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URBANIZATION AND ITALIAN POLITICS

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EFFORTS TO ACCOUNT for the nature and direction of political change in the developing nations of Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East have produced the theory of political modernization. In these nations, observers have found the gradual emergence of *modern* political systems, characterized by (1) functionally specialized political institutions, such as parties, elections, pressure groups, schools, mass media, and legislatures; (2) political recruitment based on achievement; (3) mass awareness of national political events and allegiance to a national political system; (4) mass participation in national politics; and (5) a powerful, centralized, bureaucratic state, capable of performing a broad range of complex, sophisticated functions.¹

The development of the modern polity, according to this theory, is accompanied (or perhaps necessarily preceded) by the secularization of society, the growth of new social classes and the restructuring of class relations, industrialization and commercialization of the economy, and the growth of cities.² In most developing nations, modern politics have tended to involve mostly the Westernized urban groups. Cities have not only been the principal arenas of politics, but also the principal means for the diffusion of nationalism and other modern political ideas and forms of behavior.³

Has this been the pattern of political development in Italy? It is difficult to say, given the ambiguities of the theory of political modernization, the lack of consensus on the nature of urban-rural relations in Italy, and the nature of Italian society.

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¹Gabriel Almond and James Coleman (eds.), *The Politics of the Developing Areas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959); Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1958).

²Almond and Coleman, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 100-101, 172-174, 270-274, 387-389, 470.

1. *Political Modernization*

The theory of political modernization has two principal weaknesses. First, it fails to specify crucial traits of the modern polity. Take, for example, the "modern" political party. To a Frenchman, the modern political party—the party which is distinctively modern—is one with a clear program, fixed ideology, tight discipline, elaborate organization, and red-hot militancy.⁴ To an American, the modern party is a pragmatic one, loosely organized, oriented toward compromise and bargaining, and preferably one of two major parties.⁵

Is the modern polity a democracy or an oligarchy? Does it have a multi-party system, a two-party system, or a one-party system? What kinds of politics characterize the modern polity: stability, consensus, skepticism, doubt, low temperatures, realism, prosaic leadership, awareness of complexity, caution, and incrementalism or ideological extremism, conflict, emotional fervor, commitment, certainty, impatience, high temperatures, and messianic leaders?⁶ The theory, as so far elaborated, does not specify what may be expected to develop in these respects.

There is also the usual ambiguity involved in the term "modern." Is the modern polity an end-state of universal political evolution; a necessary stage through which all countries will pass; or just a possible development? Is today's modern polity tomorrow's traditional polity? Substituting the words "development" and "developed" for "modernization" and "modern," moreover, does not seem appreciably to increase the predictiveness or reduce the ambiguity of the theory.

Even if one accepts the general idea of political modernization, it may be difficult to tell whether or not the process is occurring. For example, the same movement may (and probably does) have modernizing and traditional aspects. It may have a modern and a traditional wing. It may, as with the Italian Christian Democratic "integralists," be modern on economic matters, yet be reactionary in matters of politics and ideology. It may, as with the Italian Communists, represent a tradition-oriented force in some areas (the

⁴Maurice Duverger, *Les partis politiques* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1951).

⁵James Coleman, "Conclusion," in Almond and Coleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 523-576 at p. 533.

⁶Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology* (New York: Collier, 1961).

North and the Center) and a modernizing force in others (the South).⁷

It may also be the case that the ideal-typical traits of modernity, such as specificity of structure and recruitment based on achievement, are not necessarily characteristic of modern polities. It is possible that modern structures of government tend toward diffuseness, rather than specificity; that boundaries tend to become less defined and less well maintained than before. Take, for example, the role of government in the twentieth century: has this role tended to become increasingly specific or increasingly diffused? Do legislatures, executives, bureaucracies, and courts operate today in more, rather than less, clearly defined jurisdiction? Has the boundary between the political system and the other aspects of society tended to become more fixed and certain or rather less? Is a totalitarian party a specific political structure; or does it typically rely on elastic boundaries and diffuse roles for its effectiveness and survival? With regard to the use of achievement criteria in political recruitment, can it be said that the doctrine of "availability" is primarily achievement-oriented?

The concept of the modern is useful, productive of insight, indeed unavoidable, yet it is bound to be somewhat ethnocentric, vague, and tentative.⁸

2. *Urban-Rural Relations in Italy*

The second difficulty in applying the theory of political modernization to Italy stems from the lack of agreement on the nature of urban-rural relations in that country. To some, Italy is essentially an urban country, without a significant rural element. Representative of this school of thought was Roberto Michels, who wrote:

There is not in Italy any absolute separation between city and countryside. The Italian people in its entirety is in nature an urban people. The life of the Italian rural population develops in much

⁷More precisely, one would have to distinguish between the modernizing activities of the Communists in the cities of the Center and North—where they are among the major forces assimilating newly arrived peasants to modern urban culture—and their activities in the rural areas of the Center-North, where they are largely defending traditional attitudes, such as anticlericalism, and traditional institutions, such as the cooperative network.

⁸For an assessment of the theory of political modernization, see Lucian W. Pye, *Aspects of Political Development* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966).

more urban forms than that of the German or French country inhabitants.⁹

Another school of thought also minimizes urban-rural differences in Italy by asserting just the contrary, that Italy is basically a peasant society. Italian city dwellers are seen to be peasants, former peasants, or peasant-minded. Certain character traits, labelled peasant traits, are said to be found throughout Italian society: "amoral familism," suspicion of outsiders, cynicism, parochialism, incivility, etc.¹⁰

To still a third group, the urban-rural cleavage is one of the major faults in the structure of Italian society. Italy to them is neither basically rural nor basically urban, but rather an arena for serious urban-rural conflict and disparity.¹¹

Urban-rural conflict has been traced to roots in classical Roman culture, in which city meant civilization; the countryside, vulgarity. This Roman inheritance can be seen in the uniformly unflattering terms used to refer to peasants in modern Italy and in the general sense of inferiority of peasants in Italian society, as compared to the peasants of France.¹²

The Italian Left has often pointed to the gap between city and countryside: a gap in social and economic conditions (measurable

⁹Robert Michels, *Le prolétariat et la bourgeoisie dans le mouvement socialiste italien* (Paris: M. Ciard, 1921), pp. 102-103. Michels was attempting to explain why there were so few peasant leaders in Italian politics, and particularly in the Italian Socialist party which had such an unusually large peasant following. This fact he considered difficult to explain since the impetus toward political and social reform in Italy had often come from the rural areas and these areas alone had witnessed the few revolutionary uprisings that had occurred since unification.

¹⁰See, for example, Norman Kogan, *The Government of Italy* (New York: Crowell, 1962), pp. 35-36, and Edward Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1958).

¹¹Mattei Dogan writes: "In very few Western countries is the contrast between city and countryside so strong as in Italy, from the point of view of standards and way of living as well as of social psychology." See his essay, "La Stratificazione sociale dei suffragi," in Alberto Spreafico and Joseph La Palombara (eds.), *Elezioni e comportamento politico in Italia* (Milan: Edizioni di Comunità, 1963), pp. 407-474 at p. 430. See also Riccardo Musatti, "Città e campagna: fine di un'antitesi," 8 *Nord e Sud* (Dec. 1961), pp. 18-33; Riccardo Bassetti and Giacomo Corna-Pellegrini, *Le redini del potere* (Milan: Ceschina, 1959), p. 21; Cesare Mannucci, "Il Piemonte e l'esodo rurale," 4 *Nord e Sud* (Sept. 1957), pp. 85-87; Giovanni D'Ascenzi, "L'esodo rurale nella 'Mater et magistra' e in altri documenti pontifici," 2 *Quaderni di Sociologia Rurale* (1962), pp. 5-11.

