantage of this scheme is its simplicity, an attribute not to be despised in a politico-administrative picture that is otherwise anything but clean. Other points in its favor arise from the urban geography of the region, as described in the first part of this paper. Supposing that the activity of territorial planning continues at a regional level, one can then proceed by imagining the region as a complex of homogeneous but not always contiguous problem areas, such as the cities and the urban-agricultural zones that separate them. Accordingly, in place of the traditional figure of the provincial capital with its surrounding tributary area—a figure represented to some extent in all the territorial groupings thus far considered—we must substitute the conceptual model of a many-centered regional city, its centers being divided from each other by areas of prevalently different character and purpose. When a group of communes that surround and include city elect representatives to the council based on population, the political (numerical) weight of the city so preponderates that the decisions of the council are no longer binding, and there remains no device by which the smaller communes can make the institution work for them.

To avoid this inconvenience, one of two alternative plans can be put into practice. The first has already been described. The second, supposing that it is really inevitable to visualize the administrative territory in terms of a capital city and its outlying districts, arranges matters by having the council founded on representation of the communes irrespective of their demographic base. The advantage to the lesser communes from both of these alternatives is of the same order: since the political weight of the city and the pressure of its affairs are intrinsically superior to their own, they would undoubtedly gain a better hearing at the national and regional level, without monopolizing the debates at the level of communal interaction. Above all, the city itself would profit from the opportunity to visualize its problems in terms of its surroundings and to deal with institutions (namely, the adjacent communes) possessing full independence; the city would thus be more likely than is now the case to make quick and definitive decisions. The smaller communes would also benefit from having a place to work out problems on a basis of formal equality, and they would be more inclined to participate in intercommunal organizations. Meanwhile, the presence of the regionally coordinating Department, as of the regional authority itself, could protect against the danger of an abuse of power by the smaller communes. Instead of a mosaic, the region could then be considered a series of rings strung out along an axis represented, in this case, by the Department that would bring about coordination.

The senseless competition between city and countryside for the land available for their particular activities must end. Provision must be made for an assimilation of the rural farming areas in a context that will bind the life of the urban areas, without forcing them to adopt a subordinate position or submit to the conquest of an unregulated urbanization.

Suburbanized areas should be circumscribed so as to impede further spreading and qualify their internal or organizational structure; their population density and productivity are still too low to justify their impulse toward decentralization. It is imperative to strike a balance between forces that pull for concentration of activities and those that, on the contrary, encourage dispersion. Technological advances in the transportation sector can reduce the need to create economies on the basis of location. On the other hand, rational exploitation of a given space (with respect to storage capacity or increased population density) allows it to furnish services at a given transportation cost, thus favoring a potentially greater concentration.

The southern and eastern zones of the Veneto, or, more generally, all those still apparently immune to the phenomenon of suburban sprawl should, however, be protected from contamination by harmful factors in the model which applies to the central zone. Even though these areas have been considered backward and peripheral, they should nonetheless be able to enjoy the presence and benefits of industrial zones and service centers, some already in existence and others to be built, at a maximum distance of forty to fifty kilometers. Therefore, organization of these areas ought princi-

ally to be directed toward qualifying a few urban centers (policentrism), thus guarding against the waste of resources which occurs in the central area. One does not mean to suggest an absolute distinction between industrial
and agricultural zones; although it seems natural to think that the latter would premoninate in the southern part of the Veneto, where the population is relatively sparse: the point is that we must handle even the same problems differently if they arise in one area rather than another.

In urbanized areas, urban -- and hence industrial -- needs exert an enormous pressure on agricultural activities. The latter should therefore be provided both with safeguards, to maintain the proper relationships among diverse activities, and limitations, to ensure enough space for activities more appropriate, necessary, or productive in an urban setting.

The economic mechanisms of urban growth have favored the undisciplined expansion of the cities; in other words, short-term economic interest has relegated the areas set aside for agricultural uses to an inferior status. Any territorial subdivision that fails to resolve this conflict will have no success in the matter of planning and its implementation in the Veneto.

