

SABINO CASSESE, *Lo Stato fascista*, il Mulino, Bologna, 2010, pp. 150.

Has a Fascist state ever existed? This is the question that inspires Sabino Cassese's fine book. The author is convinced that historians can, at last, give a clear answer. It is a well-known fact that the ideologists of the Fascist regime emphasised the supremacy of the state, claiming with it the birth of a new type of state. Cassese's opinion is radically different: during the twenty-year Fascist period in Italy, pre-Fascist institutions were used to a large extent, and legislative measures, dating from the previous sixty years, albeit revised in keeping with the new regime, were used in the drafting of legislation. As members of the technical-political staff, Alberto De Stefani, Alfredo Rocco and Alberto Beneduce ensured this continuity. Thus, on the one hand legislation aimed at repressing fundamental freedom emerged but, on the other hand, there was a tendency to rationalise provisions "which impose order, obviously in an authoritarian manner, but without any claim to be of Fascist inspiration" (p. 16). The overlapping of the two distinct trends answered a specific need for pluralism. And the corporations proved useful for this policy: in fact, class conflict was not suppressed but transferred to within the state. In short, corporatism became an "indicator of complexity".

Therefore, in Italy, as in other countries, there was a rationalising, modernising component. The incentive came from the need to tackle the chaos caused by the First World War and in the immediate post-war years. With the arrival of the 1929 crisis, this need increased in the search for solutions to recover from the crisis. The most enlightening example of the similarity with other state contexts is the Italian banking law, which has many traits in common with the Glass Steagall Act. But there was also persistence over the long term and the banking law is irrefutable proof of this continuity in the following decades. Thus, at least until the 1990s, this resulted in there being a large public sphere, which developed during the twenty-year Fascist period in Italy.

Nevertheless, Cassese dwells painstakingly on the elements of continuity with the liberal era. Associationism was certainly a privileged field: it took the weak foundations of the liberal era in order to turn them to its own advantage, carrying out an intensive promotion campaign in which the state was considered the leading actor. The turning point came in 1926 when the idea of the state

became more clearly defined with the government that – according to an expression of Sergio Panunzio, which Cassese quotes – “embodies and juridically represents the State” (p.69). In this context, the idea of the corporative state as a distinctive feature of the regime took shape, although the operation was not completed until 1934 with the institution of the corporations, organised according to the criterion of the “productive cycle” or the “great productive sectors”.

But what was corporatism in the Fascist era? As a first step, Cassese agrees totally with Febvre’s definition of corporatism as a *fatras*, a sort of hotchpotch. Numerous events that determine ambitions and ideas, which differ enormously one from another, converge in corporatism. Nevertheless, a distinction can be made: before the great crisis the main aim was order and police, but afterwards anti-capitalist reasons became more marked, until they reached the extreme utopian form concentrated in Ugo Spirito’s formula for an owners’ corporation.

Therefore, corporatism was dynamic and flexible, and some stages may be outlined concisely. The preliminaries to the first stage may be deduced from the Palazzo Chigi and Palazzo Vidoni agreements of 21 December 1923 and 2 October 1925. With the first agreement reached between the General Confederation of Italian Industry and the National Confederation of Fascist Corporations, the signatories resolved to abandon “the unyielding clash of interests” between industrialists and workers, agreed on the principle to collaborate and set up a joint committee to implement the agreement. With the second agreement, both parties acknowledged each other reciprocally as the “exclusive representatives” of the workers and of the employers, at the same time agreeing to the abolition of the factory committees. The most important provision of this stage was the Rocco law of 3 April 1926 no. 563 which, developing principles already outlined in the period prior to corporatism, ratified the juridical recognition of one single trade union responsible for representing the entire category. The single trade union was granted the power to regulate labour relations between the categories with collective agreements. In order to resolve collective disputes and to formulate the juridical regulation of labour relations, the same law founded a Labour Court within the Appeal Courts, at the same time prohibiting strikes and lock-outs. In the same year the Ministry of Corporations and the National Council of Corporations were founded, this

latter constituted in 1930. The Workers' Charter had a marginal role and, although it was emphasised by the regime, the Charter contains only a perfunctory indication of the principles – most of which were not implemented – of the first stage of corporatism.

In the second stage, which began after 1929, corporatism was geared to disciplining the economy. From the time the effects of the crisis began to be felt in Italy, corporatism equipped itself with a complex machinery, the result of extensive legislation, which was “formally harmonious, but basically not very efficient” (p. 101). Its structure was in the shape of a pyramid, with at its base the trade, union associations that appointed the delegates of the twenty-two corporations, which included the representatives of the state and of the Fascist National Party. Above these was the National Council of Corporations, a top-heavy, inefficient organisation in that it included all the members of the corporations. In 1934, it was replaced by the Central Corporative Committee, made up of the confederation presidents and government and party delegates; the aim was to streamline procedures and speed up decisional powers. In actual fact – as Cassese clearly shows – inefficiency did not just stem from the unwieldiness of the organisations but was also related to procedures in the issuing of economic measures, which had become complex and complicated. Responsibility for the measures was divided up and this caused the overall procedure to become segmented: initiative was the first take-up by the associations or the government delegates, preliminary investigations carried out by the sector's corporation, decisions taken by the Council (and later the Committee) and the measure was finally announced by the head of the government with a decree. All in all, the corporations, founded in 1934, took on the form of a “token” operation which “was more ideological than juridical”.

With laws n. 10 of 5 January 1939 no. 10 and no. 129 of 18 January 1939, the third stage was reached: corporatism made its appearance at the summit of the state. Its role of coordination and leadership in the economy was emphasised: people became members of the Fascist Chamber and of corporations by virtue of their membership in the National Council of Corporations. The loss of the elective nature of the Chamber, therefore, was justified by the need to put into effect a new system, which better suited the economic situation. All in all, it was an ambitious plan that aimed to reconcile

state and society, state and social conflict. And its results were far from the objectives envisaged at the beginning.

And so can we conclude that the corporative state was merely a sham, an empty shell Cassese does not share such a clear-cut opinion, referring to Alessio Gagliardi's research, which shows how reductive it is to dismiss the experiment of the corporations as a mere failure. The corporations, for example, played a significant role in the regime's autarkic policy. Hence Cassese's affirmation that "Fascism does not allow itself to be contained within a single formula" (p. 138). This was partly because the regime sought to build harmony using contradictory elements, which are not always easy to discern and which, in any case, rule out the idea that Fascism had the characteristics of the totalitarian state.

In this respect, corporatism did have an influence, a fact that emerges clearly when it is compared with other authoritative organisations. Corporatism was an integral part of the division of labour, in which actions carried out outside the corporations – for example on Beneduce's initiative – involved very important operations, such as salvaging operations to rescue big enterprises and big banks, whereas corporations and satellite organisations tended to deal with medium-sized and small enterprises, to protect them from foreign competition and to build a network, which could ensure their concerted action. Despite being less conspicuous and sensational, this was a far from minor task, when one considers the Italian production system which, for the most part, consisted of small factories. In this setting, Mussolini had a crucial role in controlling movement between the two areas. Despite the contradictions and inadequacies, the system was functional, assigning distinct roles to the organisations involved, from the special agencies to the corporations.