¹²Alfredo Todisco in *Corriere della Sera*, Aug. 21, 1964, p. 3.

in income, consumption, housing, and disease statistics); a gap in education and information (indicated by statistics for literacy, schoolrooms, and newspaper circulation and by public opinion surveys); a gap in the communication of ideas, values and fashions; a gap between agricultural and industrial incomes and prices; and a gap in understanding and sympathy—an unbridged chasm between urban diffidence and contempt and rural suspicion, hostility, and envy.

Italian conservatives have also made much of urban-rural differences. In Italy, as in most countries of the West, there is a long, strong, and apparently equally classical tradition associating simplicity, purity, happiness, health, naturalness, stability, virtue, patriotism, and piety with the countryside in contrast to the complication, impiety, disease, corruption, restlessness, and radicalism of the city.¹³

This nostalgic theme—shared by Jefferson, the Popes, and Neapolitan kings alike—found drastic implementation in the Fascist laws of 1931 and 1939 which sought to put a halt to the further growth of cities in Italy. These laws restored a lop-sided version of serfdom to Italy, forbidding rural workers to leave the land for cities or towns which were either provincial capitals, over 25,000 in population, or of “noteworthy industrial importance,” unless already assured of steady employment. Those who left the mountains and villages without government permission, however, were not allowed to register and secure residence permits in the city and were consequently unable to rent housing or obtain relief. Nor were they able to work legally because they were not allowed, without official permission, to register at the unemployment office. Farm workers who left the land “without justifiable reason” were prohibited from registering for another job even at the unemployment bureau of their own town.¹⁴

Had these laws been enforced seriously by either the municipalities or the police, and had employers hired only those registered at the unemployment offices, farm workers in Italy would have become serfs—to be bought and sold with the land they worked. But even halfheartedly enforced, these laws did create what has been

¹³Riccardo Musatti, “Città e compagna,” cited above in n. 11. Rural nostalgia is not, of course, a monopoly of the Right. It is an integral part of the world view of such Leftist novelists as Carlo Levi. In *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, peasants symbolize all that is good in Italian society.

¹⁴Ernesto Rossi, *I padroni del vapore* (Bari: Laterza, 1955), p. 109.

called a "genuine caste of 'pariahs,' completely at the mercy of bureaucrats and employers."¹⁵ If their employers failed to make social security payments or violated collective agreements, illegal workers in the cities could not protest for fear of being escorted by two Carabinieri back to their village.

The laws of 1931 and 1939 remained on the books long after the Constitution of 1948 had guaranteed freedom of travel and residence. Here was one of those seldom perceived items of national consensus, uniting all political forces from left to right. The laws were sufficiently enforced to provide northern organized industrial labor with protection against southern migrant competition, urban labor against rural migrant competition, and urban taxpayers from welfare and other civic expenditures on migrant worker families. These laws were enforced with enough laxity to permit over one million peasants to leave the land for urban residence and employment between 1950 and 1960, so that by 1963, only about 25 percent of the Italian labor force was still engaged in agriculture as compared to the 40 percent of 1952. But until the Constitutional Court in 1961 declared the Fascist anti-urbanization laws unconstitutional, and Parliament passed the Law of February 10, 1961, No. 5, repealing the Acts of 1931 and 1939, an Italian worker could still be sentenced to a month in jail and be sent back to his native village if he looked for a job in a neighboring town.¹⁶

Catholic fear of urbanization has also had important practical consequences: great efforts to improve living conditions in rural and mountain villages and in this way to slow down rural exodus; somewhat casual attention to the problems of Italian cities, as in postwar city planning and the lack thereof; and the land reform practices which, wherever possible, scattered the beneficiaries into isolated

¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁶*Rinascita*, June 16, 1962, p. 5; Marcello Fabbri, "La città in campagna," *5 Nord e Sud* (Oct. 1958), pp. 60-73; *L'Espresso*, Sept. 2, 1962, p. 8; Goffredo Fofi, "Immigrati a Torino," 18 *Il Ponte* (1962), pp. 940-951; Ernesto Rossi, *Il Malgoverno*, (Bari: Laterza, 1954), pp. 47-56. On the failure of the more "serious" totalitarian dictatorship in Nazi Germany to check rural exodus, see William Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (Greenwich: Fawcett, 1962), p. 365, and Frieda Wunderlich, *Farm Labor in Germany, 1810-1945* (Princeton: University Press, 1961), p. 351. One of the unanticipated and least desired consequences of the Fascist laws was to promote immigration to the very largest cities (Turin, Milan, Rome, and Genoa), where the laws could most easily be flouted. See Salvatore Caferio, "Aspetti sociali dell' industrializzazione del Mezzogiorno," *Atti del IV Congresso Mondiale di Sociologia* (Bari: Laterza, 1959), pp. 212-223 at p. 216.

homesteads. Deliberate ruralization—the dispersal of peasants formerly agglomerated in *città contadine*, or peasant slums—was designed to minimize social interaction, which, it was feared, could only favor the Communists.¹⁷

3. *Urbanization in Italy*

Which of the three schools is right? In a sense, all three. The urban nature of Italian society can be derived from a definition of “urban” in terms of population size and density. Relatively few Italian peasants, mostly in the North, live in the isolated homesteads often regarded as typically rural. The proportion living in such isolation has not appreciably changed since the unification of the country. Italian peasants, especially southern Italian peasants, tend to live in compact, sizeable communities.¹⁸ And many, indeed an increasing number of Italian industrial workers live in the rural areas surrounding the few major industrial centers. The result is an unusual disparity between the degree of Italian urbanization and the degree of industrialization.¹⁹

Southern Italian towns, even those with as many as 35,000 or even 50,000 people, are inhabited predominantly by peasant families, while urbanization in the North has been accompanied by the development of modern industry, commerce, and agriculture. Northern provincial capitals gained over 213,000 new inhabitants between 1936 and 1951 and three-fourths of this growth was due to immigration. Southern provincial capitals also grew during the same period, by over 90,000, but more than three-quarters of the increase was due to natural causes, rather than rural exodus.²⁰ Southern urbanization has been largely pre-industrial and pre-capitalistic, based primarily on the location of field offices of the national bureaucracy. When a southern town loses its role as provincial capital, as happened to Caserta under Fascism, its growth rate practically vanishes. Southern cities have been formed not by the attraction of rural labor to modern industry but by the expulsion of unemployed peasants

¹⁷Musatti, *loc. cit.*; *L'Espresso*, July 30, 1961, p. 2; Marcello Fabbri, cited in n. 16, at p. 64.

¹⁸Carlo Rodano, *Mezzogiorno e sviluppo economico* (Bari: Laterza, 1954), pp. 32-45.

¹⁹Dogan, *loc. cit.*; *Corriere della Sera*, Sept. 12, 1964, p. 15.

²⁰Carlo Turco, “Movimenti di popolazione e politica economica; I,” *6 Nord e Sud* (April 1959), pp. 57-76.

from the countryside. Often urbanization has meant merely the transformation of rural unemployed into urban unemployed.²¹

The Italian South, then, by some criteria is highly urbanized. By few criteria, however, can it be considered modernized. If by urban, we mean centers of 2,000-5,000 or more people, the South is urbanized. If by urban, we mean centers of population in which less than 25 percent of the labor force is engaged in agriculture, the South is much less urbanized. If by urban, we mean a community with certain public facilities, with a sizeable segment of the labor force in modern industry and commerce, with a distinctive way of life and producing a distinctive type of social character, then the South is not much urbanized at all. And accordingly, Italy is not a basically urban country.