III. Some Political Considerations

One can define the Italian administrative-political system's relationship with the periphery as a centralized-populist-clientelist system. These three characteristics of the system cannot be separated. By centralist, we mean that the constitution, shaped by the Napoleonic matrix during the Risorgimento, now remits to Rome every final responsibility, which renders it somewhat abstract; by populist, we mean that the system is, in effect, firmly based on a variety of categories obtained as a result of demagogical practices which are not directed toward benefiting any one particular class; by clientelist, we mean that there are stratified interpersonal relations which operate between the normal citizenry and those who dispose of the resources. All these factors call for a pyramidal but decentralized form of organization, with the governmental center at the head, aided by the centralist ordering of the entire state.

Even at the level of local agencies, relations are based on clientelism, which represents the means for the request and distribution of resources. As the governmental apparatus is centralized, Rome is the center of collection and sorting.

The centralization of the Italian state, which came about in part under the influence of the French model, prevailed, after the Risorgimento, over the federalist proposals which actually were rather reasonable, considering the profound regional differences in areas of law, administration and finance, not to speak of customs and habits.

In spite, however, of the plans of Cavour, and the specially created institutions, there was not that administrative integration and penetration which characterizes the systems of France. Integration in Italy passed "through the monopolization of state power on the part of the provincial bourgeoisie." (32) According to the famous interpretation of Gramsci, this was the tribute to the initially paid in order to obtain the adhesion of southern agrarian property owners to the new reign of Italy. In this way, all subsequent choices were conditioned by the necessity to mediate between the interests of the northern industrial bourgeoisie and the mostly southern wealthy landowners. One can thus understand the political importance of the Mezzogiorno, notwithstanding its economic underdevelopment (33).

Following this method, national political integration achieved a considerable success. Apart from the gringandage of the first few years of the Reich, which some consider to have been a real popular revolt, there were no important separatist phenomena which could endanger national unity.

In any case, from the time when G. Salvemini at the beginning of the century laid out the system of rapport and convivances between the local representatives and men of the government, the system, as one can see from the most recent political studies, does not seem to have substantially changed.
The parties have taken over "the role of the old grand electorate in the role of intermediaries in the distribution of state resources to the periphery." (34) In this way, monopolization is not eliminated, but is rather more politicized. Today, communications with Rome are carried out by the party apparatus, even in ordinary administrative business (35). The party in Italy thus plays a key role in linking the periphery to the center. Through the operation of this system, the gap left by the inefficiency of the bureaucracy is filled, and the national ideological stalemate is balanced by the distribution of resources (in conflicting and inefficient ways) to the periphery of the political system. The parliament has been overwhelmed by clientelism to such a point that it has, to a great extent, lost its ability to elaborate coherent politics.

All this is even truer in those regions, such as the Veneto, where Christian Democracy prevails: not so much due to the fact that his directors maintain rapport with other politicians, rather than the electoral base (as the Italian Communist Party tends to do), as much as to the inferior level of ideological cohesion of the Catholic party, and for its sharply accentuated traditionalism and inter-class connotations.

The communists, instead, find themselves constrained to operate for their communities and for their party from within a clientelist system. They must avoid, on the one hand, the desire to give in to its temptation, and, on the other, submission to the political exhaustion that such a system can produce. Thanks to their more constant rapport with the masses and to their organization, they have the reputation of being good administrators. In any case, they also must trust in the network of interpersonal rapport in order to overcome the bureaucratic jungle, benefiting from the help of anyone at all, regardless of ideological preclusions. The role of the bureaucracy, which ought to organize rapports according to formal rules, is, in fact, absolutely nonexistent. The bureaucracy is inefficient and capricious. Its adherents, for the most part intellectuals coming from the ranks of the petit bourgeois, usually become participants because "they couldn't find anything better." They enjoy the security of the position, and exploit it as if it were only a matter of salary, and not a service to be rendered.