In conclusion, Cassese's book distinguishes itself, above all, because it is the fruit of a method that has been pursued resolutely for several decades and is stated clearly in the last few pages. Such an approach aims at building a coherent relationship between the historical framework, the study of social sciences and the juridical-institutional context, in order to provide an overall picture of the various elements that made up the Fascist state.

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FRANCESCO DANDOLO, *L'industria in Italia tra crisi e cooperazione. La partecipazione dei lavoratori alla gestione d'impresa (1969-1985)*, Milan, Bruno Mondadori, 2009.

Industrial relations are an important topic in the history of the twentieth century, a century in which industry occupied an unquestionably central position in the economic sphere; however, industrial relations are also important in social relations and in politics. After having published two books on the history of entrepreneurs' associations in the Campania region of Italy, Dandolo returns to his research on industrial relations, albeit from a different perspective. His book *L'industria tra crisi e cooperazione* is mainly about workers' participation in company management from 1969 until the mid-1980s. This period was a very contentious one in the history of industrial relations – the reader has only to think of the “hot autumn” (a period of political and social tension and disorder in 1969) – but also a period which heralded some positive changes. The book is based on two fundamental aspects: the complex debate on participation, which spanned most of the 1970s, and the procedure to approve a rule of law for the use of cooperation to overcome business crises in the 1980s. The protagonist of this latter issue was Giovanni Marcora, a Christian Democrat Minister of Industry, who succeeded in following up the debate on participation.

The 1960s mark the starting point: a period when factory work was particularly difficult because of insalubrious buildings, scant attention to health and safety, a very tough work pace, and not much leeway for shop stewards. The Statute of Workers' Rights was decisive in safeguarding their safety and dignity. Its approval in 1970 – the fruits of the commitment of Giacomo Brodolini and Gino Giugni – gave the trade unions a new role, removed the authoritarian structure of management, which was very common in factories and limited the entrepreneur's disciplinary power in enhancing productivity. It was then that the problem of an entrepreneurial ethos appropriate to the new conjuncture began to be posed, together with the need to formulate proposals, which were not merely in contraposition to the management but which took into account the requirements enforced by the market in which the company operated.

In this context, the debate on so-called “industrial democracy” developed in Italy. This term included the various juridical models which envisaged

organs that were democratically elected by the workers and could have a significant influence on the firms' management. In Europe, several countries had already adopted measures of this sort, and confrontation developed on the basis of their experience, the Scandinavian and German models being those most studied. In Norway, firms with more than two hundred employees had to have a body that controlled the management, with one third of its members elected from the workers. Watch committees in Sweden used a similar system; in addition, it was compulsory to use part of the profits to improve the working environment, in accordance with the trade unionists. Dandolo is of the opinion that the model's logic lay, above all, "in the quest for areas of compatibility between enterprise on the one hand and the economic and social variables on the other, recovering its rationality in negotiations to foster a fairer and more shared development".<sup>1</sup> In this sense, the so-called "obligatory corporate peace", which consisted in the prerogative of the employer and the trade unions to organise rapid negotiations to cope with the workers' protests and to act jointly to stop them, is interesting.

In Germany worker participation took the form of joint management, particularly in large firms. The company's governance was organised according to the so-called "dual model": a company management organisation and a second organisation – in which the trade unions were represented – that acted as a watch committee with regard to the management organisation. The first forms of *Mitbestimmung* had been introduced in the coal and steel sector in 1951; from there they spread to other sectors. Worker participation could take many other forms, from joint supervision to joint agreement, as to how part of the profits should be spent. An EEC directive resulted in the matter being debated and examined in other European countries too. In Great Britain, the government ordered the Bullock Commission to investigate the issue, and in France the Sudreau Commission dealt with it.

In Italy the debate took off in the second half of the 1970s, because the Communist Party was in favour of it. The Communist Party was important politically and was active in promoting forcefully the demand for increased worker participation in production processes. With a wide-ranging survey of the studies and papers published in those years, Dandolo traces the various

<sup>1</sup> p. 36.

attitudes to the issue. At a political level, the Christian Democrats were willing to approve worker participation; the socialist area, in particular the more reformist area of the socialists, was the issue's strongest supporter.

The basic problem, however, seemed to be the identification of a way of achieving industrial democracy in Italy, in the light of the many doubts that were spreading among management and workers. *Confindustria* (the Italian Manufacturers' Association) defended the entrepreneurs' prerogatives with great determination. With very few exceptions, the line taken was to reject any possibility whatsoever of worker participation, reasserting a position which remained unaltered throughout the twentieth century. There were many misgivings, even among the trade unions. The CGIL (*Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro* – Italian General Confederation of Labour) was interested in the self-management, put into effect in Yugoslavia, but this was not compatible with the capitalist model. On the contrary, joint management did not appeal, because it was feared it entailed relinquishing conflict, which was deemed unacceptable.

Reciprocal mistrust was reinforced by negative judgement about the only agreement the parties reached in that period, the agreement signed by Lama and Agnelli in 1975 on a single point of the cost-of-living allowance. This resulted in the failure of the possibility of worker participation and of a new model of industrial relations. Thus, there was no change in the pattern of a confrontation between employers and workers based on the ability of one group to prevail over the other on the occasion of the renewal of contracts, instead of a common quest for efficiency and for a well-balanced distribution of the company's profits. It was probably a lost opportunity. A long period of strikes and heavy conflict, fraught with negative consequences for the production system, might have fostered a development in industrial relations. Worker participation in company management, no matter what manner was adopted, might have rescued industrial relations from the clashes and conflicts that had been the cause of the "hot autumn" of 1969 and of the renewals of contracts in 1969-1970 and 1972-1973, which had resulted in exorbitant (and at times unsurmountable) costs for the enterprises. But this did not happen.

The search for a way to make capital and labour cooperate in company management continued, albeit in different forms. This was due to an influential

Christian Democrat, Giovanni Marcora, who was concerned about the workers' arguments but was not in favour of a rather inefficient welfarism. Born in 1922 in the province of Milan, in his youth Marcora had worked as a foreman on the airport-building site, sharing the workers' problems first-hand. After 8 September 1943, when he was still not twenty-one years of age, he had joined the Resistance movement in Italy in the groups of Christian partisans, where he had met Enrico Mattei and had experienced the collaboration between representatives of different political parties. At the end of the war he joined the Christian Democrat party, and in Milan in 1961, he was one of the protagonists of the first Centre-Left government in Italy. After having held the office of Minister of Agriculture for six years, he was appointed Minister for Industry and Trade in 1981.

