

ATLANTE LUISS 2005. *Quattro scenari per il futuro*, Luiss University Press, 2005, pp. 341.

The Luiss *Atlante* brings together lecturers, scholars and international experts from different cultural traditions who exchange their ideas on topics of world-wide importance. As Luca Cordero di Montezemolo, the President of Luiss University, points out in the Preface, these topics enable us to trace a map of the critical state of today's world. This edition of the *Atlante* presents the contents of the four seminar-scenarios created in four lectures by internationally-famous scholars, followed by the comments from some lecturers at Luiss University. The scholars have dealt with the general subject of globalisation and the future, using four scenarios: 1) religion and ideology; 2) territorial dismemberment; 3) the middle classes and the managerial classes; 4) broken worlds.

In the Introduction, Sebastiano Maffettone writes about the methodological and theoretical aspects of governance, i.e. the political and cultural control of globalisation. As Maffettone points out, globalisation is an opportunity both for a more equal distribution of our planet's resources and – equally important – for the defence of personal freedom, and, lastly, as an opportunity for the ever-delicate and complex relationships between different cultural traditions (p.24). We are faced with a major challenge because globalisation is moving at two speeds: economic and technological globalisation on the one hand and its social and support infrastructure on the other. Secondly, but no less importantly, Maffettone reflects on the ethics of international relations based on human rights and built on the recognition that there are different ways of constructing local identities.

In the first scenario, Daryush Shayegan (*25 Years After the Iranian Revolution*) presents some thoughts on the "Islamic republic". The key point in his writings is the "ideologisation of religion" and the contradictions inherent in the definition of an "Islamic republic". When the imperial régime was overthrown, the *Ulema* had total power, radically changing the nature of Shiitism: it "was no longer a religion searching for an eschatological transfiguration, but a government which acted "as though" what had to happen in the future had already happened; as though – in other words – the Islamic republic had anticipated the Messianic event expected at the end of time. It is true that the religious officials have never explicitly declared that they had taken such a step, but it was evident that we were face-to-face with a real reversal of outlook" (p.55).

In the second scenario, Bertrand Badie (*The Crisis of the State and the End of Territories*) brings to the reader's attention a theoretical revolution, formulating the hypothesis that "a certain form of protest politics, which considers power a target to attack and no longer a principle of order, has gained currency, causing the classical theory of "hegemonic stability" to waver to such an extent that it is being replaced by the hypothesis of a "hegemonic instability" (p.102). Badie analyses the political concept of "territory" and the political demands of ethnic groups, the motivations of secessionist projects and the great economic transformation that is breaking up all the national frontiers in an obvious march towards the global market; the regression of the nation state contributes very obviously to the yielding of traditional power. "The United States' impotence in the face of the civil war in Somalia or in Liberia, and the entire international community's impotence in the face of the genocide in the Great Lakes region of Africa are some of the numerous examples of this growing disparity between resources and ability" (p. 107). The processes of regionalisation bring the same symptoms and probably comparable effects. The invention of the European Union is connected to the defeat of power: a defeat which may be attributed to the discovery of the disasters of a political-military competition which, over the centuries, has set the powers of the old continent against one another, reaching its height during the Second World War".

This picture is completed by Giuseppe Di Taranto's detailed analysis (*Towards a Systematic Globalisation*). He begins by examining globalisation (of markets and knowledge) in a historical perspective and then goes on to look its present forms (the new information technology, the global financial system, the international production system based on competitiveness and on transnational enterprises, in theory anomalous in a competitive market). As has been pointed out, "the term globalisation has meaning as an overall concept for systems and interactions of global importance which can be described in real terms. It is not an autonomous process to be considered as an unrestrainable historical movement and as an objectively inevitable political coercion. Because it is such a broad concept, we must be beware of breaking it down to the essentials, and we must remember that even great macroprocesses are always the result of the *actions* of the individual and the collective. Global relationships are built, maintained, transformed and destroyed by states, by enterprises, by groups and by individuals; they are the object of clashes of interest and of political

decisions; they produce winners and losers – but the same holds good for the destruction of global systems”¹. The problem is the governance of globalisation, when there are different population trends in different areas of the world and when technology comes into being autonomously; this can give rise to processes that transform the paths to catching up and convergence into relentless polarisation. “But this too,” concludes Di Taranto, “is globalisation” (p.148).

In the third scenario, T.W. Pogge (*Poverty and Human Rights*) carries out an analysis to discover which conditions of poverty are a violation of human rights. Freedom from extreme poverty is one of the most crucial issues for mankind. It is impossible to know for sure which of our decisions have an effect on the populations of poverty-stricken countries and what exactly these effects are. Pogge writes: “It is not possible to know this because, by reverberating at a global level, the effects of my economic decisions mix with billions of decisions made by other people, thereby rendering impossible the attempt to isolate the appraisal of *my* decisions compared with all the others taken as a whole. This is also impossible *ex post* as, for example, in attempts to determine how things could have turned out if people had acted differently” (p.165). Paolo Savona completes the picture (*The Managerial Class and Poverty*) with his critique of Pogge’s approach to the problem of poverty which is free from the ideological or religious influences that are generally found in this subject. Savona stresses ethics i.e. the moral aptitude of wealthy countries to make themselves responsible for solving the problem of poverty.

In the last scenario, Felipe Fernandez-Armesto (*New International Scenarios*) expresses his concern about the American supremacy in that it is without precedent in history. He argues that “if globalisation (the biggest-ever process of agglutination) succeeds in projecting a common culture in most of the world, there is no doubt that it will not sweep away existing cultures: the common culture will exist among the other cultures, and will be able to hide them but not to eliminate them” (p.281). According to Dario Antiscrì (*Globalizing Open Society*) “we do not know beforehand the results that will emerge from the interrelations between different cultural identities. We do know, however, that globalisation intensifies and fosters these interrelations” (p.290).

¹ J. Osterhammel, N.P. Petersson, *Storia della globalizzazione*, (Il Mulino, Bologna 2005), p. 126.

Lastly, Roberto Panzarani (*Conclusion. Globalization and Enterprises*) states that globalisation is the keystone to changing economic and social life in developing countries. It is clear that opening up to a global economy entails a rapid destabilisation of the existing models of labour and social structure, sudden threats to traditional cultures and religious faiths, a more rapid inflation of expectations, greater incentives to corruption and easier access to the destructive potential of modern armaments. The challenge is to create a market in which the supply and demand for labour can be adjusted to people's knowledge. One approach would be to take the legacy the history of Europe has bequeathed us and to use it on a *glocal* scale which "in terms of the market, succeeds in creating a chain of values between our *genius loci* and the immanence of globalisation" (p.308).