They enjoy a stipend proportionately high at low levels, and low at the higher levels than any other factors. An at least partially consoling consideration is the fact that with the help of the efficient organization of the parties (better if it is the governing party, but not necessarily), one can step around the bureaucracy with a certain ease.

A system such as that described should be based on bargaining and a containment of conflicts. Conflicts exist only in that moment in which a request is brought forward, but the system rapidly reduces them, satisfying the petitions. In addition, if there are "rules of the game" which are precise and accepted, both conflict and the violence which can follow it are naturally reduced.

In Italy, however, two problems exist which are rendering the system inefficient in exactly that area of violence, whether it be public or commercial. The first is the great number of unresolved problems which are played by ideology, and, on the other hand, the level of economic and organizational development. Conflicts, and the violence which ensues, have only been growing since the process of passage from an agricultural to an urban and industrial economy began. The number of unresolved problems has grown in geometric progression; this may be due to the fact that there were no instruments of which to confront the problems, or, perhaps more truly, to the fact that problems were allowed to grow without intervention in order that the rapports forming the base of the political system might be spared any radical change. One is dealing with a system in which authority is indeed neither central nor very strong; one first, obvious, consequence of this has been a growth in the power of bargaining (which can mean authority within this system) on the part of many social groups.

In the clientelist system resources in fact get assigned in an "irrational and uncontrollable way." The criteria to which one holds "are not influenced by a greater or lesser level of economic development, nor by a greater or lesser distance from commercial and industrial centers." Above all, popular clientelism produces benefits of an individual nature, to the disadvantage of projects or programs of collective interest. The very way in which benefits are requested and distributed gives rise to envy, and fear of having given more than has been received.

According to Tarrow, local Italian politicians can be defined as "entrepreneurial politicians" in the sense that in order to obtain and administer resources from the central government, rather than obeying the rules established by a functional, very hierarchical government, such as the French, they obey instead their own personal initiative, establishing informal relationships through their inventive faculties.

In the Italian clientelist system the linking role between the center and the periphery is played by the parties, which find motives for their differentiation more in traditional ideology than in their day-to-day behavior. Entrepreneurship is played out within the limits and language of party organization. In this way, in spite of the fact that Italy has been defined as the "country of transformism," political debate has become ideological abstractionism; that is to say, has become a justification directed at strengthening theories (which serve to differentiate) and not at guiding practical actions in the long run.

In countries where violent protest (36) is the only means of expression available to people whose problems can only be solved by public institutions, only a few particular problems ever reach the attention of the politicians. These few privileged problems thus receive greater notice than many other more important, but largely forgotten ones. We see here another aspect of that dualism introduced in the first part of this study.

For example, "the raising of bus fares hurts a large number of people
at the same time and place and thereby invites demonstrations of discontent by violence and while a high rate of infant mortality does not similarly tend itself to mass protest. This would typically occur in underdeveloped countries governed by dictatorial regimes.

In Italy the problem of access is not found at first, but only emerges when, there being no selection of problems to be confronted according to priorities, attention is given to those which are most easily received. Sometimes ideology performs the function of providing a framework for the complexity of society's rising problems by a coherent concatenation of causes and effects. In this way one can find a remedy for the "lack of direct access to certain overlooked problems," and one can individualize them before they reach the dramatic stage.

This, as Hirschman affirms, occurs in underdeveloped nations, while the Western democracies, whose basic ideologies are more universally absorbed, make use of comprehensive plans which illustrate the ends and means and make provisions for their own consistency. This planning represents the conscious and rational attempt of common thought towards materialization (37). In the case of Italy, access to the problems can be relatively easy; however, a comprehensive plan would be needed at that moment of decision-selection which, in Italy, never occurs.

