

Local government and social movements in Bologna since 1945.

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy

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Local government and social movements in Bologna since 1945.



SUMMARY

Local government and social movements in Bologna since 1945.

PhD dissertation submitted by Simon Frank Parker, Magdalene College, Cambridge, March 1992.

This dissertation is a case-study of the post-war administration of Bologna and the social and economic movements which developed in the province after 1945. The study describes the evolution of a distinct political and economic culture under the leadership of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) which has been called the 'Bologna model' of administrative politics. As well as charting the growth of the model and its subsequent variations, the dissertation analyses the political function of the model and the contradictions which have emerged from its application over the last 40 years.

The dissertation begins with a resumé of the debate on Emilian Communism and the significance of Emilia for the rest of Italy and Europe. In chapter one, the share-croppers' and farm-labourers' campaign for land reform is examined in the context of the alliance strategy outlined by the Communist leader, Palmiro Togliatti, in 1946. The remainder of the chapter deals with the industrial labour movement, the cooperative movement and the peace movement of the late 1940s and early 1950s. The chapter ends with an exploration of the role played by popular culture in the formation of political identity.

Chapter two deals with the Communist administration of Bologna from 1945-1960 focusing in particular on early forms of popular participation in municipal affairs and on the development of town planning. Chapter three follows the key administrative election of 1956 when Giuseppe Dozza defeated the challenge of the former vice-secretary of the DC, Giuseppe Dossetti, whose radical vision for urban life (the Libro Bianco) was to become a key point of reference for future municipal reforms. In chapter four, the thesis

focuses on the transformation of the Bologna PCI and the regional conference of 1959 which marked a turning-point in the life of the Communist federation and in the PCI's administrative practice. Chapter five once again focuses on the local administration and sets the political debate in the context of the changing economic structure of the province during the 'economic boom.' The decentralisation of local government and the establishment of a system of neighbourhood councils is described in part two, while part three is dedicated to an examination of radical planning and the conservation of the historic centre.

Chapter six returns to the study of social movements during the student and worker mobilisations of 1968 and the 'Hot Autumn' of 1969-1972. The chapter considers the relationship of the PCI to the new social movements and describes how the Communists and their collateral organisations were able to maintain their hegemony within the workplace and civil society. Chapter seven concludes the thesis by reviewing the 'Emilian model' in the light of 1968 and assessing the most severe challenge to the PCI's authority during the Movement of '77. The chapter ends with a section on the recovery of the 'model' and recent initiatives in decentralisation. In the final section, a 'historico-culturalist' approach to the study of urban politics and social change is recommended as the basis for future research in this area of political sociology.

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I owe a great debt of gratitude to my research supervisor, Paul Ginsborg, who inspired my interest in Italian politics and whose enthusiasm for this research project has never wavered. His help, advice and support, as ever, has been way beyond the call of duty, and over the last four years I have come to value his friendship as much as his professional judgement.

I have several people to thank for making my adjustment to Italian civil society less onerous than it otherwise would have been. In particular I would like to thank Angela Liberatore and Marco Lorenzini (and Marco's parents 'Athos' and 'Felsina') for their boundless hospitality and generosity. The staff of Radio Città del Capo indulged my musical tastes and even allowed me to inflict them on the public of Bologna. I would also like to thank Franco Berardi for introducing me to the ideas and personalities of '77 and for supplying me with useful material.

The staff of the Gramsci Institutes of Rome and Bologna were extremely patient and helpful, but I would particularly like to mention Fausto Sacchelli, head librarian of the Istituto Gramsci Emilia-Romagna, for generously photocopying endless pages of documents and for chasing-up useful references.

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From London and Milan, John 'Macintosh' Foot, kept me sane with the occasional tape, postcard and glass of grappa, Simon Jarvis provided a bed, tea and sympathy, and Frank

Parker stoically proof-read the manuscript at very short notice and in record time.

I would like to thank the Economic & Social Research Council for awarding me a major state studentship, and the United Kingdom Erasmus Council for a 'free mover' grant to study at the University of Bologna. I am grateful to The British School at Rome for awarding me a grant in aid of research and to Magdalene College and the Faculty of Social & Political Sciences for travel grants.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to Esmé Madill whose love, humour, patience, tolerance and support has meant such a great deal to me over these past five years.

P R E F A C E

Description of Sources.

A variety of primary and secondary sources were used for this study and in addition to citations in the notes, the main secondary references are contained in the bibliography.

Primary material divides into four categories:

(i) Official publications of the Comune di Bologna and other local authorities.

- Minutes of the Consiglio Comunale

- Minutes of the Giunta of the Comune

- Minutes of council committees and commissions

- Town plans and viability studies

- Reports specially commissioned by the Comune (e.g. on administrative re-organisation, housing, youth policy etc.)

- Periodicals published by the Comune, including 'Documenti del Comune', 'Bologna' etc.

- Statistical publications for internal and public consultation, budget proposals and internal discussion documents.

- Speeches of the mayor and councillors

- Personally conducted interviews with politicians and council officials

(ii) Party publications and documents¹

- Minutes of the PCI Bologna Federation [R,B]
- Minutes of the Comitato Regionale (Emilia-Romagna) of the PCI [R,B]
- Minutes of the Direzione Nazionale of the PCI [R]
- Minutes of the Comitato Centrale of the PCI [R]
- Local, regional and national conference proceedings of the PCI
- Election propaganda and policy documents of the PCI (Federazione di Bologna) and regional and national publications. [R,B]
- Personal archival material e.g. the Archivio Dozza. [B]
- Electoral and general publications of other political parties (especially the DC and PSD) including conference proceedings and policy documents. [B]

(iii) State records and documents²

- Ministry of the Interior reports from its prefects in Bologna
- Ministry of the Interior reports from the Chief of Police and the Commander of the Carabinieri
- Miscellaneous reports, documents and intelligence

¹ Sources are identified as follows: R=Istituto Gramsci Rome; B=Istituto Gramsci Emilia-Romagna.

² All held in the Archivio Centrale di Stato, EUR, Rome.

(iv) Press articles and general publications

- Reports of the local Communist press, La Lotta, Il Progresso d'Italia, L'Unità, Emilia, Rinnovamento etc.³
- National PCI publications, especially Rinascita
- Reports of the non-Communist or anti-Communist press, Il Resto del Carlino, L'Avvenire d'Italia
- National press stories which comment on Bologna, La Corriera della Sera, etc
- International press reports on Bologna
- Leaflets, posters, designs relating to electoral campaigns, strikes, and to social protests (1968, 1977)⁴

Graphs illustrating the incidence of political and trade union meetings in Bologna 1948-53 were collated from data in the prefectural records of the Ministry of the Interior.

I made extensive use of the library and archive of the Istituto Gramsci (Emilia-Romagna) in Bologna and the national Istituto Gramsci in Rome where the archives of the PCI which have been made available for public consultation are held. Research on the state's observations and dealings with Bologna's administrators, politicians and trade unionists was based in the Archivio Centrale di Stato in EUR, Rome where I consulted the files of the Interior Ministry. Additional material was consulted in the Biblioteca di Storia Moderna e Contemporanea (Rome) and the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale (Florence).

³ Newspaper articles only appear in the footnotes, but periodical and review articles are also contained in the general bibliography.

⁴ Mostly contained in the archive of the Istituto Gramsci Emilia-Romagna (AIGER).

The primary material on the PCI locally covers the period from the Liberation to the early 1950s while the national party documents in some cases have been consulted for the years up to 1956. Certain government sources were available for the period up to 1960. Unfortunately strict embargoes apply to more recent material in the archives of the PDS (the 'Democratic Party of the Left' - the new name for the PCI adopted at the Rimini Congress of March, 1991) and the Ministry of the Interior and for this reason the bulk of the primary sources dealing with the PCI and the state authorities is to be found in the chapters relating to the years 1945 to 1960.

The periodisation of most of the primary sources approximately corresponds to the era of 'mass' struggles which characterised Togliatti's 'Partito Nuovo', up until the new style 'integrationalist' strategy which the Bologna PCI adopted after 1959. I have tried to compensate for the lack of 'insider' sources on the PCI and the state authorities in the latter half of the thesis by including non-institutional accounts and interviews where appropriate. Documents, bulletins and leaflets from the student movement and 'new left' groups in Bologna have been used extensively in chapter six on the social movements of 1968-1970 and chapter seven on the Movement of '77.

The Comune di Bologna's own library and archive proved to be a rich source of material, and I was fortunate to be given access to internal memoranda and reports. Several interviews were conducted with politicians and officers who worked or are still working in the comune and I attended a number of election meetings, neighbourhood meetings, and local party gatherings from which I gained useful insights into the attitudes and feelings of the local population as well as the activists and administrators.

Kind friends also provided me with material which they had collected themselves, particularly on the movement of '77. But perhaps the greatest resource was being able to discuss Bologna's distinctive political culture and its fascinating patch-work of radical traditions over a glass or two of San Givovese in a local osteria. The impressions I gained from these encounters cannot be easily footnoted here, but I hope that what appears below is suffused with the enthusiasm and curiosity which infected me when I began this research in the foggy winter of 1988.

*Party which resulted from the merger of the PSI & PSDI in 1966 which dissolved in 1969.

PSDI	Partito Social-Democratico Italiano	Italian Social Democratic Party
PSIUP	Partito Socialista di Unità Proletaria**	Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity
PRG	Piano Regolatore Generale	General Town Plan (or Structure Plan)
PR	Piano Regolatore	Regulatory Plan
RF	Rifondazione Comunista	Communist Refoundation (former PCI)
UDI	Unione delle Donne Italiane	Union of Italian Women
UIL	Unione Italiana del Lavoro	Union of Italian Workers

** Splinter party from the PSI, formed in 1964 and dissolved in 1972.

Other terms

Aggiunto del sindaco	Deputy mayor
Artigiano	Artisan or craft worker. Because of the taxation and social security advantages, many small-business owners are registered as 'artigiani' even though they have no recognisable craft skills.
Assessore	Departmental director and member of the council executive or <u>giunta</u> .
Bracciante	The American term 'farmhand' comes closest to the original sense of the word in Italian. However this does not capture the casual nature of the employment (contrast with the 'salarati'). Braccianti are often hired for the day or by the hour. They have the most precarious economic existence of all the peasantry.
Capoluogo	Bologna is both the <u>capoluogo</u> of its province and the Emilia-Romagna region.

A note on usage.

Throughout the dissertation I have preferred the capitalised form of Communist/Communism when describing or referring to the Italian Communist Party, its adherents, its strategy etc. Often the PCI is abbreviated to 'the Party' where it is obvious that the Communist Party is being discussed. When referring to 'communism' generically as an ideology and movement guided by the principles of Marxism I have not used the capitalised form. Although I have tried to be as precise as possible, there are times when either term would be appropriate (such as when referring to the PCI and the international communist movement collectively) and so readers should not treat this as a hard and fast rule. I have adopted the same method with the Italian Socialist Party and it can be assumed that 'Socialist' or 'Socialists' are members or supporters of the PSI, PSIUP or PSU.

The expression 'socialcommunist' refers to the 'popular front' alliance of the PCI with the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) which continued formally and informally until Aldo Moro's 'centre-left' administration of 1964. In the case of Bologna, however, the Communists ruled in coalition with the Socialists throughout most of the post-war period and the term is here used to describe the mass associations and the municipal administrations led by the PCI and PSI.

Declaration

Finally, I would like to state that this dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration.

Glossary of TermsAbbreviations

ACC	Atti del Consiglio Comunale (Bologna)	Proceedings of the City Council (Bologna)
ACLI	Associazione Cristiana dei Lavoratori	Italian Association of Christian Workers
ACS	Archivio Centrale di Stato	Central State Archives (EUR - Rome)
ANPI	Associazione Nazionale Partigiani d'Italia	National Association of Italian Partisans
APC	Archivio Partito Comunista	Communist Party Archives
ARCI	Associazione Ricreativo di Circoli Italiani	Association of Italian Recreational Clubs
CCD	Commissione paritetica per lo studio dei problemi di decentramento	Joint Council Commission for the Study of Problems of Decentralisation
CCFL	Comitato Centrale sulla Finanza Locale	Central Committee on Local Government Finance
CdL	Camera del Lavoro	Labour Chamber
CdT	Comitato della Terra	Land Committee
CGIL	Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro	General Confederation of Italian Labour
CISL	Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Liberi	Italian Confederation of Free Trade Unions
CP	Consulte Popolari	People's Councils
CRAL	Circolo Ricreativo Assistenziale Lavoratori	Workers' Recreational & Welfare Centre
CTM	Consigli Tributari Municipali	Municipal Rating Councils
DC	Democrazia Cristiana	Christian Democracy
FGCI	Federazione Giovanile Comunista Italiana	Italian Young Communists Federation

GM	Giunta Municipale	Council Executive
GPA	Giunta Provinciale Amministrativa	Provincial Administrative Executive
IACP	Istituto Autonomo Case Popolari	Autonomous Institute for Public Housing
IdF	Imposta di Famiglia	Family Tax
ICAP	Imposta sulle industrie i commerci, le arti e le professioni	Tax on industry, commerce, arts & professions
INA-Casa	Istituto Nazionale Abitazioni	National Institute for Housing
M.I.Gab.	Ministero dell'Interno Gabinetto	Office of the Ministry of the Interior
M.S.	Movimento Studentesco	Student Movement
MSI	Movimento Sociale Italiano	Italian Social Movement (Neo-fascist party)
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano	Italian Communist Party
DT	Due Torri	Electoral name of PCI in Bologna
FDS	Partito Democratico della Sinistra	Democratic Party of the Left (former PCI)
PDUP	Partito Democratico di Unità Proletaria	Democratic Party of Proletarian Unity
PIC	Piano Intercomunale Comprensoriale	Municipal District Plan
PLI	Partito Liberale Italiano	Italian Liberal Party
FRI	Partito Repubblicano Italiano	Italian Republican Party
FSI	Partito Socialista Italiano	Italian Socialist Party
PSLI	Partito Socialista dei Lavoratori Italiani	Socialist Party of Italian Labour
PSU	Partito Socialista Unificato*	United Socialist Party

Coltivatore diretto	Direct cultivator or small-holder.
Comprensorio	District - often refers to the ensemble of Bologna and its neighbouring towns or to a topographical area (i.e. the plain or the mountain district).
Consigli di quartiere	Neighbourhood councils
Mezzadria	Literally 'half-sharer' in the crop. One of the most ancient forms of farm tenure where the produce is divided equally between the land owner and the farmer. However, it is unusual to find a neat 50:50 division and a more accurate description of this type of farming is 'compartecipazione' or co-division.
Quartiere	Literally 'quarter' - derived from the Roman perpendicular town division. Because the modern city no longer corresponds to this pattern, the term has been translated as 'neighbourhood'.
Salariate	A wage-labourer with regular employment who may or may not have accomodation provided by his employer.
Sindacato	Trade-union
Sindaco	Mayor

The province of Bologna.