Donatella Strangio

"La Sapienza" University, Rome

M. LESCURE, A. PLESSIS (eds), *Banques locales et banques régionales en Europe au XXe siècle*, Albin Michel, pp. 430.

As was pointed out in a book (Frediano Bof, Maurizio Pegrari, Cristina Nardi Spiller, Paola Dongili, *Il credito fondiario delle Venezie nel Novecento*, Verona, 2002) reviewed some time ago in this *Journal* (2002, 2, pp.451-454), from the nineteenth century the operations of regional banks were "crucial" for promoting local growth, and were just as important in contributing to national growth. Their elasticity enabled them to experiment and they financed both public works and other new sectors in the economy.

Hubert Bonin, the author of one of the articles in this book, has recently addressed the subject again (*Esquisse d'une histoire de l'esprit d'entreprise en France des années 1780 à nos jours*, in "Cahiers du GRES", 2005, n.15), showing how the local bank "s'intègre fortement au mouvement de financement des entreprises modernes et même constitue des réseaux de collecte d'épargne en faveur des investissements industriels". For Bonin the lending banks (rural credit banks, mutual loan societies, co-operative banks) were "*plus combattives et mobiles parce que non engluées dans des jeux institutionnels classiques*".

This volume, edited by Lescure and Plessis, follows the other book published in 1999 which deals with the position of local banks in nineteenth-century France, opening a new research agenda centred on specific economic entities which had been neglected because of their fragmentation and the scattering of archival sources.

Lescure and Plessis stress the great diversity of local banks and the difficulty in defining them: "*En fait, la banque régionale et locale se compose d'un ensemble disparate d'établissements très différents, d'abord par leur taille, allant des plus modestes banquiers locaux, opérant sur un territoire très restreint, jusqu'aux plus puissantes des banques régionales ; ensuite par leur statut, puisque on y trouve des firmes privées, mais aussi des caisses coopératives ou des établissements semi-publics*". (Carole Christen-Lécuyer's recent book, *Histoire sociale et culturelle des caisses d'épargne en France, 1818-1881*, Paris, 2004 makes interesting reading on this subject.)

Lescure and Plessis are convinced that historians should go beyond commemorative publications, bankers' testimonies and the role of banking regionalism in politics, and examine critically the positive contribution these banks brought to the development of enterprise. Of course, Lescure and Plessis have no option but to call upon *une histoire des banques locales et régionales en Europe dans une perspective résolument "comparatiste qu'il conviendra de développer par la suite"*.

This further contribution to the "*Mission historique de la Banque de France*" consists of fourteen articles divided into three sections (*Banques locales et banques régionales en Europe au XXe siècle*; *Banques locales et banques régionales en France: l'évolution générale*; *Banques locales et banques régionales en France: études du cas*) which, as well as providing an in-depth study of individual cases, place the subject in a general context of economic development and seek to explain the survival or the decline of local banks from the point of view of production development.

The articles analyse the significance of the financial support provided by local banks, both before and after the rise of the big central banks, in particular the way banks became rooted in local society: "*C'est de leur encastrement dans le territoire que les banques locales et régionales tirent l'essentiel de leur force. Il leur faut l'enracinement et l'encastrement dans les sociétés et les économies locales. Les relations de longue durée établies entre les banques décentralisées*

et leur clientèle, la structuration de ces relations par de multiples réseaux de solidarité économique et sociale, constituent de puissants facteurs de réduction des coûts d'information et de contrôle de l'aléa moral". Indeed, in his article (*Les banques populaires et les banques locales en France entre les deux guerres*) Alain Plessis criticises the fact that historians have paid too much attention to the competition between central banks and local banks, and have neglected the relations between, on the one hand, local and regional banks, and, on the other, co-operative banks; these latter, in fact, after the Second World War "*ont considérablement développé leurs opérations, surclassant les petites banques locales en voie de disparition devenant des concurrentes redoutables pour les banques régionales et même pour les grandes banques de dépôts nationalisées*".

In fact, the two analyses of the development of medium-sized and small banks in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which were crucial centuries for industrial development and for the shift towards concentration both in industry and in banking, lead to the same conclusions: the operations of local banks had positive effects: "*allongement de l'horizon stratégique des firmes lié à la relation de long terme entre banque et industrie, vigueur et régularité de l'investissement des firmes soutenues par les banques, renouvellement du tissu industriel grâce au rôle des banques régionales dans le lancement d'entreprises et d'activités nouvelles*".

As the authors and editors are keen to point out, the process was not homogeneous because the medium-sized banks continued to put up resistance, not only by themselves but often merging to create more powerful banking groups, or else moving their operations from the private sector to the public sector.

There are, however, some contrary trends which are interesting: for example, since the beginning of the twentieth century England has seen the highest levels of concentration, with an early decline in local banks: "*la disparition des banques locales est l'un des facteurs qui expliquent la chute des économies et des communautés régionales en Angleterre. Elle accéléra le processus de désindustrialisation et le déclin industriel qui constituent peut-être le plus grand problème posé aujourd'hui à l'économie et à la société britanniques*" (Francesca Carnevali, *Les banques régionales en Angleterre*). This brings the reader back to the importance of the "*encastrement dans le territoire*" and the consequent growth of small and medium-sized enterprises. This is pointed out again in the

article on Italy and the dualism of North-South development (Giuseppe Conti, Giovanni Ferri, *Banques locales et soutien au développement décentralisé des PME en Italie*): "Pour conclure, nous pouvons affirmer que le relationship banking, typique des banques locales, peut apporter des avantages ou bien des contraintes selon la structure socio-économique de la région; dans l'Italie du Sud, caractérisée par une dotation de capital social plus faible, les résultats négatifs l'emportent".

Ludovica de Courten

Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities

Archive General Management, Rome

J.A. NIETO SÁNCHEZ, *Historia del Rastro. Los orígenes del mercado popular de Madrid, 1740-1905*, Visión Net, Madrid 2005, pp. 165.

The study of living standards has always had a prominent place in historians' research agenda and during the last decades interest in this subject has increased because of the development of a line of enquiry which attempts to analyse the course of economic history from the aspect of demand. As far as Spain is concerned, research carried out in the last decades has produced some solid evidence to suggest that during the early modern period the living standards of most of the country's population worsened markedly². This seems to confirm an old, widespread assumption concerning Spanish economic history, and poses the question of how the poorest sections of the Castilian population managed to protect themselves against the deterioration of their living conditions. In this context, there is little doubt that the development of a network of informal street markets and fleamarkets in Spanish cities should be considered as one of the most widespread strategies adopted by those sectors to protect themselves against this trend, and this justifies the interest of a book such as the *Historia del Rastro*, where the reader will find a short, concise history of one of the most important Spanish fleamarkets: Madrid's famous *Rastro*.