It is true that a common cultural base is a necessary prerequisite to the formulation of such a plan. But when that base has become so generic as to incorporate only expected objectives and/or every issue is debated to an extreme point (with references made to questions so general that one loses all sense of reality, and opposition becomes prejudice), that base no longer serves as a unifying factor. Even in the U.S., for example, notable opportunities for patronage exist, and most of the time decision-making is accomplished on a bargaining basis. What renders the two systems profoundly different is exactly the fact that Italian ideology is the antithesis of American pragmatism.

Leaving aside the cultural and historic reasons which would lead one to stray from the present discourse while pondering the origins of this situation, one can say that the two major parties have for years preserved themselves as absolute alternatives. The Italian communist party has had to walk a long, hard road even to attempt to conquer positions of force within institutions. Always remaining the "opposition," they had to try not to lose credibility in the clientele circles without, at the same time, eliminating revolutionary language. This has allowed the Christian Democrats to behave according to praxis, case by case, which led someone to see "an even too pragmatic desire to exploit the advantages of clientilism. (38) The problem that we are now confronting above all is, therefore, that absence of ideology which has guided the non-politics of Italian government against which the ideology posits a culture of change. Cultural backwardness has only been able to produce a sterile maximalist revolutionary ideology as a taumaturgic process without which nothing could ever have been changed.

Another difference between the American and the Italian systems is the fact that, even though they are pervaded with forms of patronage, in the American system both levels of government and responsibilities are decentralized, and enjoy a notable autonomy such that public authority is present primarily at the local level. American patronage is practically a two-level system, while the Italian system adds another intermediary level which carries out contact with the central government. Indeed, the centralization of the Italian government pulverizes local responsibility in the moment in which it delegates various requests to the center which, losing itself in the capillary network of non-personal rapport, diminishes every authority, a concept tightly linked to that of responsibility.

As one can easily come to see, this system can function well in the short run and in simple social organizations, but it leaves unchanged the deeper tendencies which are instead conducted in the face of profound social changes. When, in fact, after a long period of economic development, there followed a certain stasis, and the resources to be divided grew in a less-than-proportional way in respect to the social needs which strong urbanization and growing expectations had created, the system tripped up. If long-term perspectives existed in the minds of politicians, entrepreneurship might be able to play an informative role in anticipating problems.

According to Robert A. Dahl, this happened in New Haven in the 50's, when the politicians promised an urban renewal plan without the citizens seriously claiming such a project. They "refused to participate in the vagueness of a distant political success as if they had generated the request (for the renewal plan) and activated the latent consent." (39) Similar political actions, even given that there were politicians capable of conceiving them and carrying them out, are not probable in the Italian political system. The centralist-populist-clentelary system has in many ways frustrated every expectation over the long run: the so-called political entrepreneurship of local (and central) directors is rather an accentuated tendency toward speculation.

Even if one wanted to carry out a plan, one would run up against a strong distrust, and the first fetter to burden the plan would be maximizing its advantages in the shortest possible time in order to retain the support of the citizens at the cost of giving up the more consistent benefits of an extended time-life. Not all the regions of Italy are undergoing in the same way the serious consequences of the procrastinating of the Italian government: Rome, Naples and Palermo in the south, Milan, Genoa and Turin, as gross industrial centers, are the cities which suffer most the absence of a politics of metropolitan planning, and tension has already exploded many times, while the quality of life has plummeted.

The Veneto region, having no great concentration of industries and/or workers and having an absolute majority of Christian Democrats in the regional council (this is the party's strongest area in the entire nation), is not yet
behavior have taken the places of the old one. Moreover, with the advent of public education, young people came to realize that many situations which their parents passively accepted were instead able to be resolved. One can also add to this fact that the clientelist system helps, above all, those who are a part of it. It gives them no certainty, but only the hope that in "following the right road" one can obtain "favor."