Is Italy basically a peasant country? The basis for such an assertion is presumably the widespread distribution among the Italian people of one or more "peasant" traits, such as "amoral familism," in the now famous phrase of Professor Banfield.²² Italy under this theory would be nothing but "Montegrano" writ large, "Montegrano" being the pseudonymous village studied by Banfield in Lucania. This can hardly be the case if, as is reported by Italian rural sociologists, Montegrano itself has become highly atypical of Italian rural towns.²³ Economic development and the penetration of modern communications and transportation into the countryside have apparently changed the character of rural life in most areas, stimulating forms of collective action entirely absent in Montegrano. Nonetheless it is a fact that until recently Italy was in most respects a densely populated agricultural country of low productivity and income and is still the most agrarian of all the countries in the Common Market, with much the lowest productivity and the worst land.²⁴ Thus the assertion of a peasant Italy, just as the assertion of an urban Italy, is rooted in fact. No less true is the hypothesis of fundamental urban-rural conflict.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 73. Also Giuseppe Galasso, "La popolazione meridionale dal 1861 al 1951," 5 *Nord e Sud* (Nov. 1958), pp. 74-75 and "Il movimento demografico e migratorio del Meridione dal 1951 al 1957," in 5 *Nord e Sud* (Dec. 58), pp. 53-95.

²²Banfield, *op. cit.*, in n. 10.

²³Gilberto Marselli, "Sociologi nordamericani e società contadina italiana: a proposito del libro di Banfield," 2 *Quaderni di Sociologia Rurale* (1962), pp. 109-130.

²⁴Francesco Compagna, *I Terroni in città* (Bari: Laterza, 1959), pp. 17-18.

4. *Urban-Rural Political Differences*

Italy conforms in general to the usual pattern of urban-rural political cleavage. People in the Italian mountains and rural villages are more tradition-oriented, slow changing, socially homogeneous, suspicious, politically uninformed and uninvolved, devout and pessimistic than people in the Italian cities. Italian rural areas, just as rural areas in other modernizing countries, have tended to be conservative in politics. Two out of three votes for the Christian Democratic party have come from the rural areas of northeastern and southern Italy. There is a regular increase in Catholic voting as one leaves the large urban centers for the smaller villages. In cities of over half a million people, the Christian Democrats receive only about 32 percent of the vote. In villages of less than 10,000 people, they receive around 40 percent of the vote and from such villages, in 1958, they drew almost half of their total national vote.²⁵

In the Northeast, voting the Christian Democratic ticket appears to be just another form of participation in an essentially Catholic subculture. The Northeast has the highest rates of church attendance in the country. In the South, however, rates of religious participation are among the lowest in the country.²⁶ Southern Christian Democratic voters are also among the least politically informed of any group. Only 18 percent of southern rural families in 1960 had radios; only 13 percent went to the movies at least once a year. Over one-half of the southern Christian Democratic voters have no clear idea of what a political party is. When asked in a survey what the Christian Democratic party was, they thought it was a symbol or shield with cross (the *scudo crociato*); a number (corresponding to the candidate to whom they were expected to give their preference vote); the State (a reasonable confusion or perhaps not a con-

²⁵Corrado Barberis, Cesare Dall'Oglio, and Giovanni Schepis, "Il voto rurale," 1 *Quaderni di Sociologia Rurale* (1961), pp. 18-54 and Dogan, *op. cit.*, p. 433.

²⁶The study of religious sociology is still rudimentary and controversial in Italy. There are no adequate general studies of religious participation. In addition to the periodical surveys of the Italian Institute of Public Opinion (DOXA), there are the occasional articles by Carlo Falconi in *L'Espresso*. The best recent work is by Father Silvano Burgalassi, "La Sociologia del Cattolicesimo in Italia," supplement to *Orientamenti Pastoralì*, Dec. 1965, and "Religiosità e mutamento sociale in Italia," supplement to *Orientamenti Pastoralì*, April, 1966.

fusion at all); or a particular person (a relative, local notable, or party leader.) Southerners often vote for the Christian Democrats for very unstable reasons, rather than the relatively stable cultural motivations of the Northeast. They vote on the basis of the recommendation of a clientele leader whose position can and often does shift. Or they vote for the Christian Democratic party because it is the party in power, and this is a stable motivation, as well as a self-fulfilling prediction.²⁷

Data on political participation in Italy are scanty, though sometimes surprising. For example, contrary to expectations, the rate of voting turnout in general elections until 1958 was higher in rural than in urban areas, despite the greater difficulties involved in rural voting. Both urban and rural rates were abnormally high, of course, varying from 86 percent in the cities to 91 percent in the countryside.²⁸

Also contrary to expectation is the relatively greater tendency to join a political party in small towns (30,000-50,000 population) than one finds in either the rural or big city areas. One-fourth of Italian youths in small towns of that size belong to a party, while only 9 percent of the same age group do so in cities over 250,000 in population. The small towns rather than the villages or big cities contribute the big battalions of members to the political parties. Party membership among Italian young people is highest in incidence among the poorest, least educated small town voters. They tend to join either the Communist party or the Christian Democrats. Those least inclined to join a party are the educated, upper class, urban Italians. Party membership—supposedly an indication of political modernity—has declined all over Italy, but most of all in the big cities!²⁹

Generally, however, rural inhabitants are less active and less organized politically than inhabitants of urban areas because they have lower educational and income levels, less sense of civic duty and political efficacy, less contact with political events and government offices, and less firmly established traditions of political interest and activity. In this, of course, they are quite similar to Ameri-

²⁷DOXA and CIRS surveys reported in *L'Espresso*, Oct. 23, 1960, pp. 6-7.

²⁸Elio Caranti, *Sociologia e statistica delle elezioni italiane nel dopoguerra* (Rome: Studium, 1954), pp. 56-57; and Dogan, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

²⁹Joseph La Palombara and Jerry Waters, "Values, Expectations, and Political Predispositions of Italian Youth," *5 Midwest Journal of Political Science* (1961), pp. 39-58.

can farmers. In the case of Italian peasants and American farmers, a generally low level of political awareness and involvement is quite consistent with the presence of tightly organized, highly effective agricultural pressure groups, based largely on a thin layer of political activists on the farms.³⁰

It may be that the real traditional forces in Italian, as in American, politics have stemmed not from the rural and mountain areas but from the small cities and towns. The conservatism of the rural areas has tended to be overrated partly because it has been assumed that rural areas (farmers) had intense and stable political attitudes and loyalties. The political behavior of agrarians appears to be quite different from the behavior of those who live in the small towns. That this may in fact be the case in Italy, as well as in the United States, we cannot tell from the existing data.³¹

5. *Offsetting Factors*

If these are the overall tendencies, if the urban-rural cleavage is partially congruent with a series of politically relevant differences, it is true also that the urban-rural cleavage is intersected by important offsetting factors: (1) historical tradition; (2) social class; (3) section; and (4) political organization.

Take, for example, the Christian Democratic party. It is by no means strictly a rural party, but has a large urban following. About one-third of all Catholic party voters reside in cities of 30,000 or more people. These urban voters tend to present a statistical composite entirely different from that of their rural counterparts. The urban Christian Democratic voter tends to be male; the rural Christian Democrat, a woman. The urban voter tends to be politically active and informed; the rural voter, to be neither. The urban voter tends to be middle class; the rural voter, to belong to the lowest social strata.

Many urban Christian Democrats are even crypto-anticlericals—opposed to the intervention of the clergy in politics. But these urban voters are divided among themselves. They are composed of about

³⁰Angus Campbell, Philip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes, *The American Voter* (New York: Wiley, 1960); Seymour Lipset, *Political Man* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1963), pp. 183-229; Mario Caciagli, "Gli italiani e la vita pubblica," 9 *Nord e Sud* (June 1962), pp. 72-79.