² For the case of Madrid see, by example, J.M López García, *El impacto de la Corte en Castilla. Madrid y su territorio en la época moderna, Siglo XXI*, pp. 271-ss.

The origins of what later became the *Rastro* are to be found in the spontaneous streetmarkets (*baratillos*) which developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in some public squares of Madrid, where the poorer sectors of the capital could find cheap second-hand products. During the progressive impoverishment of the city's population in the seventeenth century, the *baratillos* experienced a period of growth which aroused the opposition of the well-established merchant guilds of the capital, and so, in the middle decades of the eighteenth century, the *baratilleros* were expelled from the central districts of the city to its southern area. As Nieto Sánchez explains in part two of this book, this marked the birth of the *Rastro*. The southern part of the city possessed a clear identity in Madrid's urban geography. Together with the town slaughterhouse, it harboured a vast range of economic activities, oriented towards supplying the needs of the capital, such as tanneries and looms. At the same time it was inhabited by a lower-class, impoverished population suffering from the consequences of widespread and cyclical unemployment, and so was particularly well suited to be the place of a fleamarket such as the *Rastro*.

According to the author, from its early days (chapter 3) the *Rastro* showed some of its most enduring characteristics. Firstly, the city's merchant guilds maintained their old hostility towards this market. With the sale of second-hand clothes being prominent in the list of the *Rastro's* activities, it is not surprising to find that after 1740 one of the *Rastro's* greatest enemies was the guild of those merchants who specialized in the same trade (*prenderos*). This was closely related to a second aspect. As we may easily assume, the activities of the dealers in the *Rastro* were frequently illegal, so the relationship between them and the town authorities were always difficult. In spite of its original reluctance, the local authorities came to tolerate the *Rastro's* existence, because they recognised that they could not deprive the impoverished local population of the possibility of having a place to buy cheap products: they therefore adopted a pragmatic attitude, tolerating and controlling the *Rastro* to a certain extent through a system of licences.

Just like other aspects of the political and economic life of Madrid and Spain as a whole, the *Rastro* felt the consequences of the dissolution of the *Antiguo Régimen* and the subsequent birth of the new liberal, bourgeois society during the central decades of the nineteenth century (chapter 6). With a well-known series of reforms, the activities of the leading sector of the merchant bourgeoisie

of the capital saw a marked expansion, and some of the new methods of marketing and sales which developed in the big European cities during this period were introduced to satisfy the demand of this privileged group of the local population. Of course, the situation of the lower classes of the city's society was exactly the opposite. Their living standards remained low and this explains why the *Rastro* survived in the new situation. As before, the prevalence of poverty among the inhabitants of the city overcame the reluctancies of the city's new liberal authorities and forced them to tolerate the existence of the *Rastro*, although they maintained the traditional aim of controlling it, this time through a more open licence system and stricter rules regarding trading hours (chapter 7).

In his *Historia del Rastro*, J.A Nieto Sanchez draws our attention to an institution which until now has mainly attracted the interest of writers and novelists. This is surprising when we consider that there is no doubt about the importance of this street market for the domestic economies of the poorest part of the city's population. This book, therefore, fills a gap in our knowledge of Madrid's economic and social history and helps us to understand better how the biggest part of its inhabitants managed to survive in a period characterised by a continuous fall in their living standards. As the author remarks, far from being a local phenomenon, the *Rastro* should be considered on a par with other famous streetmarkets and bazaars of some European capitals, such as Portobello market in London and Porta Portese in Rome. The spontaneous birth and development of this kind of market was one of the solutions adopted by the lower classes of the urban population in Europe in circumstances very similar to those experienced by Madrid's population. As the book clearly shows, the local authorities always regarded with deep suspicion the little world which evolved around the *Rastro* and the fact that the small dealers and peddlers who gravitated around it played an active part in nearly every movement of popular protest, subsistence revolts and political revolutions (chapter 9) should have reinforced their suspicions. Taking this into account, then, it is easy to understand the ambiguities and distrust which until present times have characterised the relationship between the town authorities and the *Rastro*.

José Ignacio Andrés Ucendo
University of the Basque Country

G.OEPFEN-DOMSCHIKY, *Kölner Wirtschaftsbürger im Deutschen Kaiserreich*. Eugen Langen, Ludwig Stollwerck, Arnold von Guilleaume und Simon Alfred von Oppenheim, Schriften zur rheinisch-westfälischen Wirtschaftsgeschichte Band 43, herausgegeben von der Stiftung Rheinisch-Westfälisches Wirtschaftsarchiv zu Köln, Köln, 2003, pp. 498.

Like several other scholars, Hans-Ulrich Wehler raised the important question as to what role Germany's bourgeoisie played in the rise and decline of the *Kaiserreich*. There is widespread agreement among historians concerning the impact of an educated upper middle class (*Bildungsbürgertum*). In contrast, according to Wehler, Germany's business élite (*Wirtschaftsbürger*) never managed to exert a similar influence on public affairs because they were systematically denied political functions by the Hohenzollern Court, the Prussian nobility and the military establishment. Failing to obtain social acceptance as a group, the *Wirtschaftsbürgertum* adopted the habit of imitating aristocratic lifestyles and intermarrying with the nobility. An all-out feudalisation of Germany's entrepreneurial class, however, did not take place. Hartmut Kaelble's research suggests that the sons of German business tycoons tended to become businessmen themselves, and to marry non-aristocratic women.

Gabriele Oepen-Domschky examines a small but important segment of Imperial Germany's economic élite: the entrepreneurial bourgeoisie of Cologne, the largest city in the Prussian Rhineland province. Merchants, industrialists and bankers from the Rhineland made important contributions to German economic development between 1815 and 1871. They continued to do so under the Kaiser. Oepen-Domschky studies the lives and careers of four Cologne-born entrepreneurs who, apart from being born in the same town and inheriting considerable wealth, had very little in common.

Eugen Langen was born into a Protestant family in 1833. He studied chemistry and engineering to qualify for jobs in both his father's businesses, one a sugar refinery, the other a steel mill. When he opened his own sugar factory (Pfeifer & Langen) in 1870, he invented and introduced a new technology for sugar-lump production. Later, he teamed up with N. A. Otto and G. Daimler to produce industrial motors fuelled by atmospheric gas. In 1856, he married Henriette Thurncysen. The couple had seven children. Some

time after Henriette's unexpected death, Langen married a niece who had helped him run his widower's household. She bore him six more children. Langen died in 1895.