In an epoch in which one of the most ardently sought ends has been social security, even at the risk of falling into the opposite defect of an excessive guaranteeism, this system could not be accepted, especially by the younger people to whom education gave, at first, an appearance of moral values based on objectivity, equality and the openness which brought them to scorn any method based on provincial closure and paternalism. Some of the problems, as well, were brought on by the press or television, and thus began to be felt in the region, although they had not reached dramatic proportions. Many problems, therefore, could not even be understood (40) by a part of the population -- that part which most participated in the system from which it profited, happy in seeing family salaries rising and incapable of seeing the dearth of progressive social services which had become necessary.

For the younger people, there existed a strong motivation to resolve the problems on a short-term basis, even though their importance could not be comprehended since they were, in part, imported, and there seemed no way to confront them. We can...define two ideal types of systems for the resolution of problems: one in which progress or comprehension tends to bring about motivation (to resolution), and the other where, on the contrary, motivation is born before comprehension."

In the South American countries studied by Hirschman, a "full, integrated, definitive and rapid solution to the difficulties" was constantly requested; this amply demonstrates that motivation had preceded comprehension of the problem. Another aspect observed in these countries was the frequent creation of new institutions: indeed, in the absence of comprehension of a problem, that strong motivation to do something at any cost resulted in the creation of a new agency or office whose business it was to solve the problem -- naturally, it was a miserable failure.

Something of this sort occurred in the Veneto with the deconcentration of various jurisdictions in the matter of programming to the Districts: here, in addition, one observes a double effect: 1) the lack of comprehension of what was to be done (attributed to hazy delegations within the material), and 2) the supposition that a supplementary organ that was better determined in order to confront all the problems concerned with territorial management would be enough. One can consider a third observed effect to be the breaking up of the region into about 50 small unified districts with the goal of sharing as much as possible the eventual advantages resulting from the provision.

Italy and the Veneto, however, are not underdeveloped regions and thus
the must remain aware of the danger into which more advanced countries fall through an excessive dose of confidence: that is, they create more problems than they can resolve. This is but another aspect of the lack of comprehension of all the aspects of the problem which emerge only when some definitive steps have been taken in one direction, without the possibility of turning back. It is a considerable problem in a country such as Italy, which is open to more advanced countries, but not to their technological levels, neither in terms of salary nor in organizational maturity. A confrontation with more developed countries accentuates even more the natural desire to quickly resolve the problems. If this does not happen, the tendency is, instead, that which is typical of the countries studied by Hirschman: an immediate retreat to extremely revolutionary positions and a falling into the convention, just as based on faith, that nothing can be done if one does not effect total change from the bottom up.

This is completely the opposite of what happens in the U.S. where they do, if at all, in the opposite direction: if change does not come gradually, it is neither accepted nor understood. The idea that conflicts of interest are only apparent has always constituted one of the elements of American culture. (41) A non-antagonistic modification of the social state, that is, one which would eventually benefit everyone, can make many people irrationally disagree.

Every progress, at least initially, almost always strikes at those absolutely relative positions of a few social groups. In this way, the difficulties of conflict, in the case of non-antagonistic measures, is often undervalued; and one is surprised at the difficulties they encounter in being introduced. Also, when after a plan has been discussed and presented, one passes to its actualization, social groups, until then completely uninvolved in the discussion, gathering together and producing their own leaders in a surprisingly short period of time, spring up against it. (42) The factors of time and expectations can help one to comprehend this situation. If the local politician is a true political entrepreneur, and the population is used to promises, and is endowed with direct responsibility, it usually will be harder to make a given group think that a change in its relative position can be compensated for by an advantage in the long run; the politician, before being criticized, will have a lapse of time in which to act.

When, instead, motivation exceeds the comprehension of a problem and, in addition, the politician is a "speculator," either the public will expect everything from him, and right away, or, if this does not happen, they immediately discharge him or entirely lose faith in any remaining possibility of change in such institutions. In this situation, even the good entrepreneur-politician will be constrained to adapt his behavior to the level of comprehension of the problems. If a unionist was perfectly convinced that a strategy of salary limitation would be the best solution to the problems of the working class, and made a clear speech on this point, few workers would follow him down that route, and he would lose power in favor of those who express the mood of the working class. With this, there would not be greater democracy, but rather an incapacity to confer sufficient delegates in order to carry out any type of politics. What he must do, then, is to maintain a comprehensible language in his attempt to gain time, not in order to maintain power, or not only, but also in order to get comprehension up to the level of motivation.