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INTRODUCTION

Part I. Methodology.

1. The Study.

This thesis is the result of 15 months archival and fieldwork in Italy between January 1988 and March 1991 and a total of 3 years of study and research in Cambridge and London. My intention from the outset was not to write a narrowly historical, political scientific or sociological account of post-war society and politics in Bologna. I wanted, wherever possible, to learn from other approaches to the subject and to integrate that knowledge into the broader analysis of local administration and urban/rural political organisation. I have drawn on the work of a variety of professionals from architects and town planners, to economists and statisticians as well as social scientists working in the fields of anthropology, politics, sociology and social policy. Also journalism has been a particularly useful non-academic resource, but since, for too long, the only English translation of an investigation into Bologna's politics and society has been a work of straight reportage¹, I believe that a critical and scholarly appraisal of this important subject is long overdue.² In combining

¹ Max Jaeggi, Roger Mueller, and Sil Schmid, Red Bologna, Writers & Readers, London, 1977.

² A less well known and somewhat more cynical account of society and politics in Bologna is contained in John Ardagh's, A Tale of Five Cities. Life in Provincial Europe Today, Secker & Warburgh, London, 1979. Although Ardagh deliberately conveys a subjective impression of the city and its people, his description of the 'Communist

different theoretical and empirical approaches I hope to have avoided the main weaknesses in the existing literature on Emilian Communism which are characterised by an epistemological monoculture and the absence, or insufficient use, of historical and cultural analyses.

2. A definition of terms.

(i) Local Government.

The study of local government has traditionally been the domain of the political scientist interested in the analysis of representative democratic institutions. Because of this institutional frame, local government has almost invariably been regarded as a sub-division of the national state and the interchangeable use of the terms 'local government' and 'local state'³ reflects the Michelsian bias of the literature towards an 'iron law' conceptualisation of local administration.⁴ It will become clear to the reader that I favour a more elastic and porous concept of local government. The

bourgeoisie' provides an interesting insight into the local power élite.

³ In the English context, Cynthia Cockburn has made the strongest claim for seeing local government as merely an appendage to the national state with an imaginary degree of 'relative autonomy.' See The Local State, Pluto Press, London, 1986. This does not necessarily invalidate the usefulness of the term, however, particularly when a local authority is carrying out a statutory obligation such as the registration of births, deaths and marriages, the issuing of voting papers etcetera. In the Italian case it is also important to realise that the sindaco as well as being an elected politician is a state civil servant and therefore operates much more as an interface between central government and his or her local government than a council leader does in Britain.

⁴ Here I support Dunleavy's assessment that, '...institutional approaches have actually produced very little direct evidence about policy determination. Policies are studied or analysed by such approaches only in a casual and superficial way.' Patrick Dunleavy, Urban Political Analysis, Macmillan, London, 1980. p.165.

organisation and political direction of the local administrations which are the subject of this thesis have, I would argue, more normative than positive qualities in that they are institutionally flexible and respond to more than just bureaucratic routines. Given the numerous possibilities the giunte of the socialcommunist administrations had for 'bending the stick' in the direction of local autonomy I would question Zariski's assertion that 'regional and local units of government possess only such powers as the national government chooses to allow them.' Indeed a major argument of this thesis is that political power in the centre-periphery relationship was very far from being 'one-way.'⁵

In this dissertation, the primary local government institution which I examine is the Comune di Bologna. The comune is the most ancient form of representative government in Italy and it arguably remains the most important tier of sub-national government today.⁶ There are in all sixty communes of varying sizes in the Province

⁵ Zariski, R. 'Italy: The Politics of Uneven Development', p.117 cited in Tarrow, S. Between Centre and Periphery. Grassroots Politicians in Italy and France, Yale University Press, London, 1977, p.124.

⁶ The creation of regional governments throughout the whole of Italy in 1970 appeared to create an intermediate authority between city and town governments and the national state. As we see later, the battle for regional autonomy continues to occupy politicians on both sides of the political spectrum inspite of the devolution of major spending powers. The political role of the regions still seems to be only vaguely defined and the political parties have often found it difficult to organise themselves regionally. For a recent study of regionalisation in Emilia-Romagna see Leonardi, R. and Nanetti, R. The Regions and European Integration. The Case of Emilia-Romagna, Pinter, London, 1990.

A good example of the relative importance the PCI ascribes to the leadership of the regional capital as opposed to the region itself can be seen in the Communists readiness to trade the presidency of the Regione Emilia-Romagna for the mayoralty of Bologna after the April, 1990 local elections strengthened the positions of the Socialists. The fact

of Bologna as a whole, but I have chosen to concentrate on the administration of the city itself because the capoluogo is not only the capital of the province and the region, it also accomodates the head-quarters of the region's major finance and business organisations, the main trade union federations, the cooperative, artisans, and commercialists' organisations, together with the command posts of the Italian state; the prefecture, the questura, and the headquarters of the army and Carabinieri.

Where aspects of the provincial or regional administration have an important impact on the decisions of the local ruling faction in Bologna (or vice versa), these will be discussed and analysed. Similarly, social movement activity (especially during the period of reconstruction) is often concentrated more in the province than in the city, and in these cases the focus of the analysis will be on the smaller comuni and the social and economic groupings active outside the confines of the city itself. Obviously sub-communal forms of local administration such as the neighbourhood councils which are examined in detail in chapter five form an intrinsic part of the study of Bologna's local government as do quasi-autonomous local government organisations such as the health authorities and the consorzi for transport, public hygiene and water and gas.

(ii) Social Movements.

that the PSI was pressing for the poltrone of the sindaco suggests that the symbolic significance of the post was not lost on the Socialists either.

As Procacci shows, the importance of the commune in the social and political life of Italy has a long history. Referring to the rise of the commune in the middle-ages he writes, '...the attachment to one's own town, one's own small nation, was the banner under which Italian commune life developed. In a world where a man was defined more by the town he belonged to than by his class or social level, and no condition seemed worse than that of the bandit or exile, the man who had no homeland and no roots.' Giuliano Procacci, History of the Italian People, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1973, pp.28-29.

Much more difficult to classify and explain is the concept of a social movement. The very use of the term to describe social forces outside the direct and formal control of political parties and institutions brings with it a set of assumptions about social and political autonomy and the nature of political conflict which critics of the concept regard as normative, insubstantial and unrigorous. I do not have the space here to do justice to the complex debate on the nature and meaning of social movements, but for the sake of clarity I intend to adopt a definition of the term which I will employ as a short-hand for describing the organisations and associations which played an important part in the political and economic life of post-war Bologna.⁷

For the purposes of this study I intend social movement to mean an assemblage of individuals or groupings which acts in combination or separately to advance the interests of its members, or which seeks to represent civil society as a whole through the expression of a popular will or sentiment with the express aim of altering the status quo (social, economic and political) in favour of the movement's goal or goals. A social movement is the expression of a collective desire for change in the structure of society and/or social and economic relations. Social movements are also moral entities in the sense that they articulate a set of values and beliefs which derives from an understanding of justice, equity and freedom. The appeal to a wider ethical community and the representation of the movement's demands in terms of universal moral criteria is a defining characteristic of such social formations.

Unlike the organisations described above, groups or associations which are formed to defend the status quo or to improve their privileged position within the state and civil

⁷ Key texts in this debate are Alain Touraine's The Voice and the Eye. An Analysis of Social Movements, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981, Francesco Alberoni, Movement and Institution, Columbia University Press, New York, 1984. On Italy, John Low-Bear, Protest and Participation, Cambridge University Press, 1978; Robert Lumley States of Emergency, Verso, London, 1990; Alberto Melucci, Nomads of the Present, Radius, London 1989; and Sidney Tarrow, Democracy and Disorder, Oxford University Press, 1989.

society are treated simply as interest groups, since these organisations (such as agriculturalists' or industrialists' associations) generally have special and exclusive channels of communication with government and the national and local news media (which they often own). On the rare occasions when economically or socially privileged associations take direct action in defence of their claims, the objective has invariably been to restore this exclusive communication channel or to renegotiate the social contract agreed between the state and the socio-economic bloc which sustains it. If a group which previously belonged to the dominant or ruling economic or political establishment finds itself outside the new 'historic bloc', insofar as this association or organisation considers itself to be anti-systemic, it can be said to constitute a social movement (for example the monarchists after 1947 were anti-systemic politically, but were staunch defenders of the economic order and thus constituted a social movement only in a restricted sense).

Clearly, most of the social movements included under this definition will belong to the political constituency of the left, but this is by no means exclusively the case.

Catholic organisations such as *Azione Cattolica* and *ACLI* which militated for reform of economic and political policy would be included under this definition, as would the more recent expressions of Catholic evangelism such as *Comunione e Liberazione* and *Movimento Popolare*.

Trade unions present a particular problem because many economists and sociologists regard them as economic interest groups which act collectively on behalf of their members for improvements in wages and conditions and they are therefore not considered as political organisations in their own right. While accepting that the major function of a trade union is to advance the economic interests of its members, unlike in Britain and the United States, trade unions in Italy have been highly politicised and in virtually all cases have been established by political parties to defend the interests of the working class, not only against employers but also against the state

apparatus itself.⁸

Because fascism took such great care to crush independent trade unions and to stifle industrial unrest, the right to organise which was won back by the labour movement during the Resistance has been strongly defended by trade unionists on the political level as much as at the negotiating table. The fact that trade unions played such an important part in the protests and agitations which periodically immersed the Republic from the turbulent years of the De Gasperi/Scelba administrations to the heady days of the 'Hot Autumn' and beyond, means that any study of the relationship between social movements and the Communist administration of Bologna which did not include an account of the activities of rural and industrial trade union organisations would hardly be worth writing.

Similarly although the cooperative and artisans federations are also primarily economic organisations, their origins are to be found in the resistance to industrial and agricultural monopolists, and historically must be considered as oppositional to the economic and political system which emerged in the rest of Italy after 1947. Although such organisations have become powerful economic forces in Emilia-Romagna over the last thirty years, the cultural and political force of the PCI's economic collateral organisations has increased rather than diminished and their importance for this study cannot be understated. By including what might be seen as

⁸ Labour movements and trade unions are seen as crucial to the concept of social movement in the work of Anthony Giddens, 'Labour movements are contestatory associations,' he argues, 'whose origins and field of action are bound up with the spread of capitalist enterprise. Whether reformist or revolutionary, they have their roots in the economic order of capitalism, specifically in attempts to achieve defensive control of the workplace through unionism and to influence or seize state power through socialist political organisation. Particularly during the relatively early phases of the development of modern institutions, labour movements tended to be major carriers of appeals for freedom of expression and democratic rights.' Anthony Giddens, The Consequences of Modernity, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1990, pp.159-160

economic interest groups within the category of social movements I do not mean to imply that such organisations are simply and exclusively social movements. Rather these social and economic formations often exhibit 'movementist' behaviour or traits during periods of great social mobilisation (such as protests against fascist terrorism or in defence of civil and political rights - for example during the Scelba period) while continuing to perform institutional or corporative functions. My concept of social movement is therefore a graduated one with polycentric, protest oriented groups such as the students' movement at the top and economic, interest-based organisations such as the artisans' and traders' associations at the bottom.

Part II. Historical and Theoretical Perspectives.

1. Red Bologna.

(i) Bologna PCI.

There have been many studies of 'Bologna la rossa' but there is not one that has been able to explain why it is that the largest city outside the Sino-Soviet bloc to be administered by a Communist Party, and the city which in 1989 still had 109,000 members in a province among a population of 911,000, can flourish in a country where the left has never held power in its own right (other than during the special conditions of the Resistance) and in a region where an industrial proletariat dependent on mass-manufacture has never established itself.

