

## Summary

Charles F. Sabel

*The Reemergence of Regional Economies.*

This essay considers the possible consequences of the strategic reorientation for relations among the state, the economy, and the organization connecting the two. The core of the essay concerns the reaction of firms and local authorities to the continuing, current economic turbulence. Section two looks at the developments from the vantage point of small-and medium-sized firms. It focuses on cases where such firms have formed or revitalized internationally competitive, technologically sophisticated regional economies. Section three considers the way multinationals have adjusted as new products are introduced more rapidly and development costs soar. Together these sections argue that an emergent corporate form which blurs familiar distinctions between large and small firms, is spreading – in different variants and speeds in every country – through the advanced capitalist world. Section four focuses on coordinate changes in the job-creation strategies of local authorities. The final sections address the future of these inchoate economic forms.

The conclusion discusses the role the state, trade unions, and employers associations could play if the advanced economies did become confederations of flexible regional economies, and the problems that arise in constructing such a confederal state from the institutional fragments of the mass production system.

Cinzia Capalbo

*External Market and skill tradition. Silk production in Cosenza from 1750 to 1810.*

The long and complex history of Calabrian silk production reached its glorious peak during the 16th century, after which it began to acquire a consistently less important role in the field of international specialisation. However, from the analysis of certain historical sources, the *Penes Acta*, this tendency appears less dramatic and much slower than has generally been thought. In particular, during the course of the 18th century and the first decade of the 19th, silk production in Cosenza still constituted a very dynamic sector of the economy of the city and its hinterland. The civic capital of the new urban bourgeois nuclei was invested in the silk sector and through silk production (which had assumed an important ex-

change value function) many farming families were able to complete their earnings and so extricate themselves from the blackmail of usury.

Clearly, international demand, which was however still able to absorb the quantity of silk produced, is not enough on its own to explain the secular grip of the silk industry in Calabria. The essay singles out the contributory causes of the important cohesive and stabilizing function of silk within the socio-economic structure of Calabria and of its value as an ancient cultural tradition and profession.

Daniela Luigia Caglioti

*Property and matrimonial strategies in 19th century Calabria.*

This article presents the first results of a study of the aristocratic and bourgeois élite of Catanzaro in the 19th century. The activities of three family groups, two aristocratic and one bourgeois, are reconstructed over the course of a century. Various aspects of the three domestic groups are considered: their economic strategies, with particular reference to the times and ways in which the landed patrimony was built up; demographic behaviour and the nature of matrimonial exchanges; the negotiations for patrimonial transfer; and the kind of participation in the political life of the city. This study was produced having recourse to informations obtained from solicitors' records and declarations of succession from the Registrar's Office, integrated with supplementary documentation.

Donatella Barazzetti

*The Birthplace shadow. Emigration and the earthquake in a town in Campania.*

The earthquake which hit various provinces in Campania in 1980, causing enormous damage and 3000 dead, has had complex and surprising effects on the community of Laviano.

In the years preceding the quake, this town (situated in the province of Salerno) witnessed the sustained migratory flow of its population abroad. About 30 families established themselves in a small German town, from which they maintained a continuous flow of information and communication with their town of origin. The 1980 disaster interrupted the stable situation between Germany and Laviano, which the emigrants had up to that time preserved, and the great majority of the families returned home. The fear of «losing the town», and with it their own identity and the meaning of their lives, compelled the emigrants in various ways to go back. Without this final aim linking one's work abroad with the possibility of returning to one's home town, the sacrifice of emigration loses all point.

Piero Bevilacqua

*Political history or the political use of history?*

This article takes as its starting point a series of debates (increasingly more frequent in Italy in the last few years), in which the recalling of past events and peo-

ple serves as a more or less immediate pretext for the purposes of political infighting between intellectuals of different political leanings.

Contemporary history, and above all political history, thus becomes degraded; deprived of all seriousness and scientific weight. But the central question that needs to be put is: whether such non-scientific use of political history has not been made possible by an, albeit serious, tradition of studies, which in Italy has dominated this field of research up to now. In fact, this is the central point: the kind of history which analyzes past events using the same political-ideological categories as for contemporary ones, which unknowingly accepts self representations without links to the social sciences, ends up by becoming the object of every possible manipulation.

*Giovanni Travaglini (interview): Territory and Infrastructure.*

This interview tackles a multiple series of themes regarding Southern Italian territory, both in its natural aspects and in its historical evolution, realized in the last forty years as a result, above all, of the special intervention of the State. Southern Italian territory, as indeed most of the national territory, is continually subject to natural and anthropic changes and thus requires organic, programmatic and sustained intervention to contain and limit the type of catastrophic damage so common in Italy. But it is likewise necessary to have a type of planning which can overcome the abstract constraint that has characterized past legislation and give State administrations more concrete power in imposing prohibitions on the private exploitation of territorial resources and greater powers of intervention to use them according to criteria based on public interest.

Alberto Asor Rosa, Arnaldo Bagnasco, Giuseppe Barone,  
Ester Fano, Silvio Lanaro  
*The «New Italy» by Silvio Lanaro.*

A cultural historian (Asor Rosa), a sociologist (Bagnasco), and two economic historians (Barone and Fano) consider the book just published by S. Lanaro, in order to point out – each from his own preferred point of view – the limits and suggestions of this work dedicated to the examination of the distinctive characteristics which have marked post-unification history and continue to distinguish the Italian world.

Asor Rosa would have found the essay more justified if it had been limited to the study of changes in customs (an argument on which he has written brilliant pages); whilst Bagnasco suggests that the absence of a strong Nation-State identity (the polycentric nature of Italy) has, in the end, probably constituted an element of strength rather than weakness in the national history of the last few decades. Thus, Barone has noted how many of the aspects lamented by Lanaro as weaknesses typical of 19th and 20th century Italy (eg. the lack of an organising centre of public life) are, in fact, common to other European countries; whilst E. Fano has added some critical observations in her contribution on the way in which the author has interpreted the experience of Fascism in Italy. A brilliant answer of the author of the book closes the discussion.