³¹V. O. Key, *Public Opinion and American Democracy* (New York: Knopf, 1961), pp. 110-120.

one million industrial workers and about 3.5 million members of the middle classes. About half of them are similar in social and political outlook to the members of the Socialist party. The other half tends to sympathize with the Right.³²

Other conservative parties have urban roots and some are even predominantly urban. By 1960, the three major rightwing parties—Liberals, Monarchists, and NeoFascists—were all at their strongest in the urban areas. The most urban of all the Italian parties in 1960 was the monarchist party, the PDI, which had little appeal outside of the cities, in fact, outside of Naples. And in the city limits of Naples, the Monarchists had least appeal to those engaged in farming.³³

If the cities, then, are not invariably or even usually, strongholds of leftist radicalism, the countryside is by no means totally committed to conservatism. In fact, the development of rural radicalism in Italy has been quite distinctive in the context of a generally urban European socialist movement. Rural leftism in Italy is rooted in anticlericalism dating from the 18th century in central Italy, where the Church was not only the government, but also the major landowner. These areas of central Italy have voted for the Left since pre-Fascist times and are among the “reddest” zones of Western Europe.³⁴

The Communist party has strong rural roots, especially in Lombardy, Tuscany, and Emilia. In 1960, the Communists drew about the same proportion of their total vote from communes with 76 percent or more of the labor force in farming as did the Christian Democrats—10.4 percent as compared with 11.9 percent. The 56.4 percent of the Italian electorate which some Italian analysts considered to be rural or semi-rural in 1960 (i.e. living in communes with at least 25 percent of the labor force in farming) gave the Communists 57.1 percent of their total vote—just under the 59.3 percent they provided for the Christian Democrats.³⁵ Peasants, moreover, constitute or constituted a major, if declining, percentage of party members. The party no longer publishes social statistics

³²*L'Espresso*, Oct. 23, 1960, pp. 6-7.

³³Giorgio Tutino, “Quartieri di Napoli alle urne,” *5 Nord e Sud* (Oct. 1958), pp. 87-100; Barberis, Dall'Oglio, and Schepis, *loc. cit.*, (n. 25).

³⁴Dogan, *op. cit.* (n. 11), pp. 440-445.

³⁵Barberis, Dall'Oglio, and Schepis, *op. cit.* (n. 25), p. 32, and Francesco Compagna and Vittorio de Caprariis, “Geografia delle elezioni italiane del 25 maggio 1958,” *5 Nord e Sud* (Sept., 1958), pp. 6-27.

concerning its membership, but in 1961, peasants formed a large part of that membership, as can be seen in the following occupational classification:

Workers	672,262
Artisans, shopkeepers	103,234
Intellectuals, professionals, teachers	9,271
Employees, technicians	32,648
Students	5,921
Housewives	227,360
Domestic workers	15,485
Pensioners	104,969
Others	24,547
Agricultural workers	239,105
Sharecroppers, tenants	198,931
Smallholders	94,687

SOURCE: Mario Caciagli, "Il rapporto voti-iscritti nel Pci," 6 *Tempi Moderni* (April-June 1963), pp. 99-105 at p. 105.

Italian party voting strength is, in fact, rather evenly distributed between urban and rural areas. Knowing whether a person lives in the mountains, in a country village, or a big city is much less useful in predicting his political behavior and attitudes than knowing his occupation, his income, and the section of Italy from which he comes. This can be seen in a comparison between the political party preferences of two rural groups: farm laborers and sharecroppers, on the one hand, and owner-operators, on the other. The differences are striking and parallel a similar class cleavage within urban groups.³⁶

Political cleavages between and within urban and rural zones are closely related to the same divisions in religious orientation. Here again, there is no clear-cut demarcation between a devout countryside and a godless city. Many rural areas have been secularized and many of them have never been profoundly Christianized, remaining pagan in the original sense of the term. Religious participation in the rural areas has been declining for a long time. In the "Red" regions of Emilia and Tuscany, for example, the proportion of rural practitioners, including women, has dropped below an estimated 35-45 percent of the potential. In southern rural areas, the proportion has dropped to between 35 and 55 percent. Among southern farm laborers, only an estimated 15 to 25 percent are regular church-

³⁶Dogan, *op. cit.* (n. 11), pp. 440-445; Pierpaolo Luzzatto Fegis, *Il Volto sconosciuto dell'Italia* (Milan: Giuffrè, 1956), p. 523.

goers.³⁷ In this respect, the rural areas are merely following an apparent national trend away from religious participation. In a public opinion survey in 1956, 60 percent of the adults interviewed said that they had been to church that week (61 percent of the women, 45 percent of the men). By 1962, the overall figure had dropped to 53 percent.³⁸

Estimates of urban religious participation are generally, although not invariably, low. The Italian city is not uniformly secularized, in any event. Its social stratification is to some extent also a religious stratification. Upper strata urban people tend to be practitioners more regularly than lower status groups, just as members of the upper classes tend, in general, to participate more in all forms of social activity, except, apparently, political party activity. The discrepancy may be more apparent than real, however, as there is reason to suspect that lower class party membership involves little partisan activity but rather constitutes a standing application for employment. However this may be, the urban areas of the Catholic Northeast, including such modern industrial cities as Bergamo, are by no means "dechristianized."³⁹

6. *The Political Impact of Rural Exodus: Short-Term*

If the political effects of urban-rural differences in Italy are offset by tradition, class, and region, the same differentiated impact may be expected from the movement of peasants from the hinterlands into the cities—a movement which assumed torrential proportions in Italy during the late 1950's. Few countries have witnessed such a rapid, massive, and traumatic desertion of rural life. In the

³⁷*L'Espresso*, Oct. 15, 1961, pp. 17-19.

³⁸*L'Espresso*, April 8, 1962, p. 5.

³⁹Prof. Burgalassi has found a relatively high degree of religious participation in what he calls the "semi-industrial zones, where religious practice is reaching un hoped-for levels. If the mountains (where religious practice is good) are being depopulated, they are being replaced by other zones in which practice no longer rests on the rather unstable base of the environment, or of a sub-culture but on the real values of personal religion and conviction. . . . Traditional practice is in crisis, but no spontaneous practice." (*La sociologia del cattolicesimo*, p. 133). In the cities, practice varies from 20 percent in Milan and 23 percent in Rome to between 70 and 80 percent in the dioceses of Vicenza, Brescia, and Treviso, (*ibid.*, p. 161). The zones of lowest practice in Italy seem to be the rural areas of the Po delta (5-7 percent) and those south, but not north, of the Arno river (8-10 percent) in Tuscany. (*Ibid.*, pp. 161, 164).

census of 1951, 42 percent of the labor force was found to be engaged in agriculture; in the census of 1961, only 32 percent; by 1963, only an estimated 25 percent of the labor force remained in agriculture.⁴⁰ Over a million peasants left for the cities between 1950 and 1960, that is, before the repeal of the anti-urbanization laws.⁴¹ There were over 400,000 new immigrants to Milan during this period, increasing Milan's legal population by almost 25 percent in ten years.⁴² Turin leaped from 700,000 to 1 million people in the eight years between 1958 and 1964, becoming the Italian city with the largest number of southerners after Naples and Palermo.⁴³ Much of the rural exodus took the form of southern migration to the northern industrial triangle: an estimated four million southern peasants went to the North between 1945 and 1964.⁴⁴ This was the product of the economic "miracle," of intensive industrialization, of social and economic change. Historic patterns of misery, subjection, ignorance, and stagnation began to dissolve under the impact of economic expansion and diffused opportunity.

Looking back on this process, an Italian journalist wrote in the summer of 1964:

We have changed a great deal in only a few years, more than any other European nation in the same period of time. We were the country of the 'hundred cities,' and now we are the country of the 'four metropolises.' We used to speak many languages, and now we are close to speaking only one. We were inert, and now we are in movement. We were parsimonious, and now we are big spenders. We used to have the spirit of sacrifice, and now we incline toward hedonism. We used to believe in 'destiny' and now we believe in 'success.' We used to cultivate friendships; now we make 'contacts.' We used to be impetuous with the ladies; now we are becoming more tranquil. We were composed; now we are agitated. We were calm; now we are nervous. We used to be prudent; now we are aggressive. We were talkative; now we are more taciturn. We were diversified; now we are becoming homogeneous. We were an elite society; now we are

⁴⁰*L'Espresso*, Oct. 15, 1961, pp. 17-19; Oct. 22, 1961, pp. 14-15; Oct. 29, 1961, pp. 16-17; Nov. 5, 1961, pp. 16-19; April 8, 1962, p. 5.