Just as a politician is interested in maintaining his position and therefore, if his representation is conferred by democratic means, in making himself understood by the electorate, experts should also do no less. Frequently, experts, after having undergone an overdose of frustrations, become converts to the point of view that "ALL" must change before any amelioration can be introduced. "The idea that revolution is requisite to any progress gives immense force to the very limited human capacity to visualize change." Naturally, for many of them, the position is one of self-interest, especially when no dangers are present. It is also a good solution, after youthful disillusionment; it allows one's conscience to wait peacefully, doing nothing.

Another solution is to make studies, attend conventions, and publish books on the "perfect reform," all the while knowing well of the exceptional disinterest towards them. The idea of revolution, from a psychological point of view, has a dual function: "to gratify the desire for change, and to dispense with the need to visualize the process of change in its intricate and often displeasing details, looking at everything from far away as if it were invisible." Sometimes revolution is inevitable. But many other, less rigid, situations exist, in which change by non-revolutionary methods is or has become possible, but where, on account of the strength of a custom, or a cultural dearth, change is nevertheless visualized as something requiring a preliminary revolution.

In Italy many individuals of right, left, or center, find themselves in this theoretical position. At the same time, within the limited horizons that they have, they are tied to the status quo, and deadly afraid of moving themselves from it, even if it is for improvement. The consequence is that an objective dearth of reformist theories encounters a constant elaboration of revolutionary theories, since those who do well within the status quo, that is, the majority, do not place any trust in a promise of partial change; they do not have faith in political speculators, and they know the rigidity of the clientelist bureaucratic system in the face of change. On the other hand, they are aware of the breakdown and attempt to maintain for as long as possible their own advantages. Strangely, but perhaps not too strangely, explicitly conservative ideas and theories are also lacking: almost all (or all) of the parties interpret this desire and are in agreement on the necessity for almost total change.

The danger in this situation is evident, in as much as it has given ample space for the propagation of the idea of revolution as the only possible future, at first only in words but later also culturally. From 1968 on, various events have intervened to modify the picture we are describing. The backward way of acting and corrupt customs of a large part of the government, the in which the socialist party itself was troublesome
ensnared, provoked only refusal, on the part of an already urban and industrial society, which had by then realized the necessity for a different approach to problems no longer considered fatal. But the only existing political alternative until then was the communist party, which both because of its history and in order to maintain its own credibility, and more recently because it was strongly combated and forced to the sidelines, had proclaimed for more than 20 years revolutionary ideas and a language of violence by which a good number of the young people had been formed. The vindications for a rapid and radical change on the part of the youth movements which were largely leftist extremists also prompted the discussion of the possibility of economic programming, which had in any case just in those years been doing very badly.

In the moment in which the groups of the extreme left grew farther away from the Communist party in order to follow the path of always more spurred maximalism and revolutionary integralism, a part of the Italian intelligentsia was brought closer to it. This may have been because the Communists, with their at first hesitant but later explicit condemnation of extremists, were getting closer to democratic positions: it may have been as a reaction to the failure of the Center Left, or, because, disillusioned by the path of reform, the intelligentsia moved toward culturally alternative (if not more revolutionary) but legally constitutional positions. Populist clientelism and the inefficiency of the bureaucracy were not in this way absolutely damaged. Only programming could have been able to constitute a valid alternative to that which, basing itself on an uncontrolled distribution of resources, constituted its antithesis.