The other Protestant bourgeois studied by Oepen-Domschky, Simon Alfred von Oppenheim (1864-1932), was the son of Eduard von Oppenheim, a Jewish convert and third-generation private banker (Sal. Oppenheim jun. & Cie.). In his early years, Simon Alfred showed little inclination to step into his father's shoes at the bank. In the middle of his legal training at Berlin's Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität he took a break of several months to join the aristocratic Prussian hussar regiment. After graduation from university in 1885 he served for a year as a junior barrister and then left Germany for a trip around the world. He met his future wife, Florence Hutchins of New York. Oppenheim joined the family business in 1886 and was made a partner in 1893. From the beginning he took a strong interest in colonial enterprises such as the Chinese Shantung-Railroad, the German-Asian Bank of Shanghai, and the German East-Africa Company (of which Eugen Langen was chairman in the late 1880s). In his colonial endeavours, and also in financing industry in Germany, Sal. Oppenheim & Cie. worked closely with the Disconto-Gesellschaft, and later with A. Levy, private bankers. It should not come as a surprise to anybody that in the course of the Second World War Simon Alfred supported Germany's sensational plans for the annexation of European and overseas territories. He lived long enough to witness German humiliation at Versailles, post-war inflation, and Hitler's early electoral triumphs.

Arnold von Guilleaume, owner of the spinning mill Felten & Guilleaume, was 65 years old and almost bankrupt when Hitler came to power. Founded in 1826, Felten & Guilleaume had expanded rapidly during the First World War, when the firm produced nets to protect infantry trenches, anchor ropes and other equipment for the military. However, in the subsequent years of the Weimar Republic, Arnold and two of his sons engaged in speculative operations and lost much of their family fortune. The rise of the Roman Catholic Guilleaume dynasty had begun in the early nineteenth century.

In 1873, Arnold's father Franz Carl built a modern cable factory in the village of Mühlheim (the *Carlswerk*). It soon became the largest employer in the Cologne region. None of Franz Carl's children went to university. Young Arnold was trained in rope making on the job, while attending lectures at Cologne's

engineering college. Later, he worked in the UK as an unpaid assistant for the machine-building firm of Lawson in Leeds. Like Simon Alfred Oppenheim, he travelled extensively to the Americas and to Asia. His marriage to Ella Deichmann, the daughter of a wealthy Cologne banker, was arranged by the Deichmann and Guilleaume families. At the palatial home they owned, Ella and Arnold used to entertain illustrious guests, among them several Hohenzollern princes. In contrast to his glamorous private life, Arnold von Guilleaume's professional ethics were those of a Puritan. For many years he shared an office room with an elderly director of Felten & Guilleaume, and took pride in never missing a workday at the factory.

Ludwig Stollwerck (1857-1922) was a dedicated workaholic like Arnold von Guilleaume, with whom he also shared the Roman Catholic faith. As an entrepreneur he was mainly concerned with marketing and advertising the products of Gebr. Stollwerck, Cologne, a chocolate and sweet factory he and his brothers owned jointly. Over the years Gebr. Stollwerck built an impressive network of international business partnerships (with, *inter alia*, the Sunlight works of William H. Lever), and acquired production sites in Britain, the US, and Austria-Hungary. Around 1877, Ludwig became aware of the potential of a new invention: the automatic vending machine. Slot machines for the sale of Stollwerck sweets were introduced soon thereafter in North America and in England. In 1895, Ludwig brought together a group of investors to set up the *Deutsche Automaten-Gesellschaft* (DAG). With this brandname, vending machines, as well as phonographic and cinematographic equipment, were manufactured and sold. Ludwig Stollwerck had an unpleasant childhood, influenced to a large extent by the two bankruptcies of his father, Franz. He did not receive academic training, but spent two years in London instead, assisting Gebr. Stollwerck's local representative. His intimate knowledge of Britain had an impact on his political convictions. When Anglo-German diplomatic relations began to deteriorate about 1900, he repeatedly urged German politicians to abstain from bellicose rhetoric. The First World War, according to Ludwig Stollwerck, was a terrible mistake which he hoped would be corrected so that mutually profitable business between Germany and the Anglo-Saxon world could be resumed.

Oepen-Domschky's work is a highly valuable contribution to the history of the urban upper-classes in Germany, not only because of the wealth of detailed

biographical information it contains, but also because it refutes the notion that Cologne's *fin-de-siècle* entrepreneurial elite shared a group mentality.

Peter Berger

University of Economics, Vienna

J.P. PRIOTTI, *Bilbao et ses marchands au XVIème siècle. Genèse d'une croissance*, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2005, pp. 464.

In 1967 Pierre Chaunu spoke of Seville's supremacy in a Spanish and Atlantic trading system, with "*un effet de domination qui n'a pas d'équivalent ailleurs au XVIème siècle*" (p.78): Bilbao was a second-class port, and its merchants were mere middlemen. In the same year Michel Moret described Seville as "*le marché unique où l'Europe peut venir échanger ses produits contre ceux de la région et surtout ceux d'Amérique*" (p.79). However Jean Phillippe Priotti writes that, besides some well-established historiographical dissertations, there is a real *méconnaissance* regarding Bilbao (p.15, note 11). To prove his point he presents his examination of a great number of unpublished documents, offering a very fine selection of sources.

The book is divided into three sections. The first section (*Prémices d'une réussite*) – a tapestry of Bilbao's economy – is about the "*conditions d'émergence de son économie portuaire*" (p.17): in short, *bierro*, *rias*, *fueros*. Iron is Bilbao's main resource: according to an ancient, metaphorical portrayal, the city "*se fundò sobre el bierro*" (p.45). Ports along the coast from Guipuzcoa to Galatia and from Brittany to Norway have often made use of *rias*, inlets protected by a narrow entrance dotted with outer ports: this is the case of Bilbao's *ria* which creeps up to the Bay of Biscay. Lastly, the *fueros* – traditional legal and commercial privileges – reflect the special relationship with the Crown, and not only the Spanish Crown (during the Hundred Years' War, the English and French monarchs used the ships of Biscay). And yet demography and human presence mattered: Bilbao had a population of only 5,000 at the end of the sixteenth century (London had 90,000 inhabitants and Seville 100,000), but its population density was twice the average of the Spanish kingdoms; some 15 per cent of the population were involved in trading: "*antes de ser villa era ya Bilbao plaza de comercio; sus*

moradores fueron antes negociantes que ciudadanos; pagaron derechos mercantiles antes que contribuciones municipales" (p.23). This interplay of natural, legal and human resources reminds us that economic growth can never be fully understood without taking into consideration non-economic factors.