⁴¹*L'Espresso*, July 30, 1961, p. 2, Sept. 6, 1962, p. 8; Mario De Vergottini, "Migrazioni interne e sviluppo demografico," 18 *Rivista Italiana di Economia Demografia e Statistica* (July-Dec. 1964), pp. 9-23. Between July 20, 1964, and July 20, 1965, the percentage of the labor force in agriculture actually rose from 25.1 percent to 26.2 percent due to the recession. See *La Stampa*, Sept. 25, 1965, p. 17.

⁴²Domenico De Masi, "Migrazioni e congiuntura a Milano," 11 *Nord e Sud* (Oct. 1964), pp. 62-86, at pp. 63-64.

⁴³*Corriere della Sera*, Sept. 12, 1964, p. 15.

⁴⁴*Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 10, 1964, p. 19.

becoming a mass society. What more? We used to be individualists; we have remained individualists.⁴⁵

II.

How has this process of social modernization affected Italian politics? One result has been a decline in the political weight of the South. Election districts in the South, including Sicily and Sardinia, accounted for 33.1 percent of the valid votes cast in the general elections of 1958, but only 31.5 percent in the elections of 1963. Thirty-four new seats in the Chamber of Deputies were created for the 1963 elections, but of these seats, only nine went to the entire South and Islands, while ten went to the region of Lombardy (Milan) and seven to the region of Lazio (Rome) alone.⁴⁶

Movement from the countryside to the city, and especially from the South to the North, has affected patterns of voting behavior, resulting in the general advance of the Communists in the cities. In part, this has been due to the simple transfer of Communist cadres and voters from the rural South to the urban North. The rebellious, pioneering, activist temperament associated with rural Communist voting in the South also produces migration to the North.⁴⁷ The new immigrants in the North have helped to arrest the decline of leftwing extremism in the big northern cities—to compensate the Communist party for its losses among the “aristocrats of labor.” Most of the immigrant Communists do not appear to be new Communists, but rather old Communists transferred from depressed areas of Lombardy, Venetia, and the South. Communist farm laborers have become Communist construction workers, factory hands, and street vendors. Little in the harsh experience of such newcomers to city life would lead them to a change of heart.⁴⁸

Immigration to the cities, then, for many individual voters may have no immediate political consequences, except for the reinforcement of existing allegiances. For others, and for southerners in particular, immigration has often meant conversion to Communist vot-

⁴⁵Alfredo Todisco, *Corriere della Sera*, Aug. 21, 1964, p. 3.

⁴⁶Gian Franco Ciaurro, “Emigrazione e comportamento politico,” unpublished chapter in the book edited by Alberto Spreafico and Mattei Dogan on the general elections of 1963 to be published shortly by Edizioni di Comunità, Milan. See pp. 108-09 of the MS.

⁴⁷Ciaurro, “Emigrazione,” pp. 94-95.

⁴⁸Francesco Compagna, *Terroni*, pp. 71-76; Cesare Mannucci, “Il voto degli immigrati nell’alto milanese,” *5 Nord e Sud* (Sept. 1958), pp. 80-87.

ing. Behind this conversion lie such things as liberation from the social controls of the village; anxiety to adjust and conform to the dominant values of the new environment; the conversion efforts of co-workers, shop stewards, party and union militants; protest against discrimination, exploitation, and squalor; gratitude for Communist assistance and attention; and the lack of strong prior party loyalties.⁴⁹

Southern immigrants generally have strong drives to become assimilated. Through what sociologist Franco Alberoni terms "anticipatory socialization," they have begun to adopt northern attitudes and values even before they leave the South, primarily through television.⁵⁰ Once in the North, southern immigrants make great efforts to become northerners in dialect and customs, and to adopt the northern way of life. Political conversion is only one phase of this attempt to become northerners, in this case by conforming to the dominant politics of the new social environment. The factory is an especially strong source of pressures towards conformity. Southern migrants hide their rightwing political pasts and to ingratiate themselves with their new co-workers, as well as to feel more integrated, they become extreme revolutionaries—in the forefront of most strikes and demonstrations. Communist activism also serves to express violent protest against the injustices of the southern past and of the northern present. Political activity in general serves to assimilate the migrants into their new surroundings.⁵¹

The greatest conversion effects seem to occur with southern migrants who have previously voted for the Monarchists or neo-Fascists.⁵² Peasants from the Veneto—the hinterland of Venice—

⁴⁹Franco Alasia and Danilo Montaldi, Milano, Corea: *Inchiesta sugli immigrati* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1960), pp. 29-34; and Mannucci, "Il voto," pp. 86-87.

⁵⁰Francesco Alberoni and Guido Baglioni, *L'integrazione dell'immigrato nella società industriale* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1966), cited by Ciaurro, "Emigrazione," p. 74.

⁵¹Ciaurro, "Emigrazione," pp. 97-98. Studies show a tendency for immigrant families to develop much greater political homogeneity in their new environment than in the old.

⁵²The generalizations about immigrant political behavior that are made in this article are not based on scientifically conducted opinion surveys, which are quite difficult and unsatisfactory in Italy, but rather on the study of aggregate statistics for entire election districts, with the uncertainty and conjecture that this involves. Most of the studies deal with the electoral behavior of districts with varying amounts in in-migration. Conclusions from these studies are to some extent verified by the various researchers through interviews

tend to have stronger political attachments when they arrive and are apparently less readily converted, although those who enter the factories are sometimes strongly cross-pressured between their traditional Catholic loyalties and the leftist sentiments of their new fellow workers. Peasants from the Veneto, like southerners, have tended to settle in colonies, but they have managed, unlike southerners, to ward off threats to their traditional Catholic political culture. Southern political allegiances are much more based on personal ties to clientele leaders; attachments to the parties are much weaker. Consequently, once the southerner leaves the patron-client network, he is apt to leave behind his former political allegiance as well. Peasants from the Northeast, however, tend to have political loyalties based on religion, rather than clientelism, and religion seems to be a much stronger anchorage for political orientation than clientelism. When they move across the Po Valley to Milan and Turin, peasants from the Veneto move into areas in which the church and its associated institutions, including the Christian Democratic party, are ready to receive and assist them. They also may suffer less of a cultural shock in the urbanization process than do southerners—the kind of shock it often takes to alter party identification.⁵³

The direction of conversion may depend upon the politics of the city in which the migrant lands. If he lands in Rome, for example, there are greater chances that he will remain or become a neo-Fascist voter than if he lands in Milan or Turin.⁵⁴ Neo-Fascist loyalty in the North is a mark of social infamy, but this is not the case in the national capital. The neo-Fascists have captured or retained many of the newer inhabitants of the *borgate* or slums around Rome. Immigrant neighborhoods in the capital have been giving at least 10 percent of their vote to the Fascists. This is also a protest vote. The neo-Fascists have been actively opposed to the ruling Catholic party; they have a socialistic wing with some working class appeal; they enjoy the covert support of many Roman institutions and businesses

with political activists in the areas studied. Private polls by the Church and the political parties are reportedly in agreement in describing the major traits of immigrant political behavior. There is, however, some disagreement on the conversion rate among peasants from the Northeast. Cf. Ciaurro, "Emigrazione," p. 96 with Carlo Perotti, "Torino: Il voto degli immigrati," 5 *Nord e Sud* (Sept. 1958), pp. 79-80.

⁵³*Ibid.* On changes in party loyalty, see Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes, *The American Voter*, pp. 149-167.

with considerable patronage to bestow; and they have an active trade union federation, the CISNAL, with branches in many Roman factories. Many immigrants enter work environments with pro-Fascist sympathies, such as domestic service and the various governmental bureaucracies. And many of them come from Fascist strongholds in the South and Islands.⁵⁵

The great bulk of the immigrants, however, even in Rome, vote for the Communists. Between the general elections of 1958 and the local elections of 1964, there was an increase of 276,723 in the number of valid votes in the province of Rome. In that period the Communists gained 127,426 votes, while the Christian Democrats actually lost 9,831 votes.⁵⁶

If southerners are rather easily converted into Communist voters, they are much less easily recruited or retained as Communist activists. If urbanization has produced voters for the Communists, it has also accelerated the decline in party membership. Migration northward of Communist activists has produced a serious shortage of cadres in the southern party apparatus without adding to the strength of the apparatus in the North: southern militants have often abstained from any political activity once they arrive in the North, apart from voting. Until 1961, they needed the legalization of their status by northern local-government officials and Communist party membership did not help them to secure the needed residence permits of registration in the unemployment offices. There has also been considerable anti-Communist discrimination in housing and employment. As a result, many southern immigrants declared in favor of the local mayor's party, whatever their personal sentiments.⁵⁷

There are strong cultural differences between northern and southern Communists. Southern Communists are typically bewildered by the behavior of their northern comrades. They cannot understand the way in which things are discussed in local party sections: the problems seem unreal and the language difficult to fathom for those who bring their shotguns north with them, together with fresh memories of violence at home. Cultural differences make it hard for

⁵⁴Ciaurro, "Emigrazione," pp. 97-98.

⁵⁵*Rinascita*, June 16, 1962, pp. 3-7.

⁵⁶Calculated from the chart in Ciaurro, "Emigrazione," p. 119.

⁵⁷Alasia and Montaldi, *Milano*, pp. 34, 101; Giorgio Braga, *Il Comunismo fra gli italiani* (Milan: Edizioni di Comunità, 1956), pp. 189-190; *L'Espresso*, Oct. 30, 1960, pp. 6-7.

southern Communists to get along with northern party members, who seem impersonal, hasty, dispassionate, unfamiliar, almost of a different social class. Some southern comrades, long trained in the stance of minority protest, cannot understand why their northern comrades, who have won control of local and provincial councils in many areas, have not used their authority to abolish the capitalist system. Just as they are alien to the traditions of northern leftist reformism, they are reluctant to join its products: the large network of consumer, production, and housing cooperatives. Southern demands that the party establish separate sections for immigrants have been rejected just as the Catholic Church rejected similar demands for ethnic segregation in 19th century North America and in northern Italy in the 1960's. Segregation would institutionalize and perpetuate ethnic tensions. But the result has been the general desertion of party activities by southerners, and their general withdrawal from political activity.⁵⁸

The same result was produced by the not always cordial reception given to the southerners by their northern comrades. The invasion of their sections by ethnic outsiders was often met with hostility or the withdrawal of northerners from participation. Ethnic friction was more common in Socialist sections in Turin and Genoa, but in Communist sections there have also been attempts to preserve northern control and cases of desertion by northerners. Ethnic frictions within the Communist party—given its powerful ideological cohesion—have been exceptional: political solidarity has usually been far stronger than ethnic prejudice. In most cases, southern Communists have been well received, rapidly assimilated, and used to propagandize and mobilize incoming migrants.⁵⁹

Curiously, the major beneficiaries of urbanization and migration, the Communists, were long among its fiercest opponents. They blamed rural exodus on the government and the bourgeoisie and reveled in describing the miseries which drove the peasants from the land. They maintained that exodus could be stopped at any time through such measures as general land reform, higher price supports, the development of rural tourism, trade with China, tax cuts, and implementation of the Constitution.⁶⁰ They were silent

⁵⁸*L'Espresso*, April 21, 1963, p. 3; Alasia and Montaldi, *Milano*, pp. 101-111; E.E.Y. Hales, *The Catholic Church in the Modern World* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1960), pp. 169-170.

⁵⁹Ciaurro, "Emigrazione," pp. 95-96.

⁶⁰Francesco Compagna, *Terroni*, p. 51.

about maintenance of the Fascist laws against urbanization until 1957, when they began to realize the gains that could be made among the immigrants, who were often jobless, squalidly housed, exploited, and illegally present in the city to begin with. Until 1957, the party was concerned to protect the employment of urban workers and to maintain a state of tension on the farms. Only in that year did the party switch to a denunciation of the Fascist anti-urbanization laws and to an admission that rural exodus was a necessary concomitant to economic development.⁶¹

The Communists, however, were the first of the major political forces in Italy to become aware of the extent and implications of this mass migratory movement. The first conference on immigration problems was held by them in 1957.⁶² In October, 1958, Palmiro Togliatti reported to the Central Committee that internal migration, still not yet massive in proportions, was about to alter the geographical, occupational, and political balance of power in the country; he called for study of the factors behind migration and for party efforts to assist and mobilize the migrants.⁶³ The Communists held two conventions on the problem in 1962 and organized a highly effective campaign to aid the incoming migrants and to become the political party of the migrants à la Tammany Hall. The Communists became the major political force in the immigrant neighborhoods, with a practical monopoly of propaganda, organization, and initiative.⁶⁴

The effectiveness of the Communist campaign was directly related to the almost complete lack of any attempt by the Italian

⁶¹*Ibid.*, pp. 55-63.

⁶²Goffredo Fofi, *L'immigrazione meridionale a Torino* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1964), p. 270.

⁶³Alvo Fontani, *La grande migrazione* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1966), pp. 87-88.

⁶⁴Ciaurro, "Emigrazione," pp. 97-98 and Luciano Cavalli, "Strutture sociali e schieramenti politici a Genova," unpublished chapter in the volume by Spreafico and Dogan, cited above, n. 47. A survey in the fifty towns around Milan most affected by immigration and the decentralization of Milanese industry—with about one million people—revealed the presence of 109 Communist Sections, 132 Communist-sponsored bars and clubs, and 92 Communist-controlled cooperative stores. In the same fifty communes, there were only 94 Socialist Sections, clubs, and stores (as compared to the 333 Communist units); 30 Social Democratic Sections and clubs; and 211 Christian Democrat Sections and clubs. The number of Catholic cooperatives is not reported, but is said to be much lower than the number of Communist coops, despite the fact that Lombardy has a strong Catholic cooperative tradition. See Marco Cesarini Sforza, "Il carro armato," *Il Mondo*, Feb. 4, 1964, pp. 2-3.

state to guide the migration process and ease the resulting dislocations. In the fiscal year 1962-1963, the government appropriated the sum of 106 million lire (\$170,000) for the purpose of assisting internal migrants.⁶⁵ The party's efforts paid off handsomely in the general elections of 1963 and the provincial elections of 1964, when migrant neighborhoods in the Center and North contributed heavily to the general Communist advance. The six provinces in which the Communists made their greatest gain in absolute numbers of votes between 1958 and 1963 were the same provinces—Milan, Turin, Rome, Florence, Genoa, and Bologna—in which there had been the greatest increases in population due to immigration.⁶⁶

Urbanization has threatened the Christian Democrats with the more or less gradual loss of their rural electoral clientele. They have used their governmental control to retard urbanization by measures in favor of agriculture and mountain areas, but the movement of peasants and mountain dwellers into the cities has been torrential nonetheless and the Christian Democrats' base in the rural areas has been steadily whittled away. The Christian Democrats have also used their power to help the cities cope with the problems created by the massive influx of new residents. But the resulting government measures to assist migrants and to build low cost housing have remained very small indeed. Those measures designed to improve standards in the South and in the rural areas and to decrease the gap between the North and South, between city and countryside have not been successful. Despite tremendous efforts to industrialize the South, in the period 1951-1961 the number of industrial employees in the South rose by 46,000 as compared to 928,000 in the Center and North. Average per capita income in the North in 1964 was more than double that figure in the South and the gap was growing.⁶⁷ Proposed government measures in the fields of housing and city planning have driven conservative Catholic voters into the arms of the Liberal party. Urbanization has been a blow to the Catholics because it has converted rural Catholic and rightwing voters into urban Communist voters and converted urban Catholic voters into voters for the party of business and *laissez faire*, the Liberals.

Urbanization has tended to accelerate the secularization of Italian

⁶⁵Ciaurro, "Emigrazione," p. 82.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 120-121.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

society, to weaken the hold of the Church over the Italian population.⁶⁸ Southern migrants to the North have tended to desert the Church as well as other forms of social participation. Uprooted from the more religious mountains and villages, freed from confining rural social controls, exposed to new forms of temptation and the anonymity with which to yield to them, subjected to the conformist pressure of the secularized city poor, and discomfited by the alien and austere religious practices and atmosphere of the urban North, southern immigrants have often dropped from the ranks of the practitioners. Migrants from rural areas in the center and North have also been strongly affected by the shock of urbanization, with a resulting decline in religious participation.

Long opposed to urbanization for these reasons, the Church only recently began to adopt a more sanguine attitude and to take measures which would increase its powers of retention and attraction in the cities. Catholic organizations began to pay attention to the problem of migration in 1960. By 1962, when the Italian bishops defined Church policy on the problem, there was considerable awareness in Catholic circles of the attention and resources that the Communists were profitably devoting to the migrants. Catholic institutions began a campaign to compete with the Communists for the support of the migrants. So far the campaign seems to have been more effective in maintaining existing Catholic allegiances rather than recapturing past losses.⁶⁹

Inherent in the urbanization process is also a certain potential for anomic movements, rioting and disorder. Of the thousand people arrested in Turin during the riots of the summer of 1962, over two-thirds were southern immigrants, most of them very young, many of them barely able to speak Italian. Southerners in Turin were reacting against the hardships of initial adjustment to city life. Southern immigrants in the big cities form an unstable mass with tenuous links to any political party and a fixed tradition of suspicion towards all parties. They present a problem of discipline and control even for the Communist party; among the few things that southern comrades bring north with them is their shotgun. Union leaders find it difficult to keep them at home during strikes rather than rioting in the streets. Southerners have injected an

⁶⁸Burgalassi, "Religiosità e mutamento sociale in Italia," pp. 18-22.

⁶⁹Giovanni D'Ascenzi, "L'esodo rurale," cited above, n. 10, and *L'Espresso* Oct. 15, 1961, pp. 17-19.

element of intransigence, aggressiveness, and bitterness into northern labor conflicts which has been seen there since the immediate postwar years.⁷⁰

There is also considerable explosive potential in the deurbanization process which began with the slowdown of economic expansion in 1962-63 and which has persisted in some fields, especially building construction, into 1967. The end of the boom has meant a reversal in the pattern of internal migration: the newly urbanized peasants, especially the southerners, have been the first to be fired; the construction industry, in which a large proportion of the new workers found employment, has been among the worst hit by the recession. Many southerners, as a result, have been forced to return in failure to their villages in the South. The influx of new migrants to the northern cities has dropped greatly; the flow back to the South of migrants has reached a point where the populations of Milan and Turin have ceased to grow. It is not difficult to imagine the state of mind of those forced to return to the South by unemployment and the rising cost of living. So far the exodus from the metropolitan centers has been individual, orderly, nonviolent, and in stages—those forced to leave try first to find employment in other areas of the North before returning to the familiar misery of the South. But deurbanization, if it continues, may be highly dangerous. Already in most southern towns and villages there are bitter men, even more disposed than before to despise the parties and to demand rule by a strong man—rejecting both the traditional patron-client relations and the new party-voter relations, and ready for something new.⁷¹

Urbanization, despite the resulting shifts in electoral behavior, has not deprived the Christian Democrats of their control over the national government—a control they have held since the end of World War II. Governmental control has shifted only rarely and at the local level. In most cases, migration has not changed the balance of power although the general effect has been to strengthen radicalism in the cities and conservatism in the rural areas. Migration has had drastic effects, however, on the policy level. Communities receiving the waves of immigration have been hard pressed to cope

⁷⁰Umberto Segre, "Piazza Statuto e altro," 18 *Il Ponte* (1962), pp. 913-1,016; *L'Espresso*, April 21, 1963, p. 3.

⁷¹Domenico De Masi, "Migrazioni," pp. 62-86; *Corriere della Sera*, Sept. 12, 1964, p. 15, and Nov. 3, 1964, pp. 3, 5.

with sharply rising demands for housing, welfare, education, and medical care. Surveys disclosed, for example, that one-fifth of the population of Milan—to many, the symbol of progress and modernity in Italy—was now composed of illiterates.⁷² Rapid, largely unregulated urban development was disastrous for municipal finance and municipal services. Speculation in real estate led to the formation of huge, untaxed fortunes; extensive corruption in local offices; and severe shortages of low cost housing.⁷³ Attempts by the national government to establish greater public control over urban development and reduce the cost of housing met with the determined opposition of the real estate lobby, which managed during the elections of 1963 to convince thousands of Italians that the government was about to abolish private property in housing. The Christian Democratic party disowned its Minister of Public Works and the new city planning legislation he had sponsored—and still lost hundreds of thousands of votes to the conservative Liberal party.⁷⁴

Many communities in the North attempted to keep out the migrants, some successfully. Migrants were generally viewed as locusts, bringing with them nothing but demands for welfare. As late as 1964, surveys continued to reveal that the migrants were still seen as a burden in most, but by no means in all, northern cities.⁷⁵

One of the most important consequences of internal migration was a marked increase in sectional hostility. Although most of the migrants to the cities of the North came from the surrounding plains and mountains, an increasingly large minority came from the South. Southerners in Milan, Turin, and Genoa encountered discrimination and contempt, activating latent anti-southern prejudices. Southern in-migration was taken as showing the failure of postwar efforts to develop the South. Migration from the South began as early as the 1930's, when the overseas outlets for emigration had been closed off. By 1951, there were already about one million southerners living in the North, forming about 3 percent of the

⁷²*La Stampa*, Sept. 22, 1965, p. 5 and *Corriere della Sera*, Aug. 20, 1964, p. 4.

⁷³See the author's forthcoming study, "City Planning in Italy: Problems and Prospects," as well as earlier studies by Antonio Cederna, *I vandali in casa* (Bari: Laterza, 1956) and Angelo Conigliaro (ed.), *I padroni della città* (Bari: Laterza, 1957).

⁷⁴Fiorentino Sullo, *Lo scandalo urbanistico* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1964).

⁷⁵*Corriere della Sera*, July 9, 1964, p. 8; *L'Espresso*, July 30, 1961, p. 2; Ciaurro, "Emigrazione," pp. 82-83.

total northern population.⁷⁶ After 1951, other millions of southerners, like "Rocco and His Brothers," travelled northward in search of employment and a better life. Because of cultural differences and a tendency, shared with those from the Veneto, to settle in colonies in the big cities, southerners became the most visible of the new immigrants. Signs appeared in northern apartment houses, "We do not rent to southerners."⁷⁷ Northerners treated the southern newcomers as aliens and inferiors—the common term for them being "marocchini," or "little Maroccans." Northerners talked of an invasion from the South, of the dangers of "southernization" (*meridionalizzazione*). They expected the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* or Southern Development Fund to keep the southerners down on the farm and instead they saw a threat to the status, order, and solvency of their cities; competition for jobs; and outrages to public morality.⁷⁸

Evidence indicated, however, that there was less danger of the southernization of northern life than was feared. In the clash between northern and southern cultures, there was no doubt as to the issue: many southerners could not acquire northern dialects and styles of life, could not desert the ways of their fathers fast enough. And northern urban culture was beginning to affect those who remained behind in the rural areas, even in the South. Traditional rural, especially southern rural values were being eroded and undermined not only by the direct migration of people into the cities but by the penetration of urban values that stimulated exodus to begin with. The foundations of rural values in Italy, already severely shaken by war, military service, and the spread of public education, have collapsed under the impact of economic expansion, especially the spread of exposure to the mass media. Italy is being transformed, in the words of an Italian sociologist, from an archipelago to a peninsula, from an aggregate of small isolated villages into a single nation.⁷⁹

⁷⁶*L'Espresso*, April 8, 1962, p. 5.

⁷⁷A frequent variation has been: "We do not rent to families with more than two children." Newspaper ads like the following have been common: "For rent, southerners excluded" and "Apartment to rent, northerners only." Cited in Ciaurro, "Emigrazione," p. 79.

⁷⁸Alberto Pascale, "Da 'fratelli' a 'mafiosi,'" 11 *Nord e Sud* (July 1964), pp. 34-39 and Sergio Antonucci, "Ai limiti del razzismo," *ibid.*, pp. 39-43.

⁷⁹Cited by Alfredo Todisco in the series "L'Italia vista dai sociologi," *Corriere della Sera*, Aug. 21, 26, 30, and Sept. 2, 5, 1964. The impact of tele-

Paradoxically, this process is socially both integrating and dis-integrating. On the one hand, there is a growing uniformity of outlook and style of living between urban areas and *some* rural areas—those positively affected by economic expansion in general and by the loss of surplus population in particular. But other rural areas are receding into an even more terrible remoteness from urban standards: in many villages, exodus has meant desertion by the most energetic and the abandonment of land to those unable to leave.

The City of Milan recently surveyed the mayors of towns which have been sources of migration to the city. Of the 535 mayors who replied to the survey, 315 considered the loss of migrants to have had a negative impact on local development. Only 179 thought the outmigration had helped. Forty-one would make no flat judgment. Most of the mayors thought that migration should be restricted to prevent the pauperization of Italy's rural communes. Emigration has been a disaster for many areas, generating ever more emigration. Rural exodus had occurred under somewhat pathological conditions: it had been due not to improving agricultural productivity and declining manpower needs on the farm, but to the development of opportunities in the cities combined with growing misery in the rural areas. Italian farm land is being abandoned. The decline in farm population has not increased farm income, which remains, for an increasing number of peasants, intolerably low. Probably a million hectares of land, some of it of prime quality, is lying uncultivated for lack of manpower. Here too the Communists have perceived an opportunity missed by the others, assisting the families left behind by migrating men, encouraging letter writing campaigns

vision has been dramatic, especially in the South. Old southern proverbs are fading, such as the one which says that those born in the fields are destined to die there and the one which says that peasants should not concern themselves with politics. After the first broadcast of "Tribuna Politica," the Italian version of "Meet the Press," the research office of the state broadcasting company sent out interviews to test public reactions. In some southern towns, they were unable to find a single person ready to admit that he had seen the program, though the interviewers found out later that many had in fact looked at it. By 1964, there was no longer any hesitation in the villages. "Tribuna Politica" had become one of the most popular TV programs in the countryside. The number of TV sets in the South is about the same, proportionate to population, as in the North, although the South enjoys less than half the northern standard of living in other respects. See *L'Espresso*, Jan. 12, 1964, pp. 14-15.

from the North, stimulating the return of migrants to the South in order to vote and proselytize those who have stayed behind.⁸⁰

6. *Urbanization and Communism*

Urbanization in Italy has meant a massive transfer of people from rural to urban, and from southern to northern communities in a very short period of time. Assuming that this process resumes once again on the scale of the 1950's, assuming, that is, that the deurbanization of 1963-1966 is only temporary—does this mean the eventual peaceful triumph of Communism in Italy? Prevision is difficult, if only because the two key elements of Italian urbanization—rural exodus and southern exodus—are not necessarily joined together. For this reason, a forecast cannot be made based on a simple extrapolation of current trends. One of the major points of controversy in Italian public policy centers precisely on this point: should the government aim to transfer southern manpower to northern industry or to transfer industry to southern manpower? Should the latter course be chosen and implemented on a broad scale, a substantial redirection of the urbanization pattern—involving a population redistribution *within* the South rather than between South and North—might be the result.⁸¹ The political results of such a changed migration pattern remain obscure.

Even should the existing pattern of migration be resumed, this alone would not prolong the steady expansion of Communist voting that has been occurring. From 22.7 percent of the total national vote in the general elections of 1958 the Communist share rose to 26 percent in the local and provincial elections of 1964. Immigration alone does not account for this increase. Communist advances between 1958 and 1963—the years of the highest rate of internal migration—occurred throughout the country: in areas with heavy in-migration and those with settled and substantial middle class electorates; in northern industrial centers and in depressed farm areas of the South; in areas of traditional leftwing weakness such as the Veneto, as well as in areas of central Italy where the Left has been dominant for generations. Several other factors seem to have been at work: the shift in the Vatican's posture in Italy; increased

⁸⁰*Corriere della Sera*, July 9, 1964, p. 8; *L'Espresso*, July 3, 1961, p. 2; Ciauro, "Emigrazione," pp. 18-20, 24-25, 105-107.

⁸¹Francesco Compagna and Indro Montanelli, "Processo al Nord," *10 Nord e Sud* (June-July 1963), pp. 235-256 at p. 252.

bitterness in labor-management conflicts; the more moderate image presented by the Italian Communists, together with their increased standing in world communism; the defection of "maximalist" Socialist voters; desires to defend the status quo in the Red belt, with its highly developed network of cooperative and local government ventures; and the slowdown in economic growth, increased unemployment, and rural poverty.⁸² Considering the turmoil and inequities involved in rapid, then decelerating social change, the Communist advance may seem rather modest.

Prediction of the future development of Italian Communism is difficult. While there are many studies of the appeals of Communism there are few studies, except at the elite level, concerning the "de-communization" process. We do not know much about the conditions under which voters may be expected to desert Communist parties. Such a process has been occurring in the Italian South for the past two or three years, where the drop in Communist voting and membership figures has far surpassed losses due to internal migration and emigration.⁸³ Perhaps a similar process is operating in the immigrant slums around Rome, where in the local elections of June, 1966, the Communists suffered their first serious reverses, despite a general advance in the city as a whole.⁸⁴

The results in Rome have reinforced the general impression in Italian political circles that the Communist party is experiencing an even more serious crisis today than the one it experienced ten years ago—a crisis marked by severe internal dissension, declining membership, and growing isolation in the Italian political world. Till now immigration has shielded the party from the moderating effects of the rising Italian standard of living, from what one might call the dialectic of materialism. It has been easy to assert that urbanization was tolling the death knell of Christian Democracy in Italy, that, by promoting the Italian economic miracle, the Christian Democrats were presiding over the liquidation of their rural

⁸²"Prima e dopo il 28 aprile," 10 *Nord e Sud* (June-July 1963), pp. 7-23; "Prime analisi del voto del 28 aprile," 6 *Tempi Moderni* (April-June 1963), pp. 1-8; Christine Alix and Geneviève Bibes, "Les élections législatives italiennes d'avril 1963," 13 *Revue Française de Science Politique* (Dec. 1963), pp. 911-950; and the forthcoming book by Spreafico and Dogan on the 1963 elections.

⁸³Guido Macera, "Il voto del 12 giugno, il Mezzogiorno, e il 'rapporto' Alicata," 6 *Realità del Mezzogiorno* (June 1966), pp. 505-514.

⁸⁴*Il Popolo*, June 15, 1966, p. 7; *Rinascita*, June 11, 1966, pp. 1-5; *L'Unità*, June 16, 1966, p. 4; *La Discussione*, June 26, 1966, pp. 2-5.

political empire. And it is true that the Christian Democrats have had until recently great difficulty in expanding or even retaining an urban clientele. Only in the elections of 1964 did they begin to advance in the cities and only in 1966 did they begin to challenge with any success the Communist hold over the newly urbanized voters—perhaps in response to their alliance with the Socialists. Future historians may well see in this alliance with the Socialists the first serious effort of political Catholicism in Italy to respond to the challenge of urbanization.