The growth of decentralized vindications and disorganized conflict fomented by the extreme left, although maintaining access to new problems, required obedience to its logic without ever creating grave tensions. The only political force which could have taken up again the theme of programming in the 70’s would have been the Communist party which had preserved its own integrity in the midst of ever-increasing splintering. But not even the Communist party was up to it, both because it was out of the government, and because, traditionally revolutionary, it lacked the cultural basis for this reformist theme. The Communists, notwithstanding the fact that one must give them credit for a level of administrative efficiency much higher than that of other Italian parties, still belong to the clientelist-populist forces, an adjective which is synonymous with backwardness, although not necessarily with corruption. In the 60’s, among other targets there were so-called technocrats, which in fact did not exist in Italy. In the name of this battle against phantasms, one insisted upon the primacy of politics, of the class struggle to be more explicit, against any other attempt to delegate to technical organs. Everyone came together in this condemnation of the non-existent technocrats. Invoking the primacy of politics, while lacking a change-oriented culture, brought many to the point of being unable to know or recognize any objective reality, any concrete method for resolving problems. They ended up in abstract alternative cultures, haggling over every little thing: that is, in the most fertile terrain for clientelism. The primacy invoked was not, therefore, one of politics, but rather in part, that of violent and anarchic haggling and, in part, that of political manipulation in which professional politicians, the speculative-entrepreneur-politicians found themselves like fish in water, regardless of their party affiliation.

Concrete decision-making on any issue at all definitively put aside, when it was unavoidable, the traditional system was used. Revolutionaries were interested only in a program of revolution. (To these revolutionaries, one must add all those in power, that is, those who, even while being aware of the decay, believe that nothing can be done, and have lost the last shred of common civic honesty.) There existed, thus, two Italies: that of the populist-clientelist parties, and that of the revolutionaries, which included those, especially the young people, who demanded rapid and total changes and followed a more and more violent path of impossible decentralized vindication. The mood of many of these people, however, was not open to any concrete hope for improvement. Since the boundaries of the first Italy are not too clear, the two Italies share many citizens. One example is the actual alliance between autonomous unionism, traditionally center and rightist, and the most "ultra" fringes of the extreme leftist committees for the vindication of work. There exists, therefore, a gap which must be healed, between those who make requests and those who must respond to them. The two parts do not understand each other. Theirs is a dialogue between deaf mutes. To make their needs known, citizens must pass through numerous intermediaries whose responsibility it is not to resolve the problem, but just to act as rings through which the problem may pass. What is necessary instead is to invest a certain number of people with direct responsibility for problem-solving. (43)
### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% increase of Italian population in centers &gt; 100,000 inhabitants, with reference to the increase of the overall Italian population</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% increase of Italian population in Rome, Milan, Turin and Naples, with reference to the increase of the overall Italian population</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% increase of regional population in centers &gt; 100,000 inhabitants, with reference to the overall regional population</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*resident population

