

Summary

Salvatore Lupo
A rose for Falcone and Borsellino

Memory of Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, murdered by the mafia.

Alessandro Polsi
Before the Bank of Italy

The article examines the reason of the failed merging of former banks of issue into a big national bank after 1860. The main reason was the strong link between bankers and government in Piemonte, the most developed state before the unification. Many politicians and economists feared that a big bank of issue could increase corruption and speculation. But there was also a basic distrust of Italian bourgeoisie against the great entrepreneurs and bankers in favour of small sized and local based enterprises. Opposers in Parliament succeeded in hindering the alliance of the most important groups of Italian capitalism. The result was the slow retarded formation of a national market of capitals and credit and the persistence of deep regional differences in economic growth.

Giuseppe Barone
Bankers and Politicians in Catania

The essay draws the social and economic conditions of a big city of southern Italy such as Catania at the end of XIX century, where an accelerated agriculture, manufacturing and mercantile development promoted a rapid expansion of the credit. The agriculture crisis and the cholera epidemic abruptly, interrupte the positive economic trend, ingenerating a chain of failures and bank crack-ups, which revealed the infirailty of the credit by stell and the perverse interlacement between «politics» and «business» that was one of the strong holds of the liberal block of power. The democratic parties (radicals, republicans, and socialists) acting on the wave of the «moral question», took advantage of the extension of universal suffrage totry to impose a popular government in the common and in the province, Francesco Crispi, prime minister at the time being, reacted to the experiment of urban reformism with a marsh repression. In the meantime, the formation of the «Sicilian fasci» movement and, in a short while, their taking over the country, produced dramatic changes in the political framework, on the national as well as on the local level.

Marcello Messori
The role of banks in southern Italy today

Empirical researches have pointed out that the relationships between banks and firms in Southern Italy are characterized by higher interest rates and by a stronger impact of credit rationing than in the other Italian areas. The explanation of these empirical results requires a new interpretation of the weaknesses of *Mezzogiorno's* economic system. This paper refers to neo-institutionalism and to New Keynesian Economics. It shows how these theories stress the illworking of markets and other institutions, and support a more active role for the banking system. Nevertheless, in Southern Italy the banks did not perform this role. Thus the paper offers some examples of politics capable of improving banks' performance in the *Mezzogiorno*.

Raffaele Brancati
The public funds to enterprises

This contribution tries to summarize the main effects of the actual incentives' structure in the Italian industry by region. The intervention in the *Mezzogiorno* is only the more intense aid for economic activities, where some incentives are diffused all over Italy with particular aims: innovation oriented policies, «crisis points», energy saving, etc.

Starting from some empirical evidence, there is a framework of the distortive effects of the governments' aids to manufacturing industry. In this paper the main distortive effects, connected with the high level of subsidization, is not considered the factors' substitution, but the prevailing interest of the entrepreneurs for the way of achieving «public money» in spite of the usual firms' functions (productive, commercial, etc.).

This brings to a loss of efficiency also at a microeconomic level. This aspect is emphasized by the actual procedures that are diffused in Italy. The economic policy's suggestion is that also without external constraints (i.e. public balance stress, EEC rules) it is useful a reduction in the aids' intensity, a change in the procedures and the involvement of new institutions (regions).

Pierluigi Ciocca
But the banks don't give «incentives»

This paper shows that the negative peculiarities of Southern Italy economic structure do not involve the working of the financial structure. In particular, the capital market of the *Mezzogiorno* is fully integrated with the other Italian capital markets; and the weaknesses of the Southern banking system do not imply a difference in quality with respect to the problems of the Northern banks. This is proved by the fact that the increasing competition is cutting down the gap between the indicators and the performance of the financial markets in the North and in the South. Thus the problems, which still hamper the economic development of Southern Italy, are not caused and cannot be solved by a change in the behavior of the financial intermediaries.

Ida Fazio

A small scale to understand markets functioning

The aim of this essay is to focus on new ways of using the local scale in the historical analysis of markets.