The second oil shock had caused the Italian economy great difficulties, just as it had in other industrialised countries. The employment issue appeared dramatic, with more and more workers being laid off and the prospect of high unemployment, even if the economy were to recover. Marcora did his utmost to get a bill passed to create cooperatives among laid-off workers to save their firms that were going through a crisis. He wanted to "foster two changes: to replace welfare with responsibility, and, at the same time, to reposition at the heart of economic decisions the accumulation process which, in any case, could not disregard a fairer distribution of the profits made".<sup>2</sup>

This was to be applied to small and medium-sized enterprises and the proposal aimed at preventing the loss of professional skills which still had considerable ability to create profits. The classic pattern of the relationship between capital and labour was not only changed but fundamentally turned upside down, in that it was the worker who controlled how capital was used. The procedure to pass the bill consisted of several stages, and Dandolo also writes about the publication of *Labor exercens*. This encyclical, published by Pope John Paul II, contained references to worker participation in company management, profits and shareholding, and influenced the sensitivity of Roman Catholic politicians towards this issue. The passage of the law and the creation of this instrument for industrial policy, which was particularly useful at a time of recession, took place after Marcora's death, but his party colleagues and his

<sup>2</sup> p. 116.

political opponents acknowledged that, without his action, the law would never have been passed.

Just over ten years after the Workers' Statute, a new labour protection instrument was introduced in Italy. It was not aimed at defending rights but at safeguarding employment and the professional competence and skills of firms that were in crisis. Were the difficult conditions of the workers in the 1960s really a thing of the past? In actual fact, things were changing again, and in the opposite direction: the march of the forty thousand in 1980 and the approval of the referendum on the wage indexation scale marked a rapid change in the power balance between capital and labour. In the following years, labour protection was reduced again, resulting in a rapid spread of conditions of part-time labour with hardly any protection. However, it was not sufficient to cause a watershed for Italian competitiveness. And so we find ourselves wondering whether a worker-participation model like the German one – characterised by less conflict, greater production and better wages – might not have been a better prospect, not only for labour but also for capital. Dandolo's excellent book helps the reader to learn about what today seems a lost opportunity, but one which nothing prevents from being brought up for discussion again. As Edmondo Berselli wrote in his (posthumous) book *L'economia giusta*, the current global economic crisis reaffirms the relevance today of the social free-market economy.<sup>4</sup>

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ALBERTO MARCOS MARTIN, *Finanze e fiscalità regia nella Castiglia di Antico Regime (secc. XVI-XVII)*, Lecce, Edipan, 2010, pp. 328.

There is a "before" and an "after" in the historical studies on modern-age Castilian finance, and there is no doubt that Felipe Ruiz Martin's work marks this watershed: in the second half of the twentieth century, in the wake of

<sup>4</sup> E. Berselli, *L'economia giusta*, (Einaudi, Turin 2010).

Ramón Carande's monumental research on Charles V's bankers,<sup>1</sup> Ruiz Martín has made a unique contribution that cannot be ignored, regarding not only the reconstruction of the history of banking in the Iberian Peninsula between the fifteenth and the eighteenth centuries, but also going beyond the *leyenda negra*, that interpretation unequivocally based on decadence, impoverishment and withdrawal into itself which for a long time weighed on every aspect of the economy, politics and society in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain.<sup>2</sup>

Ruiz Martín bases his analysis first and foremost on the difference between small and big capitalists: in the case of the Iberian Peninsula in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The big capitalists were the Florentine, Genoese, Flemish and German bankers, whereas the small capitalists were the Castilian bankers. Thus, starting from this basic factor, Ruiz Martín shows how the different products of the Castilian towns led to the formation of different classes of capitalists, to their involvement in the *carrera de Indias*, to the creation of a vast system of trade fairs and payments and, especially from the end of the sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth century, to the creation of an ever-increasingly efficient *juros* market, connected with the monarch's continuous search for sources of finance. Ruiz Martín's reconstruction highlights both the deep involvement of big international finance in Castile's credit market, especially as far as a more direct connection with the Crown's financing mechanisms was concerned, and the influential economic role played by the urban classes and, more particularly, by the patricians of the Iberian Peninsula.<sup>3</sup>

At the beginning of the modern age Spain was an urban world: in Castile, the towns' political and economic importance was much greater than their

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Henry Kamen's research, especially Henry Kamen, Joseph Pérez, *La imagen internacional de la España de Felipe II: "Leyenda negra" o conflicto de intereses?*, Valladolid, Universidad de Valladolid, 1980 (but cf. also the debate in *Past and Present*: Henry Kamen, "The decline of Spain: a historical myth?" in *Past and Present*, 81, 1978, pp. 24-50; Jonathan I. Israel, "Debate. The decline of Spain: a historical myth?" in *Past and Present* 91, 1981, pp. 170-180; Henry Kamen, "The decline of Spain: a historical myth?" in *Past and Present*, 91, 1981, pp. 181-185).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Felipe Ruiz Martín, "Las finanzas españolas durante el reinado de Felipe II" in *Cuadernos de Historia de la Revista Hispania*, II, Madrid, 1968, pp. 109-173; Felipe Ruiz Martín, *Las finanzas de la Monarquía hispánica en tiempos de Felipe IV (1621-1665)*, (Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia, 1990); Felipe Ruiz Martín, *Pequeño capitalismo, gran capitalismo: Simón Ruíz y sus negocios en Florencia*, (Barcelona, Crítica, 1990).

demographic importance because of the Cortes, which made them privileged Crown interlocutors and which counterbalanced the importance of the nobility of the highest rank. Municipal organisation was in the hands of the merchant classes, with their patronage networks, although in the sixteenth century, and even more in the seventeenth century, the nature of property changed: land and its income, feudal estates and military titles took on an increasingly important role in the wealth of the urban patricians, who aspired to an aristocratic way of life and to acquiring chivalrous rank and behaviour. However, there is no doubt that the history of the urban classes and of the municipal bodies is one of the spheres which has seen most revision and updating in modern Spain's historiography.<sup>4</sup>

The nine papers by Alberto Marcos Martín in this book are part of that field of research begun by Felipe Ruiz Martín, enriching it not only from the point of view of method and interpretation but also with the wealth of the archive sources used. At the same time, these papers pay particular attention to the role the Castilian communities played in the financial history of the Spain of the Austrias, both by means of the position they assumed as the monarch's interlocutors when fiscal policy was being decided upon in the Cortes and by the urban aristocracy's investment decisions and their taking part in the sale of municipal and royal positions.<sup>5</sup>

The first paper in the book – *La Spagna e le Fiandre (1618-1648): il finanziamento della guerra* – is an introduction for the papers that follow; here Marcos Martín goes over the stages of the Thirty Years War, the biggest military commitment the Catholic monarchy sustained between the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, studying the financing of the war. The need to be able to rely on a continuous flow of money resulted in the already well-consolidated

<sup>4</sup> Cf. among the most recent research on this subject, L. A. Ribot García, L. de Rosa (eds.) *Ciudad y mundo urbano en la época moderna*, (Colección El Río de Heráclito, Madrid, 1997); Jesús Bravo Lozano (ed.), *Espacios de poder. Cortes, ciudades, villas (s.XVI-XVIII)*, (Madrid, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2002); José Ignacio Fortesa Pérez, Juan Gelabert (eds.), *Ciudades en conflicto (siglos XVI-XVIII)*, (Valladolid, Junta de Castilla y León – Marcial Pns, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> Among Alberto Marcos Martín's principal publications, besides the papers in this book and those quoted in the bibliography of the individual papers, we must include because of their overall picture *Economía, sociedad, pobreza en Castilla*, (Palencia, Diputación Provincial, 1985), 2 vols., and *España en los siglos XVI, XVII y XVIII. Economía y sociedad*, (Barcelona, Critica, 2000).

system of *asientos* never being seriously questioned. *Asientos* were agreements reached with a group of bankers for the granting of a loan to the Crown: the time and place of the delivery of the sums agreed upon and the repayment procedure were established in the agreements. It is apparent in Marcos Martín's reconstruction that the war expenditure sustained by the Crown of Castile during the Thirty Years War was enormous, and that, at first, only the Genoese bankers exercised the lucrative role of lending money to the Crown: however, from 1625, when the Count Duke di Olivares attempted to break the monopoly of the hated Genoese bankers, these latter were joined by the Portuguese bankers who, from the mid-1630s, took the lion's share in this system.