Source: Istat statistical data

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Population in the districts' capitals</th>
<th>Population in the districts' capital % tot. pop.</th>
<th>Rate of population centralization (concentration) in (residential) centers % total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Veneto (without main cities)</td>
<td>645,055</td>
<td>168,403</td>
<td>26,1</td>
<td>58,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Veneto (with main cities)</td>
<td>1,825,651</td>
<td>956,841</td>
<td>52,4</td>
<td>74,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Alpine Area</td>
<td>341,126</td>
<td>127,985</td>
<td>37,5</td>
<td>69,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Veneto</td>
<td>396,212</td>
<td>156,471</td>
<td>39,5</td>
<td>70,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Veneto</td>
<td>238,479</td>
<td>66,306</td>
<td>27,8</td>
<td>59,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VENETO</td>
<td>4,123,411</td>
<td>1,872,801</td>
<td>45,4</td>
<td>72,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Maintown and Urban Area (Province)</th>
<th>% Maintown (Urban Area)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belluno</td>
<td>19,5</td>
<td>19,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padova</td>
<td>42,6</td>
<td>42,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rovigo</td>
<td>27,6</td>
<td>27,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treviso</td>
<td>22,8</td>
<td>21,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicenza</td>
<td>22,2</td>
<td>22,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verona</td>
<td>48,8</td>
<td>48,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezia</td>
<td>52,2</td>
<td>51,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Per capita income as % of national per capita income</th>
<th>% of per capita national income</th>
<th>Value added at factor costs, net of bank service charges per capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belluno</td>
<td>81,9</td>
<td>87,9</td>
<td>95,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padova</td>
<td>89,7</td>
<td>93,2</td>
<td>97,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rovigo</td>
<td>74,4</td>
<td>90,1</td>
<td>103,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treviso</td>
<td>82,7</td>
<td>97,5</td>
<td>101,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezia</td>
<td>111,8</td>
<td>100,4</td>
<td>97,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verona</td>
<td>108,1</td>
<td>100,5</td>
<td>115,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vicenza</td>
<td>99,5</td>
<td>102,1</td>
<td>108,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veneto</td>
<td>96,2</td>
<td>97,7</td>
<td>103,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sicilia</td>
<td>65,9</td>
<td>70,6</td>
<td>69,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calabria</td>
<td>53,9</td>
<td>57,7</td>
<td>56,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campania</td>
<td>70,3</td>
<td>68,0</td>
<td>67,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italia</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>100,0</td>
<td>100,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridion</td>
<td>66,2</td>
<td>68,7</td>
<td>67,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avellino</td>
<td>46,5</td>
<td>46,3</td>
<td>55,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 2

COMPRESORIO BOUNDARIES AND URBAN CENTERS

FIGURE 3

> 70 inhabitants/sq. km. living in scattered houses

> 80 inhabitants/sq. km. living in scattered houses and small settlements

Fonte: IRSEV.
Footnotes


2) Ibid.

3) This concept is also discussed by A. Gershenkron, in Continuity in History and Other Essays, op.cit.

4) The transformation we are discussing had existed for sometime in the U.S.

5) It is interesting to note, in this regard, that only 20 years ago it was stated in F. Milone, L'italia nell'economia delle sue regioni, Einaudi, Torino, 1955, p.299, that "the population (of the Veneto) lives scattered throughout the countryside, thank God, in order to be able to better look after their field labor..."


8) C. Muscara, Il caso Veneto, Nord e Sud, ottobre 1975, Napoli.


11) Interview reported in "Espansione" n. 103, settembre 1978, p. 82.


18) S. Tarrow, op.cit.


20) The distribution of duties is thus provided by Regional Law: a Consiglio di Comprensorio, formed in large part by representatives appointed by the Communal Councils on the basis of population. The Council appoints a cabinet and its president.


22) S. Tarrow, Tra Centro e Periferia, op.cit., cap. VI, p. 175-207.


26) S. Tarrow, op.cit., and S. Tarrow, Introduction, op.cit.

27) "They purported to be setting up the creation of a modern state in Italy and they produced some sort of bastard," Antonio Gramsci quoted by G. Ruffolo, Riforme e Controriforme, op.cit.

28) M. Carabba, Un ventennio di programmazione, Laterza Bari 1977, pp. 93 -


31) This study has been inspired by A. Rao, Il Dipartimento degli Affari Urbani, Nord e Sud, Napoli, febbraio 1969.

32) S. Tarrow, Tra Centro e Periferia, op.cit., p. 54.

33) L. Graziano, Center-Periphery Relations and the Italian Crisis: the Problem of Clientelism, in S. Tarrow et al. eds., op.cit., p. 306.

34) Ibid., p. 55/56.

35) Ibid., p. 61.

37) A. Altshuler, op.cit., p. 306.

38) S. Tarrow, Italy: Political Integration in a Fragmented Political System, paper prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the APSA, San Francisco, September 1975, quoted in L. Graziano, op.cit. p. 307.


40) We are still using Hirschman's terminology.

41) A. Altshuler, op.cit., p. 315.

42) Ibid., p. 309.

43) A more complete bibliography is available in the Italian version upon request to the author.