In November 1989, Achille Occhetto, the secretary of the PCI made a speech to a small meeting of partisans in Bolognina, a working-class suburb of Bologna where Communists control nearly all the seats on the local neighbourhood council and where each Sunday L'Unità can be seen protruding from every other letterbox in the gleaming entrance halls of the squat condominiums. In his address to the assembled

comrades, Occhetto announced a decision which was to quickly reverberate around Italy, Europe and the Communist world. The largest Communist Party in the West was to 're-constitute' itself as a new political force which would renounce for ever its links with Soviet-style socialism in favour of a green-tinged social democracy represented by the German SPD, and to a certain extent the British Labour Party.⁹ Occhetto believed the PCI's ideology and internal organisation were out of date and needed to be reformed, its exclusion from the family of democratic socialists, and more importantly, its exclusion from government had to end, as did the party's traditional opposition to capitalism in all its manifestations.

Occhetto's decision to make this announcement in Bologna was far from incidental. The city was to be the site the following year of the last congress of the PCI, and in 1991 it was awarded the special privilege of hosting the first national festival of L'Unità under the auspices of the new Democratic Party of the Left (PDS).¹⁰ The members, militants, and leaders of the Bologna federation registered the highest support for the 'svolta di Occhetto' of any other party federation in the country. The Emilian Communists for so many years the spectres at the feast of Botteghe Oscure (the Rome headquarters of the party directorate), felt that at last their contribution to 'la Cosa' had been recognised. Leading Emilian party leaders were coopted onto the new executive and many delegates from the region's large federations were represented on the unwieldy national council with its 500 plus membership. At last Bologna's time had come.¹¹

⁹ For a good general survey see Chiara Valentina, *La Cosa*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1990.

¹⁰ However the decision to hold this important fund-raising event in Bologna was not motivated by political considerations alone. The national 'Festa dell'Unità' incurred a massive loss when it was held in Florence the previous year and party managers had to accept that only in the 'reddest' provinces of Emilia (i.e. Modena and Bologna) was there sufficient volunteer labour and public interest to guarantee the festival's success. On the post-war development of the 'Festa dell'Unità' in Bologna see chapter three, part four.

¹¹ It is also significant that six months after the foundation of the Partito Democratico della Sinistra, Emilia-Romagna accounted for more than 50% of the national membership.

This thesis is intended to shed new light on the historical development of the 'Emilian road to socialism' and the novelty of my argument lies in the suggestion that not only were the Emilian and Italian roads 'twin-tracks', but that the tracks themselves were far from parallel.

(ii) The 'modello bolognese.'

The idea of Bologna as a 'model' has stimulated much academic and political debate, but precious little discussion has been heard around the question, what is this model for? The following chapters are an attempt to address this question and to explain how and why the PCI came to power and the means by which the Communists have continued to exert that power in the forty five years since the end of World War Two.

The title of the thesis 'Local government and social movements in Bologna since 1945' refers explicitly to the twin prongs of the PCI's hegemonic project in Bologna - local government, and the mass associations of civil society (trade unions, cooperatives, artisans' associations, sporting and recreational circles and similar organisations) which cemented the PCI into the social and economic infrastructure of the city and province.

The study is not exclusively an anatomy of Communist hegemony. Others have already dissected it with varying degrees of success, my task however, is also to reveal what Communist policies for Bologna set out to achieve and what they actually did achieve. I aim to assess the success or failure of key Communist policies in the context of national spending and legislative constraints, the degree of central and local opposition, and the changing social and economic structures of the province. If Bologna is exceptional, why is it exceptional, and what significance does this have for our understanding of local political processes generally?

In 1946, Togliatti attempted to fashion a concept of 'revolutionary reformism' which was to be quite distinct from the earlier Socialist administrative experiences in Emilia

Romagna in the period before fascism.¹² In alliance with the 'progressive' elements of the lower-middle class, the self-employed, and the petty proprietors, the PCI was to construct a base from which the transition to socialism would be made. Although the transition could not obviously be characterised as socialist in itself, this ante-diluvian phase along the road to the Communist society would contain strong anti-capitalist elements. And it was through the development of these anti-capitalist and anti-monopolist tendencies that the steady democratisation and collectivisation of capitalist society was to occur.

With very few exceptions, party historians and sympathetic academics (most of them from the United States) have taken Togliatti's aspirations as if they were an uncanny prophecy which progressively unfolded in the following decades. From the many studies which came out of Bologna and Emilia-Romagna in the 1960s¹³ and 1970s¹⁴

¹² Palmiro Togliatti, 'Ceto medio e Emilia rossa' in Critica Marxista, July-October 1964, Nos.4-5 pp.130-158. This speech is examined in some detail in the following chapter.

¹³ Robert Evans' study of Bologna's administration dates from this time, but it is an altogether too credulous account of communism in 'una città sola' and tries to draw large conclusions from a very small survey of activists. Evans, R.H. Coexistence: Communism and its Practice in Bologna 1945-1965, University of Notre Dame Press, London, 1967.

¹⁴ Stephen Hellman's doctoral thesis, 'Organisation and Ideology in Four Communist Federations', unpublished PhD, Yale University, 1974 provided the basis for a more searching analysis of the PCI at the local level in subsequent essays such as 'The PCI and the Middle-Classes' in R. Blackmer & S. Tarrow (Eds), Communism in Italy and France, Princeton University Press, 1975, although the references to the Bologna federation are rather oblique. Raffaella Nanetti also studied Bologna in her doctoral thesis, 'Municipal planning through neighbourhood councils: a case study of citizen participation in the planning process in Bologna, Italy', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1977' and she has worked subsequently on regional planning and development in Emilia-Romagna. See Leonardi, R. & Nanetti, R. The Regions and European Integration. The Case of Emilia-Romagna, cit.

it would appear that the via italiana al socialismo begins and ends in Emilia, but like all good roads it also led to Rome.

The assumption here was that 'Red Bologna' was until very recently genuinely communist or 'Eurocommunist' (albeit more pluralist and democratic than its Soviet or Eastern European sister parties) and that the type of policies it implemented formed an integral part of the Italian road to socialism.¹⁵ In this dissertation I set out to argue that both these claims are highly problematic. Instead I suggest that it is more accurate to describe the historical and cultural amalgam of reformist socialism, Communist organisation and diffused industrialization as 'Leninist Keynesianism.'

¹⁵ David Kertzer is quite explicit in claiming his is a study of local Eurocommunism, in the preface to Comrades and Christians he writes, 'For readers who have come across accounts of 'Eurocommunism' more times than they can remember without ever learning of the lives of any 'Euro-Communists' who are not members of Parliament or intellectuals of renown, this book is intended to provide a glimpse into the social fabric of Euro-Communist experience. And for those curious about the coexistence of the strongest Western Communist Party with the bastion of the Catholic Church, focusing on the way in which the national conflict is played out in one local setting.' David Kertzer, Comrades and Christians. Religion and Political Struggle in Communist Italy, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1980, p.XV. This last comment is particularly surprising given the major differences in PCI/Church relations at a national level and in Bologna itself.

2. Italy as an 'Exceptional' State.

(i) Italy and the Welfare State in Europe: A Case of Arrested Development.

'Italy is a combination of families not a state' (Longanesi)¹⁶

It is my contention that notwithstanding the two decades of fascism, Bologna has always been the home of socialist reformism. Fausto Anderlini calls this political culture, 'ideal communism, real social democracy,' and social democracy was indeed the political form which the red communes in the post-war era took.¹⁷ But the isolation of the socialcommunist administrations from the mainstream political establishment and their geographical concentration in the north-east and centre of the country made it easy for the Christian Democrats and their allies to present Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, Umbria and the Marches as aberrations from the rest of moderate, Catholic Italy.

The reality is quite different, it was the Christian Democrats who bucked the European post-war trend towards state centred welfarism and redistributive economic

¹⁶ Cited in Schnapper, D. Sociologie de l'Italie, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1974, p.10.

¹⁷ Anderlini, Fausto. Terra Rossa. Comunismo ideale, socialdemocrazia reale. Il PCI in Emilia-Romagna 1945-1990, Istituto Gramsci Emilia Romagna, Bologna, 1990.

policies in national government. Thus, although Bologna's post-war administration may have differed markedly from that of Rome or Milan, it shared many similarities with London, and with Vienna and Cologne.¹⁸ This was because on a local level the Socialists and Communists of Emilia-Romagna were attempting to build a democratic administration which could begin to redress the social and economic imbalances in the region and its capital, a strategy which shared many common features with social democratic (and even Christian Democratic) governments in the rest of Europe. Stein Rokkan, the leading authority on modern state development, has identified four main stages in the growth of the modern welfare state in Western Europe:

i) State formation - the establishment of the infrastructure of the nation-state organised at the political, economic and cultural élite level based on the monopoly of the legitimate use of force and a civil and criminal legal framework capable of regulating conflict.

ii) Nation-building - the means by which the corporate mass of the state is widened through military conscription, compulsory education, the mass media etc. leading to an affective bonding between the élite and the mass.

iii) Participation - the process of active citizen participation in the state system through mass democracy and political citizenship.

iv) Redistribution - universalisation of the principle of economic justice through the establishment of public welfare services and social security systems and the

¹⁸ Most significantly these cities had a relatively high average income and stable left-wing political majorities which for most of the post-war period had exercised power under centre or centre-right national governments. As an example, the political composition of Cologne City Council in 1973 was 37 social democrats, 4 liberals, 26 Christian Democrats; in 1972 Vienna City Council contained 66 socialists, 31 catholics and three liberals. Source: Robert Fried, Comparative Urban Politics. A Performance Approach, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1980, Table 4.6 p.103.

recognition of social rights and entitlements.¹⁹

Having arrived at stage one in the Unification of 1861, the Italian state attempted unsuccessfully to achieve stage two under the liberal-nationalist Giolittian regime. The crisis and then collapse of the liberal-nationalist government led to the twenty year dictatorship of Mussolini who tried to complete the nation-building phase at a forced march. The end of the Second World War and the introduction of full universal suffrage ought to have led to the completion of the participatory phase and a rapid transition to welfarism, but forty-five years later the full political and economic integration of the broad mass of the people into Italian society has arguably still not been achieved.²⁰

Italy is not unique in veering away from the ideal-typical trajectory described by Rokkan, but it is exceptional in having not only one of the highest ratios of transfers and public expenditure in Europe but also in maintaining a consistently high level of

¹⁹ See Flora, P. 'Stein Rokkans MakroModell der politischen Entwicklung Europas: Ein Rekonstruktionsversuch', Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie, 33, 3, pp. 397-436 summarised in Peter Flora (Ed), Growth to Limits. The Western European Welfare States since World War II. Volume 2: Germany, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Walter de Gruyter, New York, 1986 p.xvi. For another important assessment of the structural development of the modern state see Anthony Giddens, The Nation-State and Violence, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1985.

²⁰ The negative public perception of the Italian state has been consistently charted by European opinion surveys. In 1973 Eurobarometer asked a representative sample of each European Community country about their level of satisfaction with their democracy, 30% of Italians replied that they were 'Not at all' satisfied, the highest level of dissatisfaction in Europe (the United Kingdom followed next with 20% while the figure for the EC as a whole was 18%). In 1983 the number of very dissatisfied respondents in Italy actually increased to 31% while the European average fell to 14%. Cited in Maria Weber, Italia: paese Europeo? Franco Angeli, Milan, 1986 p.156.

deprivation. The single most persuasive explanation for this discrepancy (which is born out by all the investigations into inequality in Italy) is that the vast sums expended by the Italian state are not reaching the poor and the very poor, while the tax burden of the bottom third of the population has continued to increase in real terms relative to the top third of the population.

For example, between 1950 and 1970 Italy had the worst record in Europe in terms of labour's share of the national income. Five years after the end of the Second World War the share of national income going to Italy's workforce was 49%, compared with 55% in Austria, 58% in Germany and 68% in the United Kingdom. Fifteen years later the figure for Italy had risen to only 52% while the respective share of GDP for Austrian, German and British labour had risen to 63%, 65% and 76% respectively.²¹

While it is true that Italy has devoted a large percentage of its national income to public expenditure (24.8% of GDP in 1951 and 44.4% in 1980), this should not be taken as an index of a general relative improvement in the quality of life of the mass of the population, particularly at the lower end of the income scale.²² The 1951 Parliamentary Commission into destitution found that 12.1 million Italians, 23.3% of the population, were living in destitution or conditions of hardship.²³ The economic

²¹ Figures taken from Franz Kraus, 'The Historical Development of Income Inequality in Western Europe and the United States', in Peter Flora and Arnold Heidenheimer (Eds) The Development of Welfare States in Europe and America, Transaction Books, London, 1981, Chapter 6 pp.187-236, table 6.3.

²² Piero Bassetti argues that 'the Italian miracle, in point of fact, is to be found in the disproportion which exists between productivity and wages', quoted in Percy Allum, Politics and Society in Post-War Naples, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1973, p.15.

²³ Maurizia Ferrera, 'Italy', in Peter Flora (Ed), Growth to Limits. The Western European Welfare States since World War II. Volume 2: Germany, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Walter de Gruyter, New York, 1986, pp.393 & 419-420. A historical reconstruction of the enquiry can be found in Braghin, P. Inchiesta sulla miseria in Italia

boom of the late-1950s cancelled out much of this acute poverty but at the cost of displacing millions of families and thousands of communities to the industrial north of the country where living conditions were primitive and public services virtually non-existent.²⁴

A study commissioned by the European Commission undertaken by G. Sarpellon found that in 1978 there were still 1,625,000 families living below the 'destitution' line (9.4% of the population) in and 3,626,000 families (20.4% of the population) were found to be 'in need.' As in 1951, Ferrera observes, these families tended to be massively concentrated in the south.²⁵ This north/south divide continued to widen after 1945 in spite of massive state aid to the poorest regions channelled through funds such as the 'Cassa per il Mezzogiorno.'

Percy Allum has shown how in the case of Naples, clientalism and corruption grew up around the central and local state to such an extent that 'pork barrel' politics became the modus vivendi for all the parties with the possible exception of the extreme left.²⁶ By contrast in the Veneto where the DC has dominated the political scene since the war, the efficiency and probity of Christian Democrat local administrations

(1951-1952), Einaudi, Turin, 1978.

²⁴ See Paul Ginsborg, A History of Contemporary Italy, Society and Politics 1943-1988, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1990, p.223n.

²⁵ 18% of the total southern population was recorded as 'destitute' and 18.1% 'in need' in 1978. Ferrera, M. cit. p.421.

²⁶ Percy Allum, Politics and Society in Post-War Naples, cit. Although during the Communists' brief taste of power from 1975-1980, the left-wing giunta was itself accused of corrupt administration, see Judith Chubb, 'Naples under the left. The limits of local change,' Comparative Politics, Vol.13, No.1, 1980, pp.53-78. An illuminating comparative study of Bologna and Naples which focuses on welfare provision in particular is provided by V. Capecchi & E. Pugliese, 'Due città a confronto: Bologna e Napoli', Inchiesta, Vol.VIII, Nos. 35-36, pp.3-54.

has rarely been questioned.²⁷ Many writers therefore argue that the affinity between 'red' and 'white' administrations in northern Italy is much greater than between Christian Democrat controlled cities like Breccia and Bari. It is important therefore to see northern Italy and particularly the Valle Padana as an intrinsic and important part of Europe's southern industrial zone with one of the highest standards of living in the EC. Few comparative studies have been made between 'red' and 'white' city administrations in the 'third Italy'²⁸ but single studies would tend to suggest that although ideological explanations for policy measures will vary between the parties, the actual variations in expenditure and housing and service provision will be relative rather than structural.²⁹

Welfarism does exist in Italy, but it is heavily concentrated in the populous cities of the northern plains and is still strongly associated with charitable associations connected to the Church or voluntary bodies operating in many cases on an ad hoc and non-statutory basis.³⁰ In Bologna where stage three and four of Rokkan's growth model can be observed very clearly, we still need to be wary of seeing the

²⁷ Although it should be said that the penetration of organised crime into the large northern cities is raising concerns about the allocation of lucrative local government contracts to firms connected with known mafia families.

²⁸ The most important study still remains A. Bagnasco, Tre Italie. La problematica territoriale dello sviluppo italiano, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1977. The 'third Italy' refers to the 'diffuse industrialisation' regions bordering the Adriatic coast and the Appenines which stretch from the northern Veneto as far south as Bari.

²⁹ The sociological studies undertaken by the Istituto Cattaneo in the late 1960s on the 'red' and 'white' zones of northern Italy have provided this comparison for the main political parties. See, various authors; L'organizzazione politica del PCI e della DC, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1968; L'attività di partito. Un'indagine sui militanti di base nel PCI e nella DC, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1967; La presenza sociale del PCI e della DC, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1968.

³⁰ See Achille Ardigò, Crisi di governabilità e mondi vitali, Cappelli, Bologna, 1980.

evolution of social policy in terms of the construction of a local welfare state when it would be more accurate to refer to a welfare system. These cultural and religious determinants of social policy very strongly condition the progress towards a participatory, redistributive and welfare based society on the North European model, even in the pro-egalitarian and lay political context of Communist local government in Bologna.

(ii) Restoration or Reform? State and Society in Postwar Italy.

Many historians and writers on contemporary Italy have defined the period from 1943 to 1948 as a lost opportunity. The newly approved Italian constitution enshrined some of the most advanced ideas on civil, political and economic rights and freedoms of any democratic state in Europe and the political formations which were committed to reform saw the creation of the Republic as an opportunity to break decisively with Italy's fascist past and to build on the values and aspirations which had been nurtured during the Resistance. However De Gasperi's ejection of the Communists from his cabinet in 1947 and the Christian Democrats' landslide victory in April 1948 finally destroyed any possibility of a pluralist approach to the enormous challenge of the reconstruction.

'The new centre coalition led by the Christian Democrats', Ferrera writes, 'opted for a restoration of the pre-war institutional framework', ruling out, '...after, 1948, any strategy for radical change. Thus, the traditional traits of the Italian welfare state were maintained and the 'natural' continuation of the pre-war experience was promoted. The welfare issue soon moved back to the periphery of political debate and competition, with social policy remaining for two decades a fragmented area of marginal adjustments, additive expansions and clientilistic exchanges.'³¹

Welfare was not the only victim of this institutional restoration. The provisions for local and regional autonomy which were such an important element of the Italian

³¹ Ferrera cit. p.390.

constitution did not acquire the status of law until the 1970s, forcing local authorities to rely on powers which were introduced in 1915 and 1934.³² This was not in any sense the result of a failure on the part of the governing coalitions to agree on the shape and content of local authority powers, since a wide degree of consensus had been achieved during the Constituent Assembly when the future political complexion of the putative republic was uncertain. Only when it became clear that regional autonomy would mean handing power over to socialcommunist administrations in a large part of the centre-north did the DC's enthusiasm for comprehensive regionalism evaporate.

Here again the Italian Christian Democrats demonstrated their willingness to deviate sharply even from the philosophy of other European Catholic parties. A defining characteristic of Christian Democracy in other countries had been the notion of 'subsidiarity' which meant that the intervention of a higher authority could only be justified when a particular need cannot be met by a lower social group or unit of government. This reflected the Catholic Church's stress on the organic community and its attendant rejection of mass society and the social fragmentation which it engenders.³³

The policy of the De Gasperi governments and their successors was in the opposite direction. Local authorities found that their powers and resources were steadily diminishing while the state provided its prefects and police and carabinieri chiefs with unprecedented powers to suspend, arrest and prosecute Communist and Socialist mayors and councillors, to ban political demonstrations and meetings and to veto a

³² The only exceptions were the 'special regions', Sicily, Sardinia, Trentino-Alto Adige and Val d'Aosta which were established between 1946 and 1949 to defuse the threat posed by separatist movements. An additional 'special' region, Friuli-Venezia-Giulia was created in 1963. They had their own regional governments with limited decision making and spending powers.

³³ Harold L. Wilensky 'Leftism, Catholicism, and Democratic Corporatism', in Flora & Heidenheimer cit. p.352.

council's budget or in extremis to dissolve the council altogether.³⁴

The 'red' administrations and the peasant leagues and trade unions under the left's control bore the brunt of these attacks in the first ten years of post-war Italy, but the PCI under Togliatti steadfastly refused to channel this popular resistance in an insurrectionary or subversive direction even when after the attempt on the life of the PCI's leader in 1948 several major cities in northern Italy fell under the control of striking workers. In Emilia-Romagna, where the PCI's organisation and membership was strongest, the 'spontaneous' outbreak of collective rage was controlled and measured. The Communists' reputation for responding in a dignified and lawful way to the 'provocations' of the state and the opponents of Communism was established in these years. But was Togliatti's 'new party' merely displaying the veneer of legality and a commitment to democracy and would the Italian Communists really refuse to seize power by force if Moscow ordered them to? These were the questions that the PCI's critics on a local and national level constantly raised when Communist leaders tried to stress that the party was a legitimate and genuine part of the Italian Republic.

The history of the Communist administration of Bologna can to a large extent be seen as an answer to the PCI's critics. When the Christian Democrats accused the giunta of authoritarianism and secretiveness it responded with 'open government' and new forms of citizen participation. Charges of unresponsiveness to public opinion and excessive centralisation were met with administrative decentralisation and the establishment of neighbourhood councils. Accusations of unrestrained urban growth and insufficient service provision encouraged conservation-led planning and major improvements in the service infrastructure. If Bologna became a showcase for the Italian Communist Party it was precisely because on an administrative level it displayed none of those features of 'actually existing socialism' which had provided the DC and its foreign and domestic allies with the propaganda means to defeat the socialcommunists on a national level.

³⁴ These developments are dealt with in some detail in chapter three.

Were it not for the fact that Bologna has been led by a Communist party it is doubtful that the city would have excited such international interest in its internal politics and economic and social organisations. However by questioning the value of using 'communist' as a meaningful adjective for the political and ideological configuration of Bologna's ruling class, I do not want to suggest that organisationally or culturally Emilian Communism and European social democracy are equivalent terms. Stripped of its sinister Cold War connotation, the concept (although not the expression) doppiezza has much to recommend it as an explanatory model for the process of accommodation and transformation which characterised the Emilian road to socialism.³⁵

The period in which the term was pejoratively used refers to Togliatti's 'partito nuovo' in which the Leninist party machine was given the task of reinforcing the democratic and constitutional structures of the bourgeois state in order to prevent a slide back into fascism. The strategy required an implicit abandonment of the revolutionary road which Togliatti had already veered away from at Salerno in 1944. The PCI's embrace of parliamentary democracy did not however signify an overthrow of the fundamental principles of Marxism which had guided the party since the days of Gramsci, Bordiga and Tasca. Capitalism was still the mortal enemy of the working class, but its overthrow required more than the active intervention of the vanguard party in directing the struggles of the urban proletariat and the peasantry. New allies had to be recruited to the war of position between the forces of socialism and capitalism. I have already mentioned how this 'svolta' was quickly translated into a concrete strategy for winning over the ceti medi in 'red Emilia'. Its success depended not only on the willingness of the petty bourgeoisie to participate in the PCI's anti-monopolist and anti-clerical campaigns, but also on the ability of the PCI and its 'collateral' organisations to build a genuinely mass and socially variegated base from

³⁵ The term can be translated as 'duplicity' or 'duplicitousness', but 'dualism' or 'duality' best captures the essence of the description without ascribing to it a pejorative meaning.

which to challenge the values and structures of the Christian Democrat state.

Democratic centralism as a method of political organisation was peculiarly well adapted to this task. The experience of the Resistance had inculcated the values of discipline, loyalty and solidarity in the membership of the party and the Liberation and the challenge of the reconstruction offered the PCI an opportunity to widen its socio-economic base and to directly involve the mass in its activities. This dichotomy between Italian Communism and European social democracy was more than simply a variation in political style or behaviour.³⁶ Politics as lived experience was qualitatively different in Communist Bologna because the PCI existed as a dynamic force in society, which was able to shape and direct the social and political

³⁶ Referring to the PCI's ability to manage 'capitalist rationalisation' in Emilia-Romagna, Anderlini argues,

'It was in this context that the Emilian PCI emerged, but by not exploiting the potential which the shell of negative integration retained in order to develop an extension of reformist politics in direct (even if implicit) consonance with the European social democratic experience.' - 'Negative integration' is a term which Anderlini uses to describe the socialisation process of the Emilian working-class through the political and social direction of the PCI in Emilia. This process is 'negative' in as much as the Communist culture must necessarily be oppositional to the power structure of the Church and state.

However, the encouragement of local capitalism does not have to imply a social democratic form of local administration. Social democracy is not just Schuman's 'social market' it is a hybrid of reformist political cultures rooted in the labour movement and committed to parliamentary democracy. In economic policy, social democracy has embraced models as widely different as centralised state planning and liberal Keynesianism. By not defining what he means by 'European social democracy' Anderlini risks conflating Emilian 'communism' with any reformist capitalist political system. Anderlini, Terra rossa, cit. p.12.

movements from which it drew its strength. Where Bolognese Communism does vary considerably from the political practice of the PCI in many other parts of Italy and at the level of the national leadership is in its great capacity for innovation and its concern to be more than just a party of the industrial working-class and poor peasantry. This meant that as the strategy of the local Communist leadership changed, particularly in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the identity and function of the Party also changed.

If the 1940s and 1950s in Bologna were characterised by a collective defence of working class organisation through the institutions of local administration, the 1960s and 1970s witnessed a shift in the PCI's concept of local government away from the 'movementist' notion of the comuni as a vehicle for organising collective opposition to the conservative state and towards an appreciation of local government as capable of effecting social and economic advances in its own right. Whereas in the first fifteen years after the war, the administration of Bologna could be described as communist in form and style but social democratic in terms of political content, the period after 1960 witnessed a transition to a more technocratic and pluralist rhetoric which often masked quite radical innovations at the level of social and economic policy. By the 1970s Bologna had won an international reputation for socially conscious planning, and its initiatives in the area of municipal decentralisation and popular participation were widely imitated. However, the transition to an urban-industrial society could not operate under laboratory conditions, Bologna's ruling political caste was not immune to the student and worker mobilisations of 1968-1972 and at the time of the Movement of '77, PCI leaders found themselves to be the object of a youth and student revolt which prompted discussion of the 'crisis' of the Bologna model.

In the following chapters these social, economic and cultural transformations are examined in relation to the political strategy which Palmiro Togliatti first expounded in Reggio Emilia in 1946. In the following chapter we explore the application of the 'Reggio doctrine' in the social movements which emerged in the province of Bologna in the first decade after the Liberation and chart the development of a highly politicised labour movement and the culture of resistance which helped to lay the

foundations for the construction of Communist hegemony.

CHAPTER ONE

Social Movements, Political Conflict and Cultural Identity in Bologna 1945-1956.

Part I. Togliatti, Emilia Rossa and the alliance strategy of the PCI.

1. Introduction

'Bella regione l'Emilia', Palmiro Togliatti declared to a large audience of Reggio Communists in September 1946, taking obvious satisfaction from his party's rapid growth and solid presence in a region which he described as, 'dear to all Italians but especially to those for whom the cause of the emancipation of the workers is close to their hearts.'¹

Togliatti was a keen student of the historic and cultural traditions of Emilia and showed a sophisticated knowledge of its revolutionary and reformist leaders from the time of the Risorgimento and beyond. His understanding of dialect and peasant folklore illustrated his awareness of how rural conflict persisted and was reproduced in the daily lives and culture of the mezzadri and landless labourers. Togliatti's skill lay in his ability to map the political strategy of the 'partito nuovo' onto the micropolitics of Emilia's highly differentiated socio-economic landscape. If Molinella or Forlì and Faenza were to be won over to the socialcommunists an appreciation of how and why they had become reformist, Republican or Christian Democrat was necessary. This required a continuing 'rearticulation' of the region's radical tradition as a historical development towards a democratic and socially equitable society under the leadership of the Italian Communist Party and its Socialist allies.

Unlike the liberal democrats of the Partito d'Azione, Togliatti did not see the bourgeoisie as the civilising force of post-industrial society. On the contrary, the PCI

¹ Palmiro Togliatti, 'Ceto medio e Emilia rossa' in Critica Marxista, July-October 1964, Nos.4-5 pp.130-158.

leader maintained an orthodox Marxist contempt for a class which he believed had set back the course of human progress by its alignment with the repressive forces of capitalism during every major rupture in the historic bloc of the dominant class. The distinction between 'borghesia' and 'ceto medio' was therefore an attempt to distinguish the regressive from the potentially progressive elements of the middle strata of Italian society. Again Togliatti adopted a strictly Marxist classification by defining as bourgeois social actors who through their ownership of the means of production or land and property directly or indirectly enjoyed control over their fellow citizens. The ceti medi were intermediate between this capitalist middle-class and the great mass of industrial and agrarian workers who could only sell their physical labour power. Among this vast ensemble of the intermediate class Togliatti included all white-collar employees, small traders, small and medium shopkeepers, petty proprietors, commercial traders, intellectuals such as teachers, university professors, priests, professionals of every type together with 'men of great culture', artists, poets, scientists and writers. To this primarily urban definition of the ceti medi Togliatti also added the rural categories of the mezzadria, the small 'direct ^{independent} cultivators' and tenant farmers.

It was Togliatti's belief that the failure of socialist reformism and the advent of fascism was strictly connected to the Socialists' inability to unite the proletarian and semi-autonomous rural workforce in a collective economic struggle against the great landowners. The Socialists' unshakeable commitment to the 'proletarianisation' of the share-cropping and petty proprietorial classes had in the past led to the isolation of the braccianti and the red leagues and driven many of the independent peasants into the arms of the fascists. However partial this account of the history of agrarian conflict may have been, the significance of Togliatti's discourse lay in the fact that he intended to fuse the now ideologically voided Socialist Party to a political strategy which would renounce once and for all the Soviet model of land nationalisation and collectivisation and defend the small proprietor and share-cropper from the worst excesses of agrarian capitalism.

Without any doubt the Reggio speech was one of the most significant explanations of

the Communist Party's alliance strategy in the post-war period. In the context of Emilia-Romagna where the PCI was the dominant social and political force, its implications were even more profound. The political doctrine established by Togliatti in 1946 formed the strategic foundation for all the Party's interventions in local administration, the trade unions, cooperatives and mass associations at least until the 'opening to the left' which brought Nenni's socialists into government in the early 1960s and arguably until the final collapse of the historic compromise in 1979. 'Ceto medio e Emilia Rossa' thus provided a blueprint for political action which Bologna's Communist leadership rapidly applied in their organisational and propaganda work.

The Reggio doctrine was clearly enunciated by Colombi in his capacity as regional secretary for Emilia-Romagna at the 6th Congress of the PCI in Milan in January 1948. Referring to the alliance with the peasantry Colombi remarked that,

'Our constant preoccupation has been not to fall into the old errors and to remember that inspite of the fact that a relatively important industrial development has taken place in the last 25 years, Emilia remains a predominantly agrarian region.'

The basis of this social alliance lay in the Resistance when,

'...every farm house was a partisan base, the farmer's son fought in a formation,' and, '...the brotherhood of arms which the war of liberation achieved was the cement which first united the workers of the city and those of the countryside, the rural labourers with the share croppers and the direct cultivators.'²

If the battle for work and a decent standard of living for the working class was to be won *the struggle must extend itself to wider economic categories who share a direct or indirect interest in the outcome of a struggle for a more equitable distribution of*

² Arturo Colombi, 'I comunisti emiliani al lavoro' (Rapporto al VI Congresso del PCI, Milan, 8th January 1948) in P.P. D'Attorre (Ed) I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, Istituto Gramsci, Bologna, 1981, pp.53-54.

wealth and income. Colombi specifically included technicians, employees, traders, and hotel keepers as potential allies in the Communist campaign against unemployment and inflation. Similarly in the countryside the landless labourers' defence of the 'imponibile di mano d'opera' placed these workers in a similar antagonistic relationship with the large landowners as the share-croppers who were demanding a revision of the farm contracts.³

In its desire to make the Communist Party a genuinely 'mass party' which would include these intermediate strata the Communist leadership in Bologna seized on Togliatti's injunction to build the 'partito nuovo' with great enthusiasm and it was with the spirit of the 'costruttori' that the cadres set about their task.

The Growth of Emilian Communism.

The most startling feature of Italian Communism in the period following the fall of fascism was the PCI's metamorphosis from a semi-clandestine, vanguardist Bolshevik party to a mass movement which had a presence in nearly every field in the social and economic life of the nation. From an estimated 40,200 members in 1944 the national party had risen to 1,770,896 by the end of 1945. Two years later the number of Italians holding the tessera of the PCI had reached the impressive total of two and a quarter million.⁴

Emilia-Romagna was the engine room of this dynamic political organisation; in 1953 it accounted for over half a million, or one fifth of the PCI's national membership⁵ in a region which accounted for only one thirteenth of the national population. By 1954,

³ Arturo Colombi, 'I nostri compiti di lavoro e di lotta' (Comitato Regionale Emiliano PCI 11th September, 1943), in D'Atorre *ibid.* p.65.

⁴ Magna, N. 'Dirigenza e base' in Accornero, A. (Ed) L'identità comunista, Riuniti, Rome 1983 cited in Cris Shore Italian Communism: The Escape from Leninism, Pluto Press, London, 1990, p.96 and Anderlini Terra rossa *cit.* See also Fig. 1.

⁵ Precisely 568,042, equal to 16.05% of the population of the region. Vincenzo Galletti, 'Il PCI in Emilia', in Emilia, 25 (New Series) Year III, March 1954, pp.83-85.

more than 16% of the population of Bologna belonged to the PCI (a proportion only exceeded by Reggio with 17.6% and Modena with 17.42).⁶ The taxonomy of the PCI membership strongly reflected the Party's base in the working class society of the region and its strength among Emilia-Romagna's large peasant population. Industrial or craft workers amounted to 135,356 of the membership (28.53%), braccianti made up 120,519 (25.38%) and mezzadri 86,302 (18.19%), peasant proprietors were a small but significant 15,663 (3.3%) while artisans, small traders and shop-keepers together made up 24,391 (5.14%); intellectuals, professionals and students were the smallest category with 2,254 members.

Bologna's importance as a mechanical engineering and metal manufacturing centre helps to explain the higher proportion of industrial workers among the the federation's 129,274 members.⁷ In 1954, 35.7% of the Bologna Federation of the PCI were workers compared to 17.5% who were rural wage-labourers and 15.8% who were share-croppers. Peasant proprietors constituted a smaller proportion of the Bologna PCI than in the region while the number of artisans, small traders and shop-keepers was similar to the regional level. As in the region as a whole, professionals, intellectuals and students propped up the bottom of the occupational category league table in the province of Bologna accounting for 2.5% of total membership. 'Housewives and pensioners'⁸ constituted a significant 20.6% of the Bologna party, higher than their 18.5% of the regional membership.⁹

If we examine this regional and local picture in the context of the growth of the Communist Party nationally, an interesting contrast emerges. From a total of 2,252,446 in 1947 the national membership of the PCI fell to 2,145,317 in 1954,

⁶ See Figure 1.

⁷ See Figure 2.1.

⁸ It is significant that the PCI chose to group these two 'economically unproductive' categories together.

⁹ Source Direzione PCI/Istat cited in Anderlini cit. p.83.

whereas the Party in Emilia actually grew, rising from 435,588 in 1947 to 478,274 in 1954. For the same period, the membership of the Bologna Federation of the PCI rose from 108,650 to 129,274.⁹ With the exception of 1953, from the end of the war to the watershed year of the 20th CPSU Congress in 1956 the Bologna Communist Party experienced continuous growth during a time in which national party membership declined in absolute terms (1951, 1952, 1955).¹⁰ While it is difficult to isolate the factors which accounted for the relative success of the Bologna federation particularly during the the most bitter years of the Cold War, a significant contribution to the spectacular growth of the Party in this period must have come from the organisation and leadership of the PCI itself, and also from the degree of mobilisation which the mass movements associated with the Party were able to achieve in the face of very tenacious opposition from the state and rural and industrial capitalists. In part two we examine the resurgence of class conflict in the Bolognese countryside in the light of Togliatti's alliance strategy and national developments in the benighted agricultural reform campaign.

⁹ Anderlini cit. p.391 and Franco Piro Comunisti al potere: Economia, società e sistema politico in Emilia-Romagna 1945-1965, Marsilio Editore, Venice, 1983 p.14.

¹⁰ Source Direzione PCI/ISTAT in Anderlini cit. p.83.

Part II. Economic re-organisation, industrial unrest and the Communist leadership of the urban labour movement.

1. Introduction.

'The exploitive relationship is more than the sum of grievances and mutual antagonisms. It is a relationship which can be seen to take distinct forms in different historical contexts, forms which are related to the corresponding forms of ownership and State power.' (E.P. Thompson)¹¹

The 5th Congress of the PCI held in Rome between December 1945 and January 1946 provided the first opportunity in eleven years for the leadership to directly address the Party's rank and file and to define more clearly the organisation and objectives of the 'partito nuovo'. Given the continued allied military presence in Italy and the urgent need to undertake the political and economic reconstruction of the country, the resolutions and speeches mostly focused on the importance of the restoration of democracy and the exclusion of fascists from the state and public life. Following the 'svolta di Salerno', the PCI had been swollen by hundreds of thousands of new members and this meant that the 'identity' of the Party needed to reflect the mass nature of the organisation and the new tasks which faced the Party as a senior partner in any provisional national administration.¹²

The 'politica di Salerno' required the elimination of any residual elements of 'sectarianism' and 'opportunism' which might have carried over from the Resistance, and the opening out of the Party to all the democratic and progressive elements present within Italian society as a whole. This was vital if the PCI was to become a

¹¹ The Making of the English Working Class, Gollancz, London, 1980, p.222.

¹² Palmiro Togliatti, 'Rapporto al V congresso del PCI' in Alberto Cecchi (Ed), Storia del PCI attraverso i congressi, Newton Compton, Rome, 1977, pp.15-74.

true party of government and Togliatti articulated the style as much as the content of this strategy when he stated, 'We do not emphasise the class struggle but the national struggle.'¹³

The subordination of the class struggle to 'national interest' was also apparent in the resolution on industry and agriculture, because although the PCI proposed the nationalisation of large monopolies, banks and insurance companies, the essential features of capitalist production were to remain. The institution of a national planning and production system (a scheme which Fanfani implemented and later abandoned) together with the introduction of some democratic work-place controls in the form of the 'consigli di gestione' were intended to counter-balance the distorting effects of the market. But in this respect the PCI measures seemed little different from the corporatist-interventionist proposals of the 'social Catholic' group within the DC.¹⁴

However, because Emilia-Romagna had very few firms that were likely to be nationalised by a future socialist government, the Communist militants in the factories and workshops of Bologna were not even offered the prospect of regulated and guaranteed employment within a state industry. Similarly, any national economic plan would be aimed primarily at the northern heavy industrial sector leaving small and medium firms to develop their own investment plans. This left only the 'consigli di gestione' as a potential vehicle for employees' control over their workplaces, but in practice the councils met infrequently and their proceedings became increasingly ritualistic and remote from the negotiating process which had been newly established between the employers and the trade unions. The rapid re-establishment of trade union leadership within the industrial working-class of the province and the unifying

¹³ Quoted in Lawrence Gray, 'From Gramsci to Togliatti: The "Partito Nuovo" and the Mass Base of Italian Communism' in Serfaty, S. & Gray, L. (Eds), The Italian Communist Party. Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Aldwych Press, London, 1981, p.25.

¹⁴ Ibid. On the 'Chronache sociali' group of left Christian Democrats see below, chapter two, section one.

function of the Federal Labour Chamber was to be a decisive factor in the disciplined response of the Bolognese labour movement to the challenges and conflicts of the post-Liberation period.

2. The Industrial Labour Movement and the Reconstruction.

'...should trade unionists be subordinate to the party? To put the question in these terms would be a mistake. The question should be put like this: every member of the party is subordinate to its leadership. There cannot be a subordinate relationship between trade union and party if the trade union has not spontaneously chosen a member of the party as its leader: this means that the trade union accepts the directives of the party and therefore it freely accepts (infact it wants) this control over its officials.' Antonio Gramsci.¹⁵

The re-birth of trade unionism in Bologna occurred during the dark winter of 1944 when Bologna was still under the complete occupation of the German army. The first foundation of the free trade unions of Bologna took place in November, 1944 in a church in the heart of the old city. Several unions were represented including most importantly Federterra and the metal workers unions. However, it was not until the following January that the newly formed executive committee of the Federal Labour Chamber was able to announce the constitution of a united trade union movement. The Labour Chamber was officially confirmed as the legitimate representative of Bologna's workers by a prefectoral decree of 22nd April which transferred the functions previously attributed to the fascist 'Provincial Union of Workers' to the new body.¹⁶

¹⁵ Antonio Gramsci, Quaderni del carcere, Vol.I, Einaudi, Turin, 1975, p.321 [Miscellany 1930] cited in Piro Comunisti al Potere cit. p.57.

¹⁶ Dario Ventura, Sindacato e ricostruzione a Bologna 1945-1948, Editrice Sindacale Italiana, Rome, 1981, p.2.

of bombardments of the winter offensive had left very little of Bologna's industrial infrastructure intact. Virtually all of the city's major factories and industries had either been destroyed or seriously damaged and of the 20,000 workers employed in industry before the war only 2,000 were able to return to their original places of work after the Liberation.¹⁷ Although the Allied Military Government officially recognised the Labour Chamber on the 8th May, the Labour Office of the AMG insisted that every agreement made between the employers and the Camera del Lavoro should be submitted to it for written approval. The rapid restoration of democratic industrial relations was signalled by the fact that 29 agreements were made between the Labour Chamber and the Association of Industrialists in the first three months after the Liberation.

Within a year the number of trade unionists in the province had grown to 166,115 organised in 46 federations and trades, a phenomenon which highlighted the importance of Bologna within the Italian labour movement. As Ventura observes, 'in other regions the influx was slower in its development and...more laborious especially in the south.'¹⁸

However, with memories of forced labour and inhuman wages and conditions still fresh in the minds of the work force, labour relations in the city and province of Bologna were far from convivial. The workforce at Ducati were particularly angry that the Ducati brothers were still at liberty when they had been die-hard collaborators with the fascist and Nazi regime until the last moment. Several Ducati workers had also been arrested after being denounced by the owners as 'undesirables' and antifascists and a mass meeting of employees demanded the 'arrest and prosecution of the ultrafascist Ducati brothers for the crime of high treason against the nation.'¹⁹ These popular demands for 'epurazione' and the prosecution of fascist collaborators

¹⁷ Ibid. p.18.

¹⁸ Ibid. p.1.

¹⁹ 'Un ordine del giorno delle maestranze della <<Ducati>>' in Corriere dell'Emilia 2nd June, 1945, Vol.12, No.38. in Ventura cit. p.19.

reflected a groundswell of public opinion which the Communist Party thought it necessary to control in order to prevent the tensions and conflicts of the Resistance from ruining the delicate process of democratic renewal and reconstruction which required the energetic participation of all the elements of Italian society.

In an article written a month after the Ducati protest meeting, the federal secretary of the PCI made a clear statement of the Communist Party's position,

'...Communists are also prepared to tolerate those industrialists who are not too compromised with fascism or with nazism and who can show proof of their repentance..', but this depended on the industrialists, '...showing proof of their good will by putting all of their resources at the disposition of the country for its reconstruction.'²⁰

The Communists' strong presence in the Federal Labour Chamber and the 'consigli di gestione' was also reflected in the tough attitude to 'industrial discipline' which trade union officials took whenever 'wild-cat strikes' broke out. When an unofficial strike stopped production at the Weber plant in November 1945, not only did the trade unions order the employees back to work but the Camera del Lavoro actually countersigned the strike leader's dismissal and the suspension of four co-organisers.²¹

If this was an example of the PCI's opposition to militant industrial unrest from an organisational perspective, Giuseppe Dozza explained to the members of the regional committee of the Emilian Communist Party why such conflict was undesirable on a strategic level,

'...when the Labour Chamber negotiates to obtain some advantages for the workers it

²⁰ Arturo Colombi, 'Stroncare la << mano ossuta della fame >>' in La Lotta, 30th June, 1945, Vol.II, No.7.

²¹ Ventura cit. p.34.

should remember the legitimate interests of the small industrialists: they cannot meet a back-dated increase in salaries. We must be aware of this and make the masses understand that sometimes these small industrialists have needs of their own.²²

Acknowledging that this would create problems for the PCI's claim to be the sole defenders of the working-class, Dozza added,

'...I know that there are difficulties but we must regulate them because otherwise our policy towards the ceti medi cannot work.'²³

Colombi, in his capacity as regional secretary, also emphasised the importance of preserving good relations with the small and medium entrepreneurial class,

'Generally we have a good policy towards the ceti medi but they are being frightened-off by the demands of the Labour Chamber. It's time that we represented their (the ceti medi's) problems and highlighted the conflict of interests that exists between them and the great industrialists by demonstrating that this is a factor which unites them with the workers in their struggle against the common enemy.'²⁴

The common enemy in the late 1940s was not only monopoly capitalism but economic depression, rampant inflation and high levels of unemployment. In the province of Bologna alone, the number of unemployed industrial workers had risen from 26,735 in September 1947 to 31,457 a year later. In the same period industrial production in Emilia-Romagna fell by as much as 30-35% with the construction industry suffering a

²² Comitato Regionale del PCI (Bologna - 23rd June, 1947), APC MF. 141/32-96 p.34.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid. p.20.

massive fall in production which varied between 50% and 60-70% across the region.²⁵

The process of de-industrialisation also produced high levels of unemployed among the skilled engineering trades in the city. This was largely a consequence of the decision by the state agency which had the responsibility for re-structuring large factories in Emilia-Romagna (FIM - fondo per l'industria meccanica) to dismantle virtually all the industries which were involved in war production. This meant that Ducati which had 6-7,000 workers at the end of the war, employed only 1,300 in 1954, while the smaller firms of Calzoni and Cogne shrank from 1,600 to 130 and from 2,400 to 600 respectively.²⁶

There can be no doubt that the collapse of large-scale manufacture caused great hardship for many thousands of Bolognese families, but as with the 'Reggiane' workers who continued to assemble tractors and even designed and manufactured a new model after they had occupied the factory, the metal mechanical workers in Bologna refused to abandon their skills and collective working practices.²⁷

Unemployment created the conditions for the emergence of an 'entrepreneur forcé' who with very little capital established himself as a new type of artisan producing

²⁵ Evangelisti argues that the collapse of engineering and manufacturing industry in Emilia-Romagna was a direct consequence of Einaudi's deflationary autumn budget of 1947 which severely restricted the availability of credit to private firms, and particularly small and medium-sized companies. By 1948 the level of regional unemployment had risen to 29.9% of the active population. Valerio Evangelisti, 'Le radici nel nuovo precariato, 1945-1980' in V. Evangelisti and S. Sechi, Il galletto rosso. Precariato e conflitto di classe in Emilia-Romagna 1880-1980, Marsilio Editori, Venice, 1982, p.86.

²⁶ Vittorio Capecchi, 'Classe operaia e cultura borghese: Ipotesi di un ricerca in Emilia-Romagna' in Capecchi, V. (Ed), Famiglia operaia, mutamenti culturali, 150 ore, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1982, p.262.

²⁷ For an account of the 'Reggiane' occupation and the production of the R60 tractor see S. Tatò, A voi cari compagni, De Donato, Bari, 1981 cited in Capecchi ibid. p.254.

anything from small machine parts to buckles and fasteners.²⁸ Bergonzini qualifies this positive evaluation of industrial restructuring by demonstrating that many smaller enterprises suffered because they relied on larger local manufacturers for the bulk of their sales.²⁹ But Capecchi sees this 'ridimensionamento' as fundamental to the growth of an autonomous core of worker-entrepreneurs who were later to provide a vital link between the socialcommunist sub-culture and the productive middle class.³⁰

²⁸ See Daneo, C. 'Struttura economica e strategia politica del dopoguerra', in Note e Rassegne, 1971, No.33-34 in Capecchi *ibid.*

²⁹ L. Bergonzini, 'Il mercato di lavoro nell'industria emiliana' in Atti della Commissione parlamentare di inchiesta sulla disoccupazione, Vol.III, Tome 2, Rome, 1953 in Capecchi *ibid.* p.263.

³⁰ See Table 1 and also, V. Capecchi, 'L'Industrializzazione a Bologna nel novecento dal secondo guerra ad oggi', Storia illustrata di Bologna, 9/V, AIEP Editore, Milan, 1990, p.165.

Table 1. Employment in the metal mechanical industries in Emilia-Romagna by size of firm and percentage share of the workforce, 1937-1961.

Size of Firm	1937	1951	1961
1-10	28.6	36.9	37.4
11-100	16.3	23.1	32.6
101-500	34.4	18.6	10.3
501+	34.4	18.6	10.3
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: ISTAT/ V.Capecchi, 'Classe operaia e cultura borghese' cit. p.251.

The Communist Party exploited a peculiarity in the economic structure of Emilia-Romagna (the relative lack of large firms) by portraying the absence of monopolies as a cultural and ideological feature of Emilian society.³¹ The low level of industrial concentration could be presented in terms of a collective 'refusal' of the most pernicious forms of capitalism as much as a result of the deliberate discrimination of the government and Confindustria against the 'red region.'³² Long before Emilia-

³¹ For the early history of industrial organisation in Emilia-Romagna, see Paolo Tirelli, 'Aspetti economico-sociali dell'agricoltura tra il 1918 e il 1926' in Aldo Berselli (Ed), Storia della Emilia Romagna Vol.3, Santerno Edizioni, Imola, 1980.

³² See Table 2. Discrimination against Emilia-Romagna in the distribution of Marshall Aid was very marked, for example Piedmont and Lombardy received 25% and 28% of heavy equipment purchase funds, while Emilia-Romagna received 0.7%. Vittorio Capecchi, 'L'industrializzazione a Bologna nel novecento. Dal secondo dopoguerra ad oggi', in Walter Tega (Ed) Storia Illustrata di Bologna 9/V, AIEP Editore, Milan, 1990, p.162.

Romagna and the Veneto became identified as a 'third Italy'³³ the PCI's stress on the uniqueness of the regional economy gained credence because local industry was beginning to regenerate in the mid-1950s inspite of what amounted to an investment strike by the state and the major banks.³⁴

Table 2. Industrial employment in Emilia-Romagna by size of firm, 1950.

Size of Firm	Number of Firms	Employees
1 to 50	78,123	165,280
51 to 1000	717	106,768
More than 1000	21	35,399
Totals	78861	307,456

Source: Luciano Bergonzini, 'Il Piano di Lavoro in Emilia' in Emilia, November, 1950 reprinted in D'Atorre, I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, cit p.87.

The effectiveness of the process of provincial/regional accumulation depended on the maintenance of a stable labour force which could develop and widen its skills base while continuing to provide strong demand for locally provided goods and services. However, this virtuous circle became a reality only in the latter half of the 1950s

³³ A. Bagnasco Tre Italia: La problematica territoriale dello sviluppo italiano, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1977.

³⁴ Franco Piro confirms this observation when he argues that ideological motives governed the allocation of investment funds during the first phase of the reconstruction to the extent that, '...where the Communists were strong, the resources should not be sent.' Piro, F. Comunisti al potere cit. p.92; and see also, 'Utopia e realta del modello emiliano', in S. Conti, R. Lungarella, F. Piro, L'economia emiliana nel dopoguerra, Marsilio, Venice, 1979.

when together with the rest of north and central Italy Emilia-Romagna experienced the take-off in growth associated with the 'economic miracle'.³⁵ Until then the Bolognese economy continued to contract in spite of a general revival in consumer demand in other parts of Italy.

Outlining the potential application of the CGIL's 'Piano di Lavoro' in Emilia-Romagna, Bergonzini identified the three most important problems which affected the regional economy; the problem of large-scale industry under the control of the FIM (and hence under constant threat of closure) and the difficulties experienced by small and medium sized firms in the Bologna-Modena-Reggio zone; the lack of agrarian reform, problems of social relations in the countryside, and the transformation of 200,000 hectares of uncultivated or infertile land into farmable land in the Po delta; and finally the need for a different trade policy which would permit the re-opening of domestic and foreign export channels for Emilian industrial products.³⁶

But without the sales, marketing and distribution resources available to large firms, the local family-centred entrepreneurs of Bologna risked being restricted to a regional or even provincial market for their goods. The Communist leadership recognised that in order to counter the effects of the increasing domination of manufacture and retail sales by national and multi-national monopolies it would be necessary to provide the technical and financial resources which individual firms were unable to provide. As we shall see in the following chapter, on an administrative level important assistance

³⁵ Commenting on the political rationale for the encouragement of small enterprise by the 'comuni rossi' Sabel & Piore write, 'In areas dominated by the Communists (such as Emilia-Romagna), [local] government intervention was motivated not by a vision of a new industrial order; rather, it was motivated by a determination to secure if not the allegiance at least the neutrality of small business, and so to counter a reemergence of the Fascist bloc of petty bourgeoisie and big capital, as had existed in the 1920s.' C. Sabel & M. Piore, The Second Industrial Divide. Possibilities for Prosperity, Basic Books, New York, 1984, pp.228-229.

³⁶ Bergonzini Il piano di lavoro cit. p.86

was provided by the comuni, but in the economic field, the Party's hopes for regeneration and employment were increasingly invested in the traditional centre of worker self-management, the cooperative movement.

3. Cooperation in post-war Bologna: Between the movement and the market.

The cooperative movement in Bologna was re-constituted under the organisational direction of the 'Federazione delle Cooperative' (Federcoop) in the first months after the Liberation. The statute of the new organisation approved at the first provincial congress in Bologna declared that the provisional committee should, 'promote the constitution of cooperatives of consumers, production, labour, transport and agriculture, and credit and insurance, aiming at the moral and material improvement of the working-class.'³⁷ Like the provincial CLN, the composition of the provisional committee of Federcoop reflected a broad spectrum of political parties from the Liberals to the Communists. This political pluralism made the approval of article 3 of the statute even more remarkable because cooperatives were defined as, 'organisations created and sustained by the working class and as an instrument for safeguarding their ideal and material interests on the economic and trade union and political level.'³⁸ There is no doubt that the early architects of Federcoop saw the organisation as both a representative of cooperative enterprise and a campaigning movement for political and economic reforms in defence of the working class.

However, the accord between the parties proved to be shortlived, and on the 5th July,

³⁷ Enea Mazzoli, 'Le cooperative unitarie a Bologna', Emilia, Year VII, No.12, December 1955, pp.329-334.

³⁸ Ibid. Emphasis added.

1945 the Christian Democrats withdrew their representatives from the federation. In spite of their refusal to attend the Federation meetings in an official capacity, the Christian Democrats were active in individual cooperatives, and this 'half-in, half-out' relationship with the Federcoop continued until 1953 when the Catholics withdrew completely from all cooperatives under socialcommunist control to form their own provincial association.

The PCI was extremely wary of openly championing cooperativism as a solution to the economic difficulties of the province for two main reasons. First, the original political inspiration for Emilian cooperation was the same social reformism which the Communists believed had helped to weaken the class struggle and had opened the way to fascism. Second, the idea of an alternative to the capitalist mode of production without a proletarian revolution was unthinkable and potentially reactionary if cooperative enterprise came to be seen as an end in itself.³⁹

Speaking on behalf of the direzione of the PCI, Novella outlined the Party's position on cooperatives at the 2nd Congress of Communist Cooperators in 1950. The national leadership's view was taken up by the federal committee member responsible for cooperative organisations in Bologna who reminded the committee of Novella's contention that, as far as a cooperative enterprise was concerned there was, 'no difference in its economic actions from that of a private firm.' Mazzolani therefore concluded that, '...there is no element of conflict between a cooperativist economy

³⁹ Referring to the share-cropper/small farmer mentality in relation to the collectivist traditions of the braccianti, Grieco talked of the long and difficult passage to socialism, 'one passing through capitalism and the other passing through cooperation.' R. Grieco, 'Come è possibile risolvere la questione agraria in Italia', in 'Introduzione alla riforma agraria', Turin, 1949, cited in Viviana Pierleoni & Maria Rosa Pancaldi, La formazione della mentalità <<collettiva>> nelle campagne bolognesi, 1943-1947, C.C.M.L.C., Bologna, c.1978.

and a capitalist economy.’⁴⁰

As with every other ‘mass organisation’, the PCI regarded the cooperative movement as an institutional asset which could communicate the aims and values of the Party to ordinary members and workers and where possible mobilise groups of cooperators around the collective struggles the Party was promoting. This required what the local leadership of the federation described as a ‘work of ideological clarification’ on the directors of the cooperative firms of the province, many of whom still clung to the idealistic visions of Prampolini and Zanardi which equated cooperation with socialism. As Mazzolani complained, ‘...our cooperative managers do not have the capability of directing their actions with the tenacity that the struggle demands.’⁴¹

One of the solutions offered for correcting this deficiency was the establishment of a ‘school for cooperators’ along the same lines as the trade union and party schools.⁴² The problem with this type of ‘political formation’ was that the people towards whom it was most directed, the managers and directors of the cooperatives, were usually unable to attend because of their work commitments. Almost every intervention made at federal committee level complained about the ‘distance’ between the cooperative

⁴⁰ Mazzolani, Report to the Executive Committee of the Bologna Federation of the PCI, ‘La cooperazione e il Partito nella nostra provincia’, 3rd February, 1950. APC MF. 0325/1097.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Bologna was one of three national centres for the training of PCI cadres and it ran several popular ‘short courses in Marxist theory, the emancipation of the peasantry, party organisation, the emancipation of women and Italian history. Federazione PCI di Bologna APC 0325/1956-1958. For a comprehensive analysis of the work of party schools in Modena see David Travis, Communism in Modena: the development of the PCI in Historical Context (1943-1952), unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1985, chapter six and also ‘Communism in Modena: the provincial origins of the Partito Comunista Italiano (1943-1945)’, in the Historical Journal, Vol. XXIX (1986), pp.875-95 by the same author.

leaders and the party apparatus and talked in exasperated tones of the isolation of good Party militants in the cooperative organisations.⁴³

An attempt by the more moderate members of the federal committee such as Cenerini and Dal Fiore to urge the Party to deal with the problems of the cooperative movement sector by sector rather than proposing a universal remedy for the entire organisation were met with a strong rebuff by secretary Bonazzi,

‘The federal committee is the most important organ of political direction and as such it sees the problems of cooperation in our province from a political and general organisational stand-point without going into its specific aspects; it sees things from the point of view of the class struggle and the formation of a democratic consciousness among the broad mass of cooperation.’⁴⁴

But while the federal secretary lamented the lack of control which the Party exercised over individual cooperatives and sectors, this was the criticism of a father for his prodigal son, for there was no doubt that the cooperative movement was perceived as part of the extended family of Bolognese Communism. For this reason the growth or decline of the cooperative movement was interpreted as a strengthening or weakening of the PCI’s economic and political power in the province. Comparing the situation in 1946 to that of 1950, Bonazzi reported that the membership of agricultural cooperatives had remained static at 27,000, consumer cooperative membership had declined from 60,000 to 55,652 while production coops had increased their membership from 8,000 to 11,067.⁴⁵

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Table 3. 'Red' Cooperatives in the province of Bologna, 1948-1950.⁴⁶

Type of Cooperative	1948	1950
Production and labour cooperatives	120	168
Consumer cooperatives	80	71
Agricultural cooperatives	17	49
Others	150	97
Total number of cooperatives	398	385

Source: Federazione PCI di Bologna, APC 0325/1657, 1950.

The two main factors which contributed to the decline in the number of cooperatives and absolute membership of Federcoop during this period were the protracted economic recession and the effects of the rapid polarisation of civil society following the 1948 elections.⁴⁷ Although this left socialcommunist cooperatives more isolated, they were an isolated majority, and far from being disheartened by the economic and legal restrictions which the government was imposing on cooperative enterprise, the new managers showed an even greater dedication to building and improving the cooperative movement in the province.⁴⁸ Leading figures in Federcoop such as Dal

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⁴⁷ See Table 3.

⁴⁸ It is significant that Prefect Borghese (who admittedly was a former Socialist leader of the CLN during the war) complained of the discrimination against construction cooperatives in the awarding of state contracts for reconstruction work inspite of the fact

Fiore, Mazzolani, and Colombini were also senior members of the provincial federation of the PCI and their technical and managerial skills were regarded as highly as their political commitment. By launching initiatives in favour of flood victims from the south and setting-up soup kitchens for the unemployed during the winter, the cooperative leaders showed their sensitivity to the political as well as the humane need for welfare and solidarity.⁴⁹ Not only did this put the charitable organisations of the Church on the defensive, it also served as an example to a government which appeared deaf to the calls for a state welfare and emergency programme which would guarantee Italians more than the limited public assistance which fascism had extended to certain privileged categories of workers.

Nevertheless complaints that the cooperatives were politically weak and over-concerned with the economic dimension of their operations continued to be heard at federal committee level. Cenerini, in particular, criticised cooperative managers for not doing more to advance the cause of Communism in their day-to-day work, arguing that the 56 cooperative retail outlets were 56 potential sites for the dissemination of propaganda for the socialist movement, an operation which was deemed necessary because, '...the shopkeepers never waste an opportunity to use their stores for propaganda against us.'⁵⁰

As a solution to this lack of political direction, Cenerini suggested the establishment of a core of what amounted to Party commissars working alongside the cooperative directors and instructing him (and less frequently her) on the correct political course. In addition he felt that the PCI's school for trade unionists and cooperators lacked

that these cooperatives tendered at lower prices. Report of the prefect, ACS M.I.(Gab) 215/22515 2nd April, 1946.

⁴⁹ The prefect noted that Federcoop was coordinating the collection of food, blankets and clothing donated by its member organisations for the victims of flooding in Campania in November, 1949. ACS M.I.(Gab) 42/3014.

⁵⁰ Meeting of the federal committee of the Bologna PCI, 3rd February, 1950. APC MF. 0325/1108

theoretical depth and that cooperative managers should be required to attend a more ideologically exacting course at the school for Party cadres. Leaving aside the vexed question of Communist attitudes towards the ceti medi (who certainly would have included the hated 'bottegai'), Cenerini's comments suggest that a strongly Bolshevik concept of the PCI's function at the head of the social and economic movements in the province still persisted among many of the senior Party activists.⁵¹

Whatever the political critique of the cooperatives' activity in Bologna might have been, by the middle of the 1950s the movement's commercial and economic success was unquestionable. Emilia's correspondent described the Cooperative Federation as, '...a force which has a considerable weight in the economic life of the province, (and) a very great influence on public opinion as a mature movement which is conscious of the prospects for development...'⁵²

In 1953, consumer cooperatives accounted for 15% of all retail sales in the province and their market strength undoubtedly helped to lessen the impact of price rises, although inflation continued to increase. Membership had stabilised at around 70,000 and the greater presence of white-collar members revealed that the organisations were able to appeal to a wider occupational spectrum than in the first years after Liberation.⁵³ By 1954, the 376 cooperatives which traded in the province together employed 116,818 men and 33,535 women. Some of the agricultural cooperatives were described as 'model firms' by the Ministry of Agriculture which awarded several prizes for the quality and quantity of rice production, and foreign agriculturalists often visited the province to observe new farming techniques which were being experimented by the larger cooperatives.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² E. Mazzoli cit. p.333.

⁵³ See table 4 below.

⁵⁴ Mazzoli cit.

Table 4. Social composition of the Provincial Federation of Cooperatives and Mutual Societies of Bologna in 1950 and 1953.⁵⁵

Occupation	Number of Members	% of Total
Braccianti	15,284	21.9
Workers	31,875	45.69
Tenants	707	1.01
Mezzadri	5,846	8.37
Direct cultivators	1,376	1.96
Housewives	6,528	9.36
Professionals	818	1.26
White-collar employees	7,061	10.45
Total	69,495	100.00

Source: Mazzoli cit. p.333 and Bologna PCI internal documents.

The Communist Party continued to dominate the management councils of nearly all the cooperatives in the province, but the PCI defended its majority position by claiming that this was simply a measure of the Party's political strength in the local community.⁵⁶ This was certainly true, but it also allowed the PCI to apply some political direction to the running of these collective enterprises even if this remained largely symbolic. In spite of the clarion calls for a closer scrutiny of cooperative

⁵⁵ Based on 69,495 members, or 94.75% of the total. The percentage of rural 'ceti medi' in the producer cooperatives was approximately equivalent to their share of the rural population. The same could not be said for the city however, where only 4% of the membership of labour or production cooperatives was non-manual.

⁵⁶ See Table 5.

management by senior Party cadres, there is no evidence that this had an appreciable impact on the day-to-day administration of these firms, which as Novella conceded, were forced to compete in the capitalist market as any other capitalist enterprise.

Table 5. Political composition of the management committees of cooperative firms in the Province of Bologna in 1953.⁵⁷

Party	No. of Councillors	% of Total
Communist	1,506	59.4
Socialist	633	24.97
Social Democrat, DC, Independent etc.	396	15.63
Total	2,535	100.00

Source: Mazzoli cit.

The cooperative movement was important to the PCI for demonstrational rather than confrontational reasons. It existed as an alternative economic system even if most Party hierarchs were hostile to any suggestion that cooperative enterprise might be able to replace capitalism. Any challenge to monopoly power was seen as a positive step on the Italian road to socialism, and in Emilia where retail monopolies had yet to establish themselves by the early 1950s, consumer cooperatives gave the Party some leverage with the small producers and retailers who were fearful of unrestricted competition. But as many leaders of the Party and Federcoop admitted, cooperativism was a confined world which continued to reflect the workerist defensiveness of the early Social Reformists. Bonazzi and his colleagues did not want to see a return to 'socialist utopianism' and the success of the post-war cooperative movement threatened to revive this idealism particularly among the older Socialists who still

⁵⁷ Based on 96.4% of all council members.

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⁵⁷ Based on 96.4% of all council members.

played a key role in the 'giunta d'intesa' between the PCI and PSI. Too much criticism of cooperation would encourage greater calls for autonomy among the anti-fusionists in the PSI, too little could be seen as a concession to the neo-reformists' belief in the achievability of working-class autarchy.

However disingenuous the 'alternative model' which the cooperatives represented, the development of these 'progressive enterprises' did at least allow the PCI to contrast its economic organisations with those of the major capitalists and employers whose combative stance against the industrial labour movement was becoming ever more pronounced. In the following section, the implications of this growing industrial conflict are considered in terms of the political strategy of the PCI.

(v) Working-class unity and the political organisation of labour.

In the late 1940s, Communist Party hegemony in the work-place was threatened by two quite different but equivalent perils, unemployment and the 'free' trade unions. In February 1950, the Federal Labour Chamber recorded 205,796 members as compared to 242,764 in the previous year which meant that the CGIL had only retained 86.7% of the workers it enrolled in 1949. Recruitment was down in nearly every category, but was particularly poor in government offices and agencies, the post office, commerce, clothing and textiles, banking and insurance, and entertainment. In his report to the federal executive committee, Venturoli suggested that the persistence of high levels of unemployment was an important explanation, but whereas FIOM had continued to enrol 1,500 redundant workers in the organisation, most other trade unions did not organise the unemployed. One of the chief reasons for the drift of unemployed workers away from contact with the labour movement was, as Venturoli admitted, a result of the removal of the 'uffici di collocamento' from trade union control, meaning that local labour chambers lost contact with workers who had been made redundant.⁵⁸ This was a direct sign of the structural damage which the

⁵⁸ APC MF. 0325/1139-1140. Giuseppe Venturoli, 'Problemi sindacali', report to the Central Committee of the Bologna Federation of the PCI, March 1950.

government had inflicted on the labour movement, but the indirect attacks on the socialcommunist leadership of organised labour were no less significant.

At the important Sabiem plant, the 'Saragatians' were able to win 91 votes in the election to the factory council in 1949 while the Communist candidates were only able to poll 6 votes, and although this was an unusual result, as Venturoli complained, 'Many errors that were made by the comrades at Sabiem are also being made in other factories.'⁵⁹ By contrast, ACLI was seen as less of a threat in the city because it tended to concentrate its membership in the mountain comuni of the province and in sectors where the socialcommunists had never established a dominant position such as schools, banks, small farms and among white-collar employees.⁶⁰ An impression of the relative strengths of the parties within the trade union organisations of the province can be gained from figures which the PCI produced for the elections to the Federal Labour Chamber in 1949. The Communists were the largest party with 56,723, followed by the Socialists with 14,169 while the Christian Democrats and PSLI (later PSDI) polled 6,163 and 4,447 respectively.

The PSLI was described by the PCI as, '...a party in the service of the national bourgeoisie and America...' but the Communists were careful not to underestimate a political organisation which had the capacity to spread anti-Soviet and anti-Communist propaganda and to recruit 'new socialist reformists' especially, 'ex-fascists.'⁶¹ In general the PCI could take some comfort from the relatively low level of active opposition to its trade union organisation at plant or shop-floor level, but the

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Comitato regionale emiliano PCI, 'Le organizzazioni clericali in Emilia', 18th October, 1949 in D'Attorre I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, cit. p.72.

⁶¹ Comitato regionale emiliano PCI, 'Il PSLI in Emilia', 11th March, 1949, in D'Attorre *ibid.* p.70. The PSLI's own union the FIL (Federazione Italiana dei Lavoratori) was particularly strong in Baricella where it had a closed-shop agreement with the landlords which effectively kept out members of the CGIL. Casali & Gagliani *cit.* p.275.

increasingly steep decline in trade union membership and the inefficiency and lack of commitment of some of the older union militants was a cause for concern. What the Communist Party feared was not a rival trade union challenge to its leadership of the labour movement (except in a few Social Democrat strongholds such as Molinella or Budrio), but a gradual growth in disaffection among the politically inactive workforce. The Christian Democrats knew they could not convert a former Socialist to Catholic unionism, but by an assiduous anti-Communist propaganda campaign they might persuade him that the extremists who ran the 'red' unions had no interest in their members but were simply using the workers to undermine democracy and the rule of law. The prefect was convinced that the Communists were intent on keeping the workforce in a constant state of agitation because they knew that a static and silent proletariat was vulnerable to this type of de-alignment.⁶²

The killing of six foundry workers by the police at Modena on the 9th February, 1950 gave the Communist Party an opportunity to organise and direct the urban labour movement in the first political demonstration of collective anger since the 'attentato a Togliatti'. In secretary Bonazzi's report to the federal committee on the response to the massacre a good impression can be gained of the PCI's relationship to the trade union movement in the province. Describing the spontaneous walk-outs and demonstrations of the city's workforce as 'good and opportune', Bonazzi criticised the local trade union leadership for not mobilising their members immediately news of the massacre was received. He claimed that some union officials even dissuaded workers from striking because they had not received official instructions to take industrial action.

⁶² '...any pretext is used to keep the brains of their supporters occupied, and a real bombardment of meetings...(is kept up) in order to give them no time to think in an autonomous and subjective way.' ACS M.I.(Gab) 42/3014, report of the prefect for November 1949. Data on political meetings collected by the questura between 1948 and 1953 reveals the high level of political activity which the Camera del Lavoro and the parties of the left maintained compared to the Christian Democrats. See Figures 2.2 to 2.9.2.

This timidity was understandable given the extent of the control exercised by the Party apparatus over the general strike that was called throughout the province for the following day and which Bonazzi later went on to describe:

'The Party politically determined the nature and direction of the battle, and when we say this we mean that the comrades who direct the mass organisations had agreed with the Party on the way to proceed, that there was discipline, that the Party managed and followed its development not only through its control of our comrade trade union leaders, but also through its own organisations, the federal apparatus, the Party sections and its cells. These are all positive features.'⁶³

The federal secretary was generally pleased with the trade unions' mobilisation of the work force but another important test of the Party's organisational and political strategy had been the collaboration with the PSI which was described as good in the province but deficient in the city. A major demonstration of this type also gave the PCI an opportunity to review the work of its trade unionists. In a style reminiscent of Lenin's 'What Is To Be Done', Bonazzi warned that,

'The very nature of the trade union official's job can easily lead him to lose sight of the fundamental objectives of the struggle of the working class. In the mind of the trade union leader even a conservative, non-revolutionary mentality can develop that tries to resolve questions through compromise and by undervaluing the one and only political aim of the working class. Together with the trade unions we must therefore advance the workers' movement until our objectives are realised, until the proletarian revolution and socialism are achieved.'⁶⁴

but if the strikes and protests lacked a firm and decisive political leadership, the trade

⁶³ APC MF.0325/1066, Enrico Bonazzi's report to the central committee of the Bologna federation of the PCI on the 'sciopero generale per i fatti di Modena,' March 1960.

⁶⁴ Ibid. APC MF.0325/1065.

unions were less at fault than the Communist Party itself which not just in Bologna but all over Italy, ‘...failed to hold (its) trade unionists...sufficiently close to the Party, not just in a physical sense, but from a disciplinary, political and ideological point of view.’⁶⁵

There was thus no conception of a flexible relationship, let alone autonomy, existing between the PCI and the most important social movement in the province.

However this did not alter the triumphant assessment of the day of action, for although the prefect refused both the CdL and mayor Dozza the right to assemble in Piazza Maggiore, the PCI claimed that as many as 100,000 workers occupied the city’s main square, that virtually all the shops were closed (a claim strongly contested by the prefecture), and that, ‘...many people who are not on our side felt hostility towards the rulers of our country on that day.’ But Bonazzi also admitted that the Bolognese bourgeoisie would put up a fight if they felt their interests were threatened, ‘We must not believe that on every occasion they will shut up shop and disappear.’ This comment revealed the federal secretary’s open contempt for the very ‘ceto medio’ with whom Dozza and Colombi, echoing Togliatti, were urging Communists and workers to collaborate.⁶⁶ The fact that no other member of the central committee challenged Bonazzi’s ‘sectarianism’ suggested that the appeal of class alliances was conditional on the petty-bourgeoisie falling into line with the political objectives espoused by the local federation at any given time.

The government’s offensive against the PCI and its collateral organisations had revived a certain die-hard mentality among local Communist cadres and leaders which placed a greater emphasis on the strength of the Party apparatus and the need for a more politically committed membership. In 1950, for example, the Party introduced a rule that every comrade who was employed must be a member of his or her factory cell. This represented a further move towards a ‘worker-militant’ membership profile

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 0325/1067.

which the PCI in re-building its factory organisations had begun in the crisis year of 1948.⁶⁷ Within four years of the instruction to create factory cells, 350 new cells had sprung-up in Emilia alone. However, 70% of the workers who were members of the PCI also remained in their territorial cell which suggested that the Party was undecided on the best form of grass-roots organisation to adopt and where possible encouraged its members to join both groups.⁶⁸

Until the mid-1950s the Bologna Federation of the PCI was continuing to increase its membership inspite of a serious national decline.⁶⁹ The Party was not only numerically stronger it was also politically tougher, those who remained or joined the Party during the fiercest years of the Scelbanite offensive against the Communist movement were regarded as more committed, more combative and more politically aware than the Party had been in the 1940s. As we have seen, part of the reason for the higher profile of militants and active rank-and-file members in the Bologna federation was to do with better organisation, propaganda and political education. However, the most convincing explanation for the dynamic growth in Communist activity in these years was the PCI's close involvement with the agrarian disputes of the second half of the 1940s and the campaign for peace and disarmament in the early 1950s.⁷⁰

In the first years after the war, Togliatti and the leadership of the 'partito nuovo' had discouraged the social mobilisation of the working mass for reasons which are well known (dislike for 'adventurism', fears of a Greek-style civil war, commitment to a peaceful transition to democracy, and the need to exert stronger control over the trade union organisations). But by the late-1940s and early 1950s the peasants and workers

⁶⁷ Casali & Gagliani cit. p.269.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ See Figure 1. As we have noted this was almost entirely due to a rapid growth of the FGCI in the first half of the 1950s.

⁷⁰ See figures 2.7 to 2.9.2.

Fig. Membership figures for the Bologna federation of the FCI 1944-1997

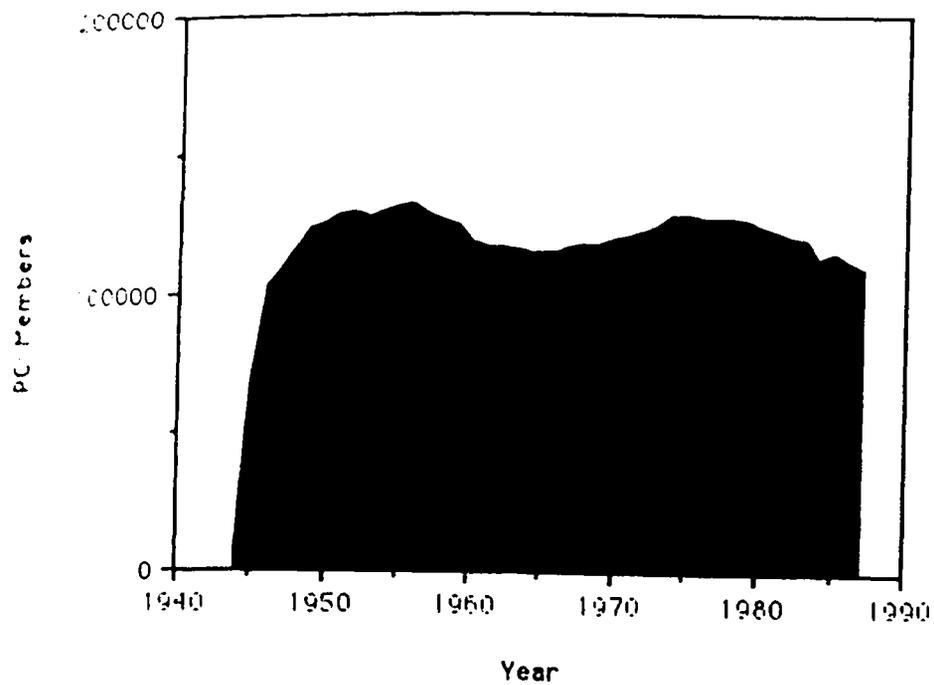