Although Marcos Martín's reconstruction of the alternation of the two powerful groups of bankers at the summit of the monarchy is extremely interesting in the overall picture of Castilian finances between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it poses a question concerning an area of research which is even vaster and more complex: did the Castilian monarchy pay back the huge amount of money received on loan from the Genoese and the Portuguese, and, if so, how was it repaid?

To answer this question, which is the real common aim of all the papers in this book, Marcos Martín had to work his way through the vicissitudes of the taxation system in Castile at least from the mid-sixteenth century, linking the measures adopted in the first half of the seventeenth century to those that already existed in the previous century. But in order to do this – in the second paper, *La fiscalità regia e la crisi della Castiglia nel XVII secolo* – the author has to remind the reader that the Castile of Philip III and Philip IV was not the Castile of Charles V and Philip II, and that, without taking on the paradoxical traits which the aforementioned *leyenda negra* wanted to attribute to it, there is no doubt that the economy of this region of the Iberian Peninsula declined notably in the first half of the seventeenth century, marked by a pronounced fall in population and a reduction in trade, due in part to the decline of traditional products and in part to the different orientation of trade flows. Therefore the fiscal measures adopted during the sixteenth century for a highly vital economy seemed inadequate for an economy that was gradually becoming more fragile; all the more so in that it was faced with an increase in levies because of the increase in military expenditure. It was therefore necessary to use other routes to find new income and to seek new solutions.

From the end of the sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth century, the awareness of these problems and the attempts to find a solution gave rise to a vast output of memoirs, both printed and handwritten, intended for a large circulation, abounding in words like *restauración*, *recuperación*, *reparo* and *reviver*. Neo-scholastic philosophers and reason of state theorists, jurists and state officials, arbiters of all kinds, proposed measures for a return to the kingdom's former prosperity. In the third paper in the book – *Debito pubblico, fiscalità e arbitrios in Castiglia fra XVI e XVII secolo* – Marcos Martín deals with the contents of these proposals, with reference to the forms of taxation in seventeenth-century Castile. He goes on to examine the public debt, which was very widespread in this region in the historic period under consideration, and was closely connected with taxation, the public debt being funded by creating new taxes or increasing existing taxes, by capitalisation and by the transfer of revenues.

At this point the financial historian has all the information he needs to give a clear description of the classic spiral of the state running into debt, a process which started with increased military expenditure, continued with the underwriting of the *asientos*, thence with an increase in the creation and the issuing of the national debt. However, in the case of Castile between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the joint provisions of higher taxation and increased public debt issue – in the face of a less vibrant economy, a decline in population and hence reduced internal revenue from taxation on consumption and production – soon proved to run short of the Crown's expectations and demands: therefore at least two other factors must be added for a complete reconstruction of what happened.

On the one hand it must, be observed that, although these measures were not new, alienation of various kinds of property and royal revenues, from waste lands to the rights to levy taxes (on roads, customs duties and ports), increased and that, in certain conditions and at certain times, royal and municipal offices were increasingly up for sale. On the other hand, the continual need to find a market for the public debt amongst the urban aristocracy and to negotiate the introduction of new taxes with the communities, reinforced the power of the latter, their municipal bodies and their ruling classes.

The fourth and fifth papers in the book – *Potere regio, poteri locali e oligarchie urbane in Castiglia fra XVI e XVII secolo* and *Alienazione del patrimonio regio, potere sovrano e condizioni poste alla concessione del servizio*

*dei milioni durante il regno di Filippo III (1598-1621)* – analyse these very aspects, particularly with reference to the *servicio de millones* which was the Castilian Crown's principal source of revenue throughout the seventeenth century: the burden of this tax was particularly felt in the towns, as was the *alcabala*, the tax on saleable goods, initially set at 5% and then increased to 10% of the goods' value.

Strictly speaking, the *servicio de millones* was not a tax but a donation of a sum of money that the Castilian Cortes granted to the monarch for a certain period and on certain conditions, which the sovereign undertook to observe. For their part, the Cortes undertook to control, not only the collecting of the money but also to check the way in which it was spent. However, despite the formal commitments, it was the king who exercised real control over the *servicio*, as is seen in the fact that from the very beginning the Crown presided over all the stages of the collection of the money and its control appeared ever stronger as the years went by. As a result, by the mid-seventeenth century the *milliones* had become very much more a form of ordinary taxation than a loan, in favour of which the Cortes voted periodically. But to what extent was this taxation mechanism disliked by the communities, who had to bear its greatest burden? In actual fact, not much because, once within the city walls, the *servicio de millones* was collected on property, with the surrendering of assets and with other ploys, which fuelled a lively local financial market and which generally ended up by benefiting the municipal ruling classes, the urban aristocracy. Thus Alberto Marcos Martin's analysis shows that there was a direct connection between the sovereign's need to secure domestic revenue and the urban oligarchies' need to find new ways of financial investment at a time when the economy was in decline.

The first five papers give us an overall picture of taxation and the public debt in Castile between the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries against the background of the changing relationship between sovereign power and urban oligarchies. In the last four papers, proposing new historical interpretations, Alberto Marcos Martin tackles some of the subjects dealt with in the first part of the book: the transfer of royal income (*Le vendite di rendite reali in Castiglia: alcune considerazioni sulla dimensione e sulla cronologia*), the sale of waste land (*La vendita della terre incolte nella Castiglia del XVI secolo. Vecchi problemi, nuove prospettive*), the public offices market (*Le vendite delle cariche pubbliche in Castiglia durante il periodo della sospensione della venalità degli*

*uffici, 1600-1621*), and the connection between the transfer of revenue and the communities' running into debt (*Ipotecare il patrimonio collettivo. Alienazione delle entrate regie ed indebitamento municipale nei secoli XVI e XVII*). Because it is impossible to go over all the contents of these very full papers, we shall concentrate on only two aspects concerning the royal taxation contractors and, more generally, the sale of public offices.

The first aspect to point out is seen in the reconstruction of the financing mechanism of the public debt with the sale of fiscal assets, in particular *alcabalas* and *tercias*, these latter coming from ecclesiastical contributions. The phenomenon is well-known, but by quantifying more precisely the resources involved in this mechanism, between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Marcos Martín shows that through tax collectors and tax farmers, the king involved not only the aristocracy but also the urban patricians (the two main groups of royal revenue purchasers) in the taxation system, thereby increasing his control over these two classes and obtaining greater political cohesion regarding his own decisions, and, all in all, reinforcing social order.