New suggestions have been introduced in the field by the criticism of Karl Polanyi about the impersonal forces of the «market principle»; by the notion of interdependence between core areas and periphery of the economic world system, put forward by Fernand Braudel and Immanuel Wallerstein, by Dutch and British «network analysis», and by the Italian historical «microanalysis».

These theoretical and methodological reorientations produce a general rethinking of many topics of traditional Italian local history. For instance they are changing the up to date readings of the relationship between supply and demand. These relationships are currently read as politically and socially conditioned, in several Italian studies about provisioning areas and consumer zones.

Simona Laudani

Market exchange and the contests

The author in this paper uses the local level in order to study market phenomena, through a historiographic and methodological recognition. She therefore chooses to make a recollection of problems and perspectives connected with the topic of markets, rather than producing a traditional survey about the last twenty years Italian local history. The review as well as the bibliography was grouped following four main conceptual focuses. The first point concerns the spatial and geographical dimension of the market. Such a dimension is connected not just to the international level of exchanges but also to the market location. The second point deals with the social aspects of the market, both as a physical place for exchanges and as an opportunity for a wider sociality. The last point is a criticism of concepts such as absolute rationality. There is a redefinition of phases and rhythms of the so called «transition», that is the shifting from a traditional market system, which was static and locked up, to the self-regulated and regulating capitalistic one.

Hannes Siegrist

Lawyers in XIX Century Italy

The article is a contribution to the social history of lawyers (*avvocati*) and to the history of Italian bourgeois middle classes. It deals with the social background, the local origins, the marriage circles, the social status and prestige of the *avvocati* in three different preunitary states respectively Italian regions, namely Lombardy, Tuscany and Kingdom of Naples. The results show, that there has been a strong commonality with respect to the social background of the *avvocati* and their wives: most of them stemmed from families which belonged to the middle and upper bourgeois strata, namely *rentiers* or *owners*, liberal professions and officials. A small minority came from aristocratic families. Sons of small shopkeepers, artisans or even workers almost never became lawyers. The *avvocati* aspired for a bourgeois middle class status in many respects. In the liberal Kingdom of Italy they often obtained an order as a *Cavaliere* (Knight) *Commendatore* (Commander), titles which the sta-

te conferred only to social and political élites. Although very seldom lawyers reached a status above that of petty bourgeois, they were in any case respected as *civile* (gentlemanlike), which meant good education and manners, decent housing and listible and political rights.

Sergio Bruni
Ten years later

Between 1979 and 1980 professor F. Pontarollo completed research on a sample of small firms — a total of 77 — all situated in four Southern provinces, L'Aquila, Avellino, Catania and Cosenza. The same firms were studied 10 years later and the article analyzes their development during this decade.

The research is based on information gathered from and articulated questionnaire compiled by small businessmen and from information supplied by expert witnesses. Thus, an analysis is made of the data relating to the origins of the business capital, the level of education and the experience of the businessmen. The firms are divided into three groups: «Dynamic», «Stationary» and in «Decline» on the basis of specific indicators such as an increase in the workforce, the growth in production and technological renewal. The research demonstrates that the successful firms are mainly those which have succeeded in selling their products on the national and international markets and the firms which have established particular links with the big northern Companies. On the contrary the firms experiencing difficulties are those that operate on a local market level and have not succeeded in entering bigger markets.

Vito Laterza
Not only Croce

The interview to Vito Laterza opens a series of surveys that «Meridiana» will accomplish in the cultural history of the Mezzogiorno, covering the field of entrepreneurial initiatives, of publishers' activity in particular, through the witness of some of its interpreters. Vito Laterza, the biggest and most prestigious of southern publishers, in this interview goes through his personal vicissitudes, connecting them to those of his publishing house: Giovanni and Franco Laterza, Benedetto Croce and Rodolfo Mattioli, figure in this story. Several are the subjects treated by Vito Laterza: from the relationships with other intellectuals, such as Mattioli, Jemolo, Luigi Russo, Guido De Ruggero, Manlio Rossi-Doria and Eugenio Garin, to the recent problems of partnership asset and the future editorial plans of his publishing house.