Then there were the "natural industries": shipyards and arms-manufacturing. "*Violence maritime*" is illegal in piracy, but legitimate in war; just as where privileges are concerned, State demand (acting as a constant pressure on technology) "*a pu aussi constituer un atout à part entière dans le développement de l'économie, en particulier pour celle de Biscaye*" (p.34). The first section of the book gives us a complex picture of Bilbao's economy, emphasising the different sectors' interactivity: vessels and arms were needed for fishing and for transporting goods; yards were needed for building ships and manufacturing arms; the State and its violence (arms, ships) were needed to guarantee trading.

The second section (*Un Carrefour commercial européen*) throws light on the relations between Bilbao and Nantes, Bordeaux, Rouen, London, Antwerp and Bruges: cloths, textiles and corn were imported from these trading centres, and raw materials (Castille wool and Basque iron) were exported; French and Flemish manufactured goods were re-exported to England, to the Castilian hinterland and the coast of Andalusia. Trade with the Netherlands and Castille was one of the mainstays of the European economy (the north-south *brassage*). But Bilbao boasted not only merchants: it had a market with goods to be consumed by the local population and goods to be redistributed by land and sea. No port can be analysed without taking into consideration *son arrière-pays*: Navarre, Old Castille (Burgos and Medina del Campo) and New Castille (Toledo and Madrid). "*Està aquí todo Navarra, Saragosa y Toledo*" a merchant proudly wrote (p. 116). If we exclude precious metals and consider both the American and the European markets, the value of Bilbao's trading was somewhere between 75 and 100 per cent of that of Seville. The change came about around 1570 (the discovery of the New World, the Wars of Religion, Flemish supremacy, the war with England and with the Netherlands). But it would be wrong to overemphasise the political factor: what really counts is the decline in consumer centres. Their relative decline was followed by "*un recentrage*" with an increase in workers in the insurance sector. But Bilbao was never to be "*ni un grand centre financier ni un place de change d'envergure*" (p.61).

The third section (*Emigration, réseaux d'affaires et pouvoir*) examines ports

“not as places but as people” (p.165). The merchants (Diego da Echavarrri, Simon de Ruiz) were enmeshed in family networks of relatives and social contacts: privileged relationships with the State – which were of mutual advantage (“*la croissance des Etats modernes n'a pu se faire sans le recours à l'emprunt*”, p.274)³ – and with “nations”, consulates in embryo. These networks gave rise to a Basque diaspora, the cause of which has often been attributed solely to the pooriness of the land. Carlo Maria Cipolla wrote : “A people's vitality of its very nature tends towards diaspora”⁴. Priotti annotates that the Basques “*sont au centre du Siècle d'Or et non pas à sa périphérie*” (p.160).

Priotti does not use the terms “centre” and “periphery” fortuitously. In Immanuel Wallerstein's theory about the world economy, the development of capitalism is ascribable to several centuries of siphoning surplus from peripheral regions (precious metals in America and agricultural products in Eastern Europe). In the international division of labour, Spain was a conveyor belt. Priotti re-evaluates this theory, at least in time and space, if not in its elegant, formal soundness: Bilbao contributed to European development and Spain was not merely a conveyor belt; the important but not crucial role of colonial trade came late and “*remet en cause les grandes lignes de la formation de l'économie-monde*” (p.161); at least until 1560-1570 the European system was not disturbed by the discovery of America. Interpretations differ but are complementary: the global-systemic – holistic – approach *à la* Wallerstein favours the whole rather than the parts; Priotti's firstly regional, and then global approach, favours Bilbao and its merchants.

Giovanni Farese

Luis Guido Carli, Rome

A. RONCAGLIA, *The Wealth of Ideas. A History of Economic Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. XIV-582.

A broader and enriched English edition of an Italian text (*La ricchezza delle*

³ See also J. Macdonald, *A Free Nation Deep in Debt. The Financial Roots of Democracy*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford 2006), pp. 564.

⁴ C.M. Cipolla, *Storia economica dell'Europa pre-industriale*, (Il Mulino, Bologna 1988), pp. 304.

idee, Laterza Editori, Rome-Bari, 2001), *The Wealth of Ideas* retraces in detail the phases of the history of economic thought. It is without doubt an accurate and often fascinating reconstruction which, because of the abundance with which the subject matter is treated, is much more than a simple handbook or a collection of monographs on each author: it is, in fact, a general review and re-interpretation of the evolution of economics from its origin until the present day.

The title obviously calls to mind Adam Smith's masterpiece, *The Wealth of Nations*, to show both the centrality of the classical tradition in economics, and of Smith's book in particular, and the diversity of the perspectives which have been the hallmark of, and continue to be the hallmark of, economic thought. Within this diversity of perspectives, Roncaglia finds two principal lines of enquiry which have confronted each other over the centuries.

The first line of enquiry, which dates to the classical era, was that of a subjective concept or, as Piero Sraffa called it, a one-way street, which leads from the availability of scant resources to the satisfying of human needs and desires. After the golden period of classical economy, from Adam Smith to Karl Marx, this idea began to gain currency again, with the so-called "marginalist revolution" at the end of the nineteenth century. Its analysis is centred on the equilibrium that results from the interaction of demand and supply, of desires and resources: the market is, in fact, the meeting point, in time and space, between demand and supply, and has as its paradigm the old medieval fair or, more recently, the stock exchange. In this context, the value of a commodity is an indication of its scarceness in relation to consumers' preferences. Income distribution also has a particular role in price theory, in that it is determined by confronting the demand and supply of production factors.

The second line of enquiry appeared with the development of capitalism. Attention is centred on the division of labour and on the conditions in which a market economy can survive and progress over a period of time, guaranteeing every production sector both the recovery of the means of production and subsistence used and, by means of sufficient profit, the incentive to continue to produce. The market is therefore understood as a network of trade flows which binds together the different sectors of the economy. This is an objective concept or – to use again an image much-loved by Piero Sraffa – one characterised by a circular flow of goods; the value of commodities is related to the difficulty of production and the distribution of profits, and this latter depends on a set of factors that are not related to price theory.

Surplus is what remains of the economy's overall production once the initial means of production and of subsistence have been restocked. And surplus lies at the heart of the distribution theory, as it does at the heart of the accumulation theory. The principal advocates of this theory were William Petty in the seventeenth century, Adam Smith in the eighteenth century and David Ricardo at the beginning of the nineteenth century; in the second half of the twentieth century, the idea was repropounded by Piero Sraffa, but it has lost ground again in the last decades, giving way to a kind of "single idea" based on the equilibrium between demand and supply. Even theories which are alternatives to today's prevailing school of thought, such as evolutionism and Keynesism, are interpreted as analysing changes in the equilibrium or deviations from it.