The subject of the methods of financing the public debt leads to the equally complex subject of the sale of large landed estates, Crown lands and municipal rights and offices. Marcos Martín describes the nature of the conflict between Philip II and the towns of Castile over these sales, especially over the sale of offices, pointing out the juridical, ideological and political character of the objections raised. In essence, the king won the conflict, but a study of the income the sales brought to the royal coffers would suggest that, on the one hand, between 1560 and 1598, the total income amounted to less than 8 million ducats, which was about the monarchy's annual ordinary income during its best years, and that, on the other hand, this practice was resorted to more widely only at particularly difficult times and always diversifying the object for sale. Lastly, it is to be noted that the objections raised concerned, for the most part, the ways the king acted, not his right to act in the way he did; besides, Philip II did not resort to large-scale sales after 1589, thus paving the way for their suspension during the reign of Philip III in 1601.

In fact, comparing the different territories of the Catholic monarchy, it is especially interesting to note that, unlike in other areas of the Spanish monarchy, the sale of municipal offices did not constitute the norm in modern-age Castile, but was an experiment that lasted from 1543 until 1601, and was

later resumed between 1630 and 1643. There is, however, a certain difference between the first and the last periods of this practice, when it brought considerable sums into the royal coffers (in 1635, for example, income from the sale of offices amounted to about 50% of the gold which arrived annually from America). And so this practice was not abandoned because of its poor earning performance, but was abandoned in an attempt to restore the relationship of trust between the sovereign and the communities, following the fall of the Count-Duke di Olivares in 1643, by abolishing a measure for which the municipal bodies had always shown their profound dislike.

But was this practice ever really abandoned? Here again, Marcos Martín's research furthers our knowledge more than historiography's well-established interpretations do: despite what the communities requested and obtained in the Cortes, the sale of public offices continued throughout the reign of Philip III, in various forms and using different methods. Although these were single episodes decided upon by the king rather than an overall strategy, they were so numerous that they may not be considered negligible.

Both these points emphasised here are closely connected with the issue of consensus and social cohesion, which the monarchy wanted to achieve by involving an increasingly wide range of classes and groups in its policies. In my opinion, this is a decisive feature in the forming of the modern state, the essence of which, as far as taxation is concerned, lies not so much in the ability to achieve an abstract ideal of efficiency and economic rationality – something that can only be achieved in industrial societies – as in the concurrence of three vital factors: the paramount importance of the figure of the sovereign as a *rey justiciero*, an importance which never failed throughout the ancient regime and which is one of the mainstays of the modern state's authority; the fiscal system as a tool for negotiation with the *cuerpos estamentales* and with the urban aristocracy, both to meet the state's financial needs and to maintain a balance within the communities (this is seen above all in the forms taxation took and in the agents who implemented it); the public debt as the point of contact *par excellence* between the demands of the *rey justiciero* and the needs of the *cuerpos estamentales* and the communities.

In conclusion, to write about taxation in the ancient regime with the aim to highlighting change and continuity in the transition towards the contemporary age, is not merely a matter of carrying out a pointless exercise of adapting data

and documents to ahistorical concepts and theories; it is first and foremost an investigation into how the prince exercised his functions as a bestower of justice in terms of taxation, what kind of negotiation process existed between the Crown and the communities, who actually collected taxes, and the role of the public debt in this process. Alberto Marcos Martín's papers in this book bring out very clearly the pact of allegiance which subsumes each of these aspects: allegiance to the king and the Crown, allegiance to the community and to one's own interests, and allegiance to the territorial group one belongs to and its privileges.

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MARCO OSTONI, *Il tesoro del re. Uomini e istituzioni della finanza pubblica milanese fra Cinquecento e Seicento*, Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici, Naples, 2010, pp. 210.

The history of public financial institutions in Spanish Lombardy has never been very popular in modern historiography. Although other political-institutional aspects and the economic and social aspects of the enduring connection between the Duchy of Milan and the Hapsburg monarchs in Madrid have been analysed in depth far and wide during the last decades, the history of the machinery of bureaucracy and government has never attracted the attention of scholars. The delicate mechanisms regulating the offices responsible for managing public finances in Lombardy – ordinary and extraordinary magistrates, and the General Treasury – and the other organs that exercised power at the heart of the state and in the outlying areas (Captain of Justice, Lord High Chancellor) fade into the background and at times have been totally ignored. The Milanese Senate has been the subject of a mainly historical and juridical analysis, which did not examine the socio-political and economic aspects of its workings.<sup>1</sup> This scant attention is partially due to the destruction,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ugo Petronio, *Il Senato di Milano*, (Milan, Giuffrè, 1972), and the more recent book by Annamaria Monti, *Judicare tanquam Deus*, (Milan, Giuffrè, 2003).

during the Second World War, of most of the sources regarding Spanish Milan housed in the city's archives.

This book by Marco Ostuni attempts to fill in some of the above-mentioned historiographical gaps, dwelling in particular upon the events of the Duchy's General Treasury, the vital nerve centre of the Lombard public-finance machinery over the course of a century between 1542 and 1640. The Treasury is not analysed exclusively from the institutional point of view, but – as the title of the book summarises so well – with Ostuni's attention constantly aimed at people, in other words at the officials, who, during the period examined, worked there, and especially at the general economic and political context of Lombardy and the Spanish Empire between the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. This is a thorough and precise piece of reconstruction, based on first-hand sources housed in Italian and Spanish archives, and equipped with a rich bibliography that throws new light on the management and control mechanisms of the Milanese public *hacienda* in an era of profound change.

The book is divided into three parts, each one dealing with a particular aspect of the court, but in fact all closely connected, with a good balance between the history of the institution itself and that of the officials who were called upon each time to be its director. The first chapter deals with the general history of the Treasury, its origins, its internal mechanisms and its institutions; the second chapter analyses chronologically the vicissitudes of the magistracy in relation to the local and international political situation and public finances; and the third chapter reconstructs a detailed biography of Muzio Parravicino and his son Francesco, governors who were in charge of the Treasury in the first forty years of the seventeenth century, and whose lives show how it was possible to have a brilliant career and to rise in society at that time.

In the first chapter (*La Tesoreria generale fra continuità e progetti di riforma*), Ostuni describes the delicate mechanisms of the Milan office and how they were affected by the complex relations between “the centre and the outlying regions”, well aware of the part these relations played after so many failures and setbacks in developing the office during the reign of Philip III, with the arrival in Milan of the first systematic rules and regulations for its management in 1603. These instructions were the last real attempt of the central government in Madrid to set some order in the management of Lombard finances, whereas the following decades, until 1640, saw only a series of extemporary measures.

The reconstruction began in the last decades of the Sforza administration, and went on into the era of Charles V, doubtless the most interesting period from the historical-institutional point of view, when the monarch intervened incisively several times to reform the Milanese institutions, greatly changing their original characteristics. In doing so he came near to upsetting the delicate internal equilibrium and creating difficulties for the intricate web of relations and patronage that existed but, in fact, the attempt failed and it is no accident that the Emperor's successors much preferred a softer and more pragmatic approach, introducing a series of improvements to the system without having recourse to radical reform.

The second part, entitled *Hombres de negocios e ufficiali al servizio dei re: i tesorieri e l'evoluzione dell'hacienda milanese*, deals with the historical context and the protagonists of public finances in Lombardy – the Treasurers *in primis* – during this century. The office holders are traced in a reconstruction which never moves away from the historical-political and economic context in which these people operated. The network of relations they maintained with the world around them, and the difficulties they had to overcome in order to cope with an ever-increasing number of burdensome obligations because of the Crown's military commitments are described in detail.

Almost all these people came from the lower-ranking nobility and from among the Milanese patricians. They had considerable personal wealth and a close network of acquaintances in the financial world that enabled the Treasurer to stand surety for operations in both the domestic and the international market to collect the monies needed by the Crown, which, even in apparently quiet years – as in the second half of the sixteenth century – had to meet with constant borrowing to honour commitments and to plug the holes in the balance sheet. Ostuni writes that for the Treasurer “it was not, in fact, so important to carry out well his duty in managing income and expenses as to be able to provide what the Exchequer needed at any given moment, draining money from the international credit circuits and pawning his own possessions if necessary” (p. 96). Hence the bitter and tragic failure of Pedro López de Orduña, the first Treasurer General, appointed by Philip II in 1573, following the reunification of the two sections of the Treasury (the military section and the civilian section) after the almost simultaneous deaths of the holders of office in each section, Nicolás Cid and Giovanni Battista Arconati.

A stranger to Lombard society and with no connections with the financial world of the time, Orduña was crushed under the weight of a system that was too complex for him. This failure led to the decision to appoint, henceforth, people whom the Court trusted and who not only had large personal fortunes but had sound connections with the principal merchant bankers and excellent relations with the local patricians, as in the appointment of Gerolamo Casati, Ferrante Cignardi and Muzio Parravicino, this latter in 1603.

The third and last part of the book (*Da mercanti a possidenti: la conferma di un itinerario*) is about Muzio Parravicino, "merchant, operator in exchange fairs, investor in government stock (*juros*) and in private property, a Crown *asentista* or contractor (p. 145). Parravicino's long, fortunate career which took him to the top office in the Treasury in the early years of the seventeenth century is retraced: from his beginnings in trade at Como, to his arrival in Valencia, the rich Mediterranean city with a strong Italian trading component where Muzio joined his brother Dario in his business, and then his move to Madrid after bankruptcy in 1575. In Madrid, not only did he abandon trade to devote himself, body and soul, to more profitable investments in government stock, but he succeeded in creating a solid network of relations with the main banking houses of the time, from the Fuggers to the Ruiz, which enabled him to participate in public loan contracts (*asientos*) to finance the campaigns in the Netherlands. Muzio became the right-hand man of the Council of Italy, often advancing the pay of the various councillors and of the apostolic delegate, to whom he often loaned money, thus also creating a series of contacts with Rome. He was a versatile merchant banker who, on his return to Milan in 1603, succeeded in changing his strategy yet again, gradually disengaging himself from international business and turning to new investments in Lombardy, not only because this enabled him to control his business more easily, but also because these investments appeared much more profitable than the previous ones.

Ostuni seems to suggest that in the events of Muzio Parravicino's life it is possible to see all the strong points and the contradictions of finance in Spanish Milan, in its connections with the Hapsburg power, but also in its ability to act independently. Parravicino's imperious rise lacked only the crowning achievement of acquiring the status of nobility. However, the aim was achieved by his son, Francesco, who replaced his father as Treasurer in 1615: in 1621 Philip IV of Spain

granted him the title of Count of San Grato which, for an *ancien régime* banker, was the unequivocal proof of his having achieved social recognition.

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P. PECORARI, *Luzzattiana. Nuove ricerche storiche su Luigi Luzzatti e il suo tempo*, Forum, Udine, 2010.

This book is a collection of ten papers on Luigi Luzzatti which Paolo Pecorari has written in the last few years. They have, in common, the methodological approach to research: analyses based on an extensive examination of the archive documentation, tracked down and consulted in various places, that contribute to clarifying particular aspects of the illustrious economist from the Veneto region, some of which hitherto have not been explored. As well as furthering our knowledge about Luzzatti the economist, these aspects highlight the wide-ranging human relations that influenced the development of the ideas and visions that underlay his work. The breadth of Luzzatti's cultural interests and relations reveals the extent to which regular contacts have a beneficial effect on political and economic thought and actions. In this respect, Pecorari's book should be read as a book about culture, rather than just about economics: it highlights how crucial it is, during the period of intellectual development and maturation, to strike strong roots in literature and to forge relations that stimulate individuals in a way that goes beyond mere, and at times arid, technicality. In my opinion, this is an important lesson, especially today: even though we are still deep in a crisis that clearly reveals the inadequacy of economics, for too long based on formulae and studies where the human dimension has been totally pushed aside, in the Faculties of Economics academics persist in regarding the teachings of human and social sciences as a sort of extra, thereby neglecting a decisive aspect of the education of the new generations of economists.

Pecorari attributes to Luzzatti a vigorous humanism, which was an inescapable part of his personality (which Pecorari reconstructs very clearly,

even when dealing with complex issues). This emerges in the very first paper, which is about Luzzatti's connections with Venice. And it is significant that, right from the start, Pecorari points out that Luzzatti was born twice in Venice: both literally, when his birth was registered, and culturally. He thus came into contact with a large group of people, who guided and deeply influenced his formative years: the early Jewish period was followed by a rationalist, secular awareness that took hold of him during his post-adolescent period. On this was grafted the supremacy of ethics over economy and law, perceived clearly during his university studies, and then the passion for the social function of credit which found an outlet in Luzzatti's first publication after graduation, entitled *La diffusione del credito e le banche popolari* (1863). Venice was in a period of decline, and Luzzatti identified cooperative credit, applied to small industries, as a possible solution. This resulted in the founding of the *Banca Mutua Popolare di Venezia*, with Luzzatti as its honorary Chairman. Meanwhile at the age of twenty-five, he was appointed a temporary lecturer in constitutional law at the University of Padua, and he worked on the project to create an advanced School of Commerce in Venice. He was involved in issues regarding the strengthening of infrastructure, and he believed that the expansion of the merchant fleet was particularly crucial, being of the opinion that public intervention was absolutely necessary. In this situation, he devised the concept of economic solidarity as an answer to the chronic shortage of industrial credit. Luzzatti maintained close connections with Venice, even when he became a prominent politician in the 1870s. Those were the years in which the distinguishing features of his Venetian wisdom emerged. Pecorari comments: "that wisdom which, although aware of and, indeed, practising the art of compromise, knew how to instil itself into *prudencia* or, if you prefer, into wisdom of government, in other words into planning ability, commitment to examine issues critically, to seek possible solutions and to pursue realistic aims" (p.37).

The second paper deals again with Luzzatti's formative years, based on the correspondence between Ernest Hendlé and Luigi Luzzatti on Cartesianism in 1862 and 1863. Hendlé referred to the concept of active reason which evolved into philosophy without a religion and into a precise historical event, the French Revolution, whereas Luzzatti's "restrictive" thought referred to the shift from systematic doubt to the certainty of *cogito*. This was a delicate stage in

Luzzatti's life, after he had discovered the "divine Spinoza" as he called him, which is mirrored in a sort of *metanoia*, that identified God as "the only true active substance" (p.47).

The third paper deals with the unpublished correspondence between Luigi Luzzatti and his teacher Angelo Messedaglia where the great theme of the connection between the epistemology of scientific knowledge and economic knowledge through the convergence of experience, mathematical reason and action emerges. Messedaglia's writings were influenced by those of Galileo and Vico, and by Romagnosi's "social Newtonianism" and Mill's inductive logic. However, the correspondence reveals that both Luzzatti and Messedaglia had both read some of the same books, and it contains cultural references of German and Anglo-French origin. It also reveals a familiarity and a constancy typical of a teacher-pupil relationship, which hugely enrich the human dimension.

A careful examination of the lectures Luzzatti delivered during his first specialist course as a lecturer in constitutional law at the University of Padua reveals the political-juridical idea that is their common denominator. At the hub we find his analysis of the French constitutions between 1789 and 1795, which distances itself from the "historiographical myth" of the Revolution considered as a break with the past, while, however, sensing the political, juridical and ethical implications which sprang from the end of the *Ancien Régime*. Luzzatti's theoretical references can be traced back to the cultural nexus of liberal-bourgeois historiography, especially to Thiers and Constant, rejecting extremisms and declaring the political option for the *juste milieu*.

The fifth paper examines what Luzzatti did in the early 1890s when he was appointed Minister of the Treasury in Rudini's first Cabinet, in one of the kingdom of Italy's most difficult periods. Availing himself of the services of Bonaldo Stringher, at that time Inspector General of the Ministry of Finance, he brought about a reform, the basis for the financial recovery measures that followed, which entailed the transfer of the services relating to the movements of income bonds and other government securities from the revenue offices to the provincial treasuries. This was for two very distinct reasons: to alleviate administrative procedures and to grant greater powers of control to the Ministry of the Treasury.

The next paper is based on the analysis of the scientific influences on Luzzatti's way of understanding financial policy, when he was again appointed

Minister of the Treasury in Rudini's third, fourth and fifth governments (1896-98). In a hand-written Italian translation of an article by Knut Wicksell, *Der Bankzins als Regulator der Warenpreise*, which Pecorari came across, he perceives one of the fundamental theoretical motives that drove Luzzatti "to contain, indeed to suppress, the circulation of currency in the national economic system, even when there were signs of recovery" (p.126). And so, once again, aspects that can be traced back to underlying cultural issues explain Luzzatti's activities and decisions in a very important period in his political life. Likewise, the reactions triggered by the publication of Knapp's book, *Staatliche Theorie des Geldes* (1905), which argues that currency is a "creation of law", are at the heart of Luzzatti's reflections (he studied them specifically) and confirm the validity of the inspiring principle, based on the connection between theory and economic policy.

The same historical setting can be found in the paper on Bonaldo Stringher, when he became Director General of the Bank of Italy. His previous years' experience as a close collaborator of Luzzatti's is recognisable in the problems he had to face, the most important being on the one hand, "the inseparable interest of the national economy and the Bank of Italy" as Stringher pointed out in his first annual report in March 1901, and, on the other hand, the "great conversion" of the 1906 revenue, where Stringher's previous experience with Luzzatti emerged in his efforts to "carry out conversions capable of affecting both the value of the debt and the expenditure for interest and hence the public budget" (p. 165).

The paper on relations between Luzzatti and Keynes in the context of European economic reconstruction after the First World War is very interesting. The opportunity arose when Keynes requested an article on the consolidation of Treasury bills and other short-term securities to be published in the "Supplements for the Reconstruction of Europe" which the *Manchester Guardian Commercial* had commissioned from him. Luzzatti, who had previously written a review of the book *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, accepted the invitation; the 1907 crisis had convinced him that the world had to be considered as "one vast unit", and that believing in the utility of ordinary business may result in "the belief that there is a brotherhood of mankind". In the note that he sent, which was published in the "Supplement" on 27 July 1922, Luzzatti points out that excessive use of the floating debt was

one “of the most serious and dangerous mistakes” he was forced to make because of Italy’s onerous deficit due to the huge war debts. However, even in a situation which was hardly reassuring, the, by then, elderly Venetian senator, with his great competence and authority, managed to end on an optimistic note: “Italian national finances have shown an alarming deficit no less than four times since 1864. Italy has succeeded in coping with the deficit no less than four times. And so, why should the country not succeed this time?”.

The last paper analyses Luzzatti’s interpretation of the text Roberto Cessi prepared on the “Scansadori alle spese superflue”. Luzzatti’s comment is in the *Proemio* of the book *La regolazione delle entrate e delle spese*. The “Scansadori alle spese superflue” were three elected magistrates who, from the second half of the sixteenth century, had the task of supervising all the offices of the city and the mainland, with the power to eliminate unnecessary expenditure. Luzzatti draws from this the lesson that “this reparative work must be carried out not only, in cases of large-scale dissipation but also in small-scale squandering” and, above all, in a “dangerous item: petty expenses”.

I conclude with this quotation from a document that Pecorari rightly emphasises at the end of his book. It is confirmation that good and scientifically-sound books on economic history can come only from constant, systematic research on the sources, studied with painstaking philological accuracy, an approach that Pecorari takes very seriously.

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MARCO ZAGANELLA, *Dal Fascismo alla DC. Tassinari, Medici e la bonifica nell’Italia tra gli anni Trenta e Cinquanta*, Siena, Cantagalli, 2010, pp. 272.

The issue of “continuity in discontinuity” is one of the more delicate subjects of history in countries which have experienced the twentieth-century political regimes generally described as Fascist. It is a subject which, in the period, coined by Karl Dietrich Bracher as the “ideology era”, has been used as a political weapon by historians, especially in Italy and in Germany, as is borne out

by a famous book by Rolf Badstübner,<sup>1</sup> the historian of the German Democratic Republic, and by the works of Claudio Pavone<sup>2</sup> in Italy. In the last decade studies on continuity that are no longer governed by political and ideological aims have been published: they have dealt with two aspects of the topic, on the one hand, supplying a valid contribution to reconstructing the profile of figures, who belonged to certain categories of the elite,<sup>3</sup> and on the other, paying attention to the economic policies adopted in the 1930s and highlighting those elements of continuity seen in the reconstruction and the economic boom period.<sup>4</sup>

Marco Zaganella's book straddles both currents of thought: he deals with "continuity in discontinuity" in the specific field of agricultural policies during the transition from the Fascist regime to the Republic in Italy. He does not merely point out a continuity in the presence of certain key figures in Italian agricultural policy in the 1930s and the 1950s, but he also analyses the common definition of the total redevelopment policies that were implemented in the period at issue. The book revolves around the figure of Giuseppe Tassinari (1891-1944), who has hitherto been mentioned by historians only for having been one of the candidates to lead a new state, which was to have guaranteed the continuity of the alliance between Italy and Germany after Mussolini was removed on 25 July 1943. Using unpublished documents, kept for the most part in the archive of the Accademia of the Georgofili in Florence and in Giuseppe Tassinari's private archive, Zaganella traces Tassinari's entire academic and political career, which culminated with his appointment first as Undersecretary and then as Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, in the second half of the 1930s.

According to Zaganella, Tassinari's work left a profound mark, to the extent that he finds unacceptable the theory of a monolithic Fascist agricultural policy, hinging on the figure of Arrigo Serpieri and characterised by a ruralist-

<sup>1</sup> *Restauration in Westdeutschland 1945-1949*. (West Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1965).

<sup>2</sup> Starting with "La continuità dello Stato. Istituzioni e uomini" in E. Piscitelli et al., *Italia 1945-1948. Le origini della Repubblica*, (Turin, Giappichelli, 1974), pp. 139-289.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Norbert Frei, *Karrieren im Zwielicht. Hitlers Eliten nach 1945*, (Frankfurt, New York, Campus Verlag, 2001) and Giuseppe Parlato, *Fascisti senza Mussolini. Le origini del neofascismo in Italia, 1943-1948*, (Bologna, il Mulino, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Simone Misiani, *La via dei "Tecnici". Dalla RSI alla ricostruzione: il caso di Paolo Albertario*, (Milan, Franco Angeli, 1998), and Rolf Petri, *Storia economica d'Italia. Dalla grande guerra al miracolo economico. 1918-1963*, (Bologna, il Mulino, 2002).

conservationist tendency, opposed to the industrialising tendencies of the regime, which research carried out by Piero Bevilacqua and Mauro Stampacchia sustains.<sup>5</sup>

Zaganella is of the opinion that Fascism harboured two different ideas of development and that they corresponded to two different trends of the regime's economic policy. The first idea (defined as "liberal" from an entry in Giuseppe Tassinari's *Diari*) referred to Serpieri and was distinctive, because it proposed a full redevelopment programme, based on the initiative of the landowners (who were traditionally averse to investing in the modernisation of their estates, especially in the areas of southern Italy with their large estates) and was devised as a standard for the whole country (which was, in fact, made up of many different agricultural situations). The unsatisfactory results of this policy led to a change in direction on the part of the regime in 1935, concomitant with the launching of a policy of autarky which, by reinforcing state intervention in the economy, was to promote the industrialisation of Italy. In this context, Zaganella's book takes its place alongside the already-mentioned books by Misiani and Petri, and the books by Alexander Nützenadel and Giovanni Farese, which highlight this change in Fascist economic policy in the second half of the 1930s, using methods which would be taken up again in the post-war period.<sup>6</sup>

Zaganella deliberately describes Giuseppe Tassinari's second definition of redevelopment as "social-autarchical", because it aimed to change both social and production systems in rural areas. This was to be achieved by means of decisive state intervention in certain areas with large estates, which were to be converted into many smallholdings owned by peasants, thereby supporting the transition from an extensive to an intensive economy. In these areas, the implementation of the reform was not delegated to privately-owned syndicates, but to state land settlement bodies which, because of the by then acknowledged "social function of property", had the power to expropriate. The bill on the division of the large estates in Sicily, which was passed on 2 January 1940,

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Mauro Stampacchia, *Ruralizzare l'Italia! Agricoltura e bonifiche tra Mussolini e Serpieri, 1928-1943*, (Milan, Franco Angeli, 2000).

<sup>6</sup> Alexander Nützenadel, *Landwirtschaft, Staat und Autarkie: Agrarpolitik im faschistischen Italien. 1922-1943*. (Tübingen, Max Niemeyer, 1997), and Giovanni Farese, *Dare credito all'autarchia. L'IMI di Azzolini e il governo della economia negli anni Trenta*, (Naples, Editoriale Scientifica, 2009).

epitomises this second idea of redevelopment. This was the model that a group of technical experts advocated in the debate on agricultural reform in the post-war years. Their leader was Giuseppe Medici, a former pupil and close collaborator of Tassinari's, who, in the post-war years, went on to become Chairman of INEA, *Istituto Nazionale Economia Agraria*, and a Christian Democrat senator (later on, in the 1950s, he was Minister of Agriculture). Correcting the original formulation of the bill, which envisaged standard intervention for the whole of Italy, Medici asked and obtained that the reform be applied only in certain specific areas, and by the land settlement bodies: thus in 1950 three measures were drafted, regarding Sicily, Calabria and the abolition of large estates.

The emphasis Zaganella places on the agricultural policy of the second half of the 1930s and on the "assault on the large estates" highlights another important aspect: Fascism's acknowledging that there was a "Southern Italian issue" – an economic and social issue in Southern Italy. It is an aspect which, trapped in Serpieri's redevelopment programme, has not been clearly defined by historians until now. By granting priority to intervention in the areas with large estates, especially in Southern Italy, Tassinari paved the way for what in the post-war years was to become the "extraordinary intervention" in Southern Italy, and which was also devised with the aim of promoting the modernisation of agriculture and its connection to Italy's industrialization process.

The book also contributes to discrediting the myth that Italian economists were isolated during the Fascist period. Zaganella examines Tassinari's international relations, showing that he was highly thought of outside Italy, first and foremost as a scholar. In the scientific world, this reputation was due to the fact that he had been one of the first people in Italy to use mathematical and statistical analysis as instruments in economic research. This was something that Sigmund von Frauendorfer had already pointed out in his study *Agrarwirtschaftliche Forschung und Agrarpolitik in Italien. Entwicklung vom 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*<sup>7</sup>, which stated that the agricultural school Giuseppe Tassinari founded in Bologna differed from Arrigo Serpieri's, despite the fact that Tassinari had been a student of Serpieri's. It was Tassinari's

<sup>7</sup> Berlin, Paul Parey, 1942.

interest in statistics that led to his being appointed one of the first members of the Econometric Society in the United States and to his contacts with the scientific sector in Germany. For their part, some German university professors, who were involved in starting research on territorial planning (*Raumforschung*) were very interested in the Italian plan for comprehensive redevelopment: this was how Tassinari and his pupils (especially Perini and Medici) came into contact, first with the scientific circles and then with the political circles of Nazi Germany. Zaganella analyses the relations between Tassinari and Konrad Meyer Hetling, the founder and director of the *Reichsarbeitsgemeinschaft für Raumordnung* (Group of Research on Territorial Planning), set up as part of the *Reichsstelle für Raumordnung* (Government Agency for Territorial Planning). These contacts soon spread from the scientific sector to the political sphere because Tassinari, Meyer (a university professor and a senior officer of the SS) and Herbert Backe (another leading figure in agriculture, who was at the same time an SS officer, Secretary of State and then Food Minister) all held both academic and political positions.

In investigating these relations the book enters a sphere which is more purely historical, and in part, takes up what Renzo De Felice has already argued regarding the hypothesis of a technical government led by Tassinari which the SS recommended to Hitler after Mussolini's resignation and especially after the announcement of the Italian armistice on 8 September 1943. With regard to these events, the unpublished documentation consulted by Zaganella throws some light, for example, showing that the SS continued to be in contact with Tassinari, even after the Italian Social Republic was set up and right until his death (21 December 1944), despite the fact that Mussolini had decided to exclude him from any position in the Salò government. From this passage it transpires that Tassinari and Mussolini had differing opinions in their relations with the Germans, in particular in their last conversation on 26 October 1944. Indeed, the episode indirectly suggests that the relations between the Italian Social Republic and Germany should be regarded as more complex than historiography has hitherto demonstrated.

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