Over the years the two lines of enquiries have confronted each other and have developed a wide range of positions, including some attempts, such as Alfred Marshall's, to reconcile objective and the subjective factors in the analysis of costs and demand. There are also some illustrious heterodox scholars, such as Joseph Schumpeter and John Maynard Keynes, who do not really adhere to one particular camp. The most recent developments show a fragmentation in research which partially obscures differences between the two basic concepts; however, there are difficulties with the subjective approach that stem, on the one hand, from irrelevant abstract theorisations about general economic equilibrium and, on the other, from the errors of simplified versions which alone produce results of a somewhat heuristic value. Hence Alessandro Roncaglia's conclusion in favour of a revival of the classical school and, more generally, in favour of a return to discussion about the development of economic policy rather than the refining of abstract analysis, as a contribution to the international debate on the foundations of economic theory.

It ought to be pointed out that the book also has the merit of drawing the reader's attention to several Italian economists who are generally not very well-known to Anglo-Saxon readers, as in the case of Antonio Serra whose *Breve trattato delle cause che possono far abbondare li regni d'oro e d'argento* was published in Naples in 1613. Although in this book Serra refutes the theory that monetary policy and the functioning of the production and trade sector should be separate, there is an extremely modern analysis of the mechanisms that govern the balance of payments (this, among other things, earned Serra the consensus of many subsequent scholars who went so far as to consider him the founder of modern

economic science). In this respect, Alessandro Roncaglia follows in the wake of Joseph Schumpeter when Schumpeter wanted to react to Anglo-Saxon cultural imperialism with a deliberate – and sometimes rather provocative – re-evaluation of English-speaking authors.

Gaetano Sabatini
University of Rome III

G. Russo (ed.), *L'avvenire industriale di Napoli negli scritti del primo '900*, with a preface by Giuseppe Galasso, Naples, Guida, 2004.
F. S. Nitti 1903 – D. De Masi 2005, *Napoli e la questione meridionale*, Naples, Guida, 2005.

The decision on the part of the publisher Guida to republish Nitti's book and the collection of papers edited by Giuseppe Russo seems an appropriate one. As specialists are well aware – although perhaps the wider public are not so well aware – both these books are classics in the literature on twentieth-century Naples. Both books are obligatory reading for anyone who wants to analyse the economic and social history of the province of Naples. At the same time, however, as Domenico De Masi's continuation of Francesco Saverio Nitti's book points out, these two publications are very important for understanding the main problems which still afflict Naples. And so these two books have considerable scientific value and are still very relevant today. In this review, we wish to focus on several important aspects. One fact is immediately obvious: both books deal with the early twentieth century. Despite being a relatively short period, these years were highly significant in the history of Naples. And the books reflect a climate of genuine concern and active planning regarding Naples at the beginning of the twentieth century. These were the years in which the gap *vis-à-vis* north-west Italy – the so-called "industrial triangle" – was widening continually, and so the people who cared about the future of Naples and Southern Italy observed that an economic policy based solely on liberalist laws resulted in increasing disparities rather than reducing them.

The solution appeared to be industry, in particular big industry. Thus building large production plants took on a role of social catharsis, to be understood, not only as a material purification, but also and above all as a moral purification.

Consequently, people came to be convinced that by offering permanent and skilled work for the large number of unemployed, new lifestyles could be transmitted: "A richer and more educated working class," wrote Nitti – "a more intelligent and, above all, less impoverished middle class will render impossible forms of abuse which have hitherto been deemed almost inevitable" (p.19). The plan was thus to promote a new ethic, unanimously approved and adhered to, which would break with all that was old and corrupt – in both a material and a moral sense – in a sizeable part of the city's social structure.

This reflection had some important consequences: as may be inferred from the title of Giuseppe Galasso's preface to Giuseppe Russo's book, the incentive was so great that it gave rise to "the first (and best) *special law* for Naples", in which theory and practice, an analysis of the real situation and a more general line of economic policy converged significantly. This first special law was so important that it influenced the passing of subsequent special legislation. It is not fortuitous – Galasso goes on to note – that in later years constant reference was made to the legislation drawn up in the early years of the twentieth century.

Nitti's work is so important in that he was passionate about the destiny of Naples and more generally of Southern Italy, and their need to undergo a general change. In the dedication to Giustino Fortunato, he writes that *Napoli e la questione meridionale* "is the result of study but it is also the result of passion and across the arid figures you will feel that no research was done without love". At the same time, however, he calls upon the inhabitants to be responsible: "Southern Italy must above all be educated" (p.17). And so external support had to be accompanied by a regeneration of Southern Italian society from within.

Special legislation was the instrument which the State should use in its operations to support private enterprise. Tax incentives were to be given priority: lower taxes and exemption through the creation of free zones could contribute to boosting private investments in production activity. Alongside tax incentives there were credit incentives, as seen in loan facilities purely for setting up new industries. But Nitti also believed that a sizeable part of state support should be used to exploit endogenous resources to encourage autochthonous development: without the ability to create the basic conditions which would enable Neapolitan enterprise to act autonomously, it would be virtually impossible to give it long-term prospects. And the objective of self-sufficient development could be reached

only by means of a massive supply of low-cost energy ("the conquest of cheap power"), in particular hydraulic energy, exploiting to the maximum the resources easily recoverable in the Southern Italian countryside. The change, however, had to be driven by industry: in this, Nitti was a product of his times in his unremitting wish to link the region's progress to industrial growth.

In conclusion, what was the outcome of what was attempted at the beginning of the twentieth century? Two articles help to provide an answer: the first is by Pasquale Villari, written in 1910 with the title *Primi risultati dei provvedimenti per l'incremento industriale di Napoli* ("The First Results of the Measures to Increase Neapolitan Industry"); the second article, based on the long-term, is by Domenico De Masi and is entitled *Il palazzo e la tribù* ("The Palazzo and the Tribe"). Villari had been studying Naples for some time and his article is imbued with a growing optimism: "And I say straightaway that the very first impression in Naples was excellent" (p.330). The by then elderly Southern Italian scholar had returned to his native Naples to see if there was any sign of a break with the past, and he was convinced that the shift to industry and better education were beginning to bear fruit. However, Villari did not get carried away by facile, generalised optimism: and so in the last lines of his article the problems to be faced emerged clearly and, unfortunately, are still very topical: the camorra, rubbish in the streets, the poor living conditions in the *vicoli*, prostitution. And these are the problems on which De Masi dwells, taking the reader up to the present. De Masi divides the history of Naples into the first, the second and the third phases of industrialisation, and, at the end of his article, he refers to the deindustrialisation process and post-industrial Naples. The picture that emerges is, on the whole, not inspiring. The other side of the coin – abandoning industrialisation, symbolised in the final closing-down of the Italsider plant at Bagnoli – has not given rise to very promising scenarios. On the contrary, deindustrialisation has brought with it a sense of bewilderment and confusion, of substantial inability to plan for the city's future. De Masi wonders whether the shift from the pre-industrial to the post-industrial is possible. He calls for a renewal of organised creativity in which the imaginative and the practical go together. But creativity is also – as Paolo Sylos Labini has recently pointed out – a critical return to the classics and these two books we have reviewed are rightly included in the most authoritative literature about twentieth-century Naples. They cannot not be

discarded if future developments are to be planned appropriately and in continuity with the city's history and identity.

Francesco Dandolo

"Federico II" University, Naples

U. S. SOËNIUS (ed.), *Bewegen – Verbinden – Gestalten. Unternehmer vom 17 bis zum 20 Jahrhundert. Festschrift für Klara van Eyll zum 28 September 2003*, Schriften zur rheinisch-westfälischen Wirtschaftsgeschichte Band 44, hrsgg. von der Stiftung Rheinisch-Westfälischen Wirtschaftsarchiv zu Köln, Köln 2003.

This commemorative volume in honour of Klara van Eyll, for decades a member and then Curator of the Rheinisch-Westfälisches Wirtschaftsarchiv at Cologne, is based on a symposium held on 13 September 2000.

In his introduction, Ulrich S. Soënius gives a curriculum vitae of Klara van Eyll and a survey of her main field of scientific historical research: biographical research on entrepreneurs, concentrating on their families or dynasties and on their institutional and social contexts. The following 23 papers – most of the contributors are connected with Klara van Eyll's area of research – highlight different facets of the history of entrepreneurs in the broader context of economic history from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, dealing almost exclusively with German entrepreneurs. Only in J. Gerlova's paper is a Czech entrepreneur the subject of research.

The contributions are arranged in four sections, according to subject matter. In the first section, three essays deal with methodological issues concerning how to secure and handle sources regarding the entrepreneurs' life and achievements. The following five essays make up the second section: research on groups of entrepreneurs regarding some historical-sociological aspects of the "*Wirtschaftsbürgertum*", such as socio-economic networking, an economic and social sense of duty, and the capacity for economic adaptability during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in German cities such as Cologne, Düsseldorf or Dortmund. The third section consists of only two essays which concentrate on some vastly neglected aspects of biographical research on entrepreneurs: the importance, the role, the socio-economic character and the success of female

entrepreneurs. These two essays, historical gender-studies as it were, depict an interesting aspect: some women became entrepreneurs by accident, for example when widowed and with dependent children who were heirs to their deceased father's enterprise. The fourth section contains thirteen essays concerning the biography and the achievements of some creative, innovative and successful (male) entrepreneurs during the last three centuries. Using the biographical method, the contributors portray the achievements of some notable entrepreneurs (both managers and owners of companies are examined) within their company, in the industries in which their companies were involved, in market evolution, and in their contribution to the development of their native town or region. Despite a certain heterogeneity, these case studies are instructive and exciting to read; some of the entrepreneurs analysed are known only to specialists. This is another positive factor of the book, together with the excellent scientific quality of the essays and the sources used. This commemorative volume ends with a survey of Klara van Eyll's scientific works and of all the books edited by the Rheinisch-Westfälisches Wirtschaftsarchiv.

Helmut Braun

University of Regensburg

J. STREB, *Staatliche Technologiepolitik und branchenübergreifender Wissenstransfer. Über die Ursachen der internationalen Innovationserfolge der deutschen Kunststoffindustrie im 20. Jahrhundert*, Akademie Verlag, Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte Beiheft 4, Berlin 2003.

For many years the question of the degree of competitiveness of the German economy has been keenly debated in Germany. In order to secure a long-term strong position for the German economy in a context of global competition, experts called for very marked improvements in productivity. Reactivating German capacities and making innovations were identified as the key to solving the productivity problem. However, for more than a century Germany had a reputation of having significant inventive potential and of being able to market the inventions as successful innovations. What sort of management decisions were taken in innovative firms and in economic policy from the late nineteenth

century until about the 1970s in Germany? And what sort of decisions were taken during the last decades of the twentieth century? Did German firms improve their "innovation capital" (scientific research combined with "practical" knowledge using scientific discoveries, exchanging discoveries and know-how between firms in one industrial sector and between different industries and so on) or did some German firms ignore the slow depreciation of their formerly-accumulated innovation capital?

In his book, Streb analyses the development of German chemical companies which dominated the markets worldwide in former times. Beginning with aniline dye chemistry, German firms such as BASF, Bayer and Hoechst soon practised Schumpeterian diversification in manufacturing pharmaceutical products and in artificial fertilisers. After the first world war, the development of synthetic rubber and benzene substitutes was the subject of research and product development: each individual company followed its own programme of invention and innovation. Once the chemistry of synthetic rubber (in Germany products called "buna") was understood, some other synthetic materials (some classes of plastics) were discovered and developed for practical uses.

During the first half of the twentieth century, German chemistry firms laid the emphasis not only on scientific research but also on some important economic aspects: the founding of the I.G.-Farben company inspired confidence in the exchange of scientific results and technological knowledge between the chemistry and the mechanical engineering sectors. The exchange of similar applicable knowledge was facilitated by regional clusters of both chemistry and mechanical engineering sectors in Germany. This system of "specific national common knowledge", concerning both science and the application of innovations, was an effective barrier against imitation by foreign rivals. Nevertheless, by the mid-1920s and during the 1930s I.G.-Farben co-operated with the US firm Standard Oil (New Jersey) in the field of synthetic rubber manufacturing. Despite a common interest in developing and selling synthetic rubber and in founding a joint company (Joint American Study Company), the exchange of knowledge failed: both firms, as latent rivals, tried, on the one hand, to reduce the uncertainties concerning the complex innovation process, but on the other hand, both firms tried to improve their own innovation capital.

After the second world war, German chemistry firms used their accumulated innovation-capital for growth in the field of Buna-technology by developing

some new plastics. With market conditions and cheaper foreign firms offering different sorts of plastic, the now independent firms which arose from the dismantled former I.G.-Farben practised an intensive exchange of knowledge and sought information about the practical needs of their plastic-manufacturing customer-firms. This co-operation was profitable for both industries: the chemistry firms which produced plastics offered plastic-manufacturing firms a problem-solving package of sometimes simple and sometimes specialised plastics, always with special knowledge about how to process them. This package could be sold at a higher price. However, during the 1970s, stagnant plastic-markets became more competitive and several high-priced packages of goods produced by German chemistry firms were replaced. A new kind of customer and new, technologically highly-specialised plastics could not stop the decline of the plastics-manufacturing industry as an important customer of the plastics-producing industry.

In the context of the innovating firms' aim to reduce the uncertainties of a specific innovation process, Streb discusses the role of government demand regarding (above all military-useful) innovations. However, the setting of government incentives to support innovation processes was a crucial area of policy. In his conclusions, Streb makes recommendations about government policy shows the limitations of the technology policy. Streb states that diversity in competing innovation projects and the guarantee of protection by patents are essential requirements. When starting complex and capital-intensive innovation processes, the government should support demand by guaranteeing fixed prices for a fixed period and by purchasing fixed quantities of the new goods.

Analysing his findings regarding historical innovation processes relating to prominent German chemical firms, Streb also makes recommendations about company management. In order to reduce uncertainty during the period of planning innovation processes, management should use communication channels to external sources (information-brokers like scientists, banks or consultants) with information about new technological developments and new needs. In initiating innovation processes, management should use the accumulated innovation capital of their own firm and of external sources such as customers: innovation processes should follow the path of innovation introduced by the firm, use internal economies of scale concerning knowledge (Schumpeterian

diversification) and co-operate with well-established customers, fulfilling their demands when manufacturing innovative goods. A firm's accumulated innovation-capital, together with a well known brand-name, also discourages quick imitations of innovations by other firms: if the distribution of a new product is not established with an external network, Streb identifies only minor disadvantages for the second mover compared to the first mover in the market. Even firms with a disadvantageous location are able to produce innovations if these firms combine standard goods with exclusive new knowledge in a practical, useful, innovative, problem-solving package for consultant customers. In general, every firm should control its innovation capital to prevent depreciation.

Streb's analysis and discussion of the history of innovation processes in the German chemistry industry, its transition into a synthetic rubber-producing industry and then into a plastics-producing industry with its connection to the plastics-manufacturing industry, is firmly grounded in modern industrial economic theory. To sum up, a copy of Streb's clearly and fascinatingly written book should be presented to politicians who advocate the building of a better environment in order to stimulate innovation activities.

Helmut Braun

University of Regensburg

GIOVANNI VITOLO (ed.), *Città e contado nel Mezzogiorno tra Medioevo ed Età moderna*, Laveglia, Salerno, 2005, pp. 350.

This book is the first publication of the Interuniversity Centre for the History of Southern Italian Towns in the Middle Ages. The Centre, founded in 2000, brings together historians with different backgrounds who work at the Federico II University, the Istituto Orientale and the Second University in Naples. The Centre's principal objective is to study the cities of Southern Italy in the Middle Ages, understood in the broadest sense, i.e. the period between late ancient times and the early modern age. The book contains most of the papers presented at the seminar held in Naples in April 2003 in the premises of the *Società di Storia Patria*. The seminar was part of the nation-wide project "The Organisation

of Lands in Italy" (co-ordinator Giorgio Chittolini), and aimed to highlight research on a subject which has obvious connections with the sectors with which the Intersarsity Centre is concerned.

The aim is without doubt ambitious: to reconstruct the dynamics of the relationship between town and countryside in a geographical area which, according to the most authoritative publications on the subject, is, on the whole, peripheral. In fact, an established historiographical tradition ascribes prime importance to central and northern Italy on this issue, thereby granting this area not only the right of primogeniture but also a sort of exclusiveness. The aim of the organisers was therefore to verify whether, in the case of the southern towns examined, the inability of the community "to move out into the surrounding area and to perform a role of leadership and control" (introduction by G. Vitolo, p.5) could be questioned.

The spread of the Commune began in the Angevin-Aragonese era, developing on the one hand a certain bargaining power with the Crown, and on the other, the power to impose its jurisdiction on the surrounding countryside.

But which were these settlements, where were they and, above all, how big were they? Giovanni Muto offers an answer: he believes that in the first decades of the sixteenth century the three provinces nearest to Naples – Terra di Lavoro, Principato Citra and Principato Ultra - boasted the largest settlements. In these regions were to be found one third of the towns, one quarter of all the villages in the Kingdom of Naples, two thirds of the towns and villages that had outlying hamlets, and, lastly, two thirds of the total number of hamlets. However, other areas also boasted towns of a certain importance: among these were Abruzzo Ultra and Calabria Citra whose history is closely related to two important cities, L'Aquila and Cosenza. Therefore, although best seen in the provinces nearest to the capital, Naples, the phenomenon had spread to almost all the historical regions of the Kingdom of Naples.

In fact, the various papers leave the reader with the impression that the history of the evolution of the town/country relationship is a lively one, with a strong element of the unexpected. In particular, the case of L'Aquila, reconstructed very professionally by Maria Rita Berardi and Gaetano Sabatini in two separate papers, is crucial for understanding the causes – more external than domestic – of the tensions, uprisings and struggles to which the city and its surrounding countryside were subjected. Fausto Cozzetto analyses the case of Cosenza, and

shows that it was different from L'Aquila, although here, too, the relationship between the city and its surrounding countryside was particularly intense. Claudia Voltaggio's paper on Atri highlights other aspects: in particular, it shows that, although the southern towns were entities apart, they showed interest in – and sometimes imitated – patterns that were already established outside the Kingdom of Naples. Magdala Pucci writes about Salerno and its surrounding area, dwelling upon some terminology found in her research documentation. Capua is another interesting case: from its early days, this city did all it could to extend the borders of its surrounding countryside. The case of the Sorrento area is different again: the Angevin period saw an increase in the power of the *milites*, a social class half way between the old aristocracy *di seggio* and the middle class. Two cities in Apulia are examined: Lecce and Taranto. Carmelo Massaro points out that, in Lecce, authority was ensured by its central position connected with its function as a county town. A similar situation is seen in Taranto: according to Anna Airò, the city/country relationship was asymmetrical: “the city's political importance is a specific gravity which makes its effect felt not only in denial but also in controlling resources” (p.258). Lastly, there is a paper on Valva, a city which “seems never to have existed” (p.27).

The papers published in this book emphasise the legitimacy of the question at the heart of the seminar. The reader is left with the overall impression that the history of feudality can be enriched by documented in-depth research on the development of the relationship between the town and its surrounding countryside. There is no longer a drastic confrontation between the fief and the town, but a new interpretation which brings these two elements together in order to throw new light on the history of Southern Italy, the need for which has been greatly felt, especially in the last decades.

Francesco Dandolo

“Federico II” University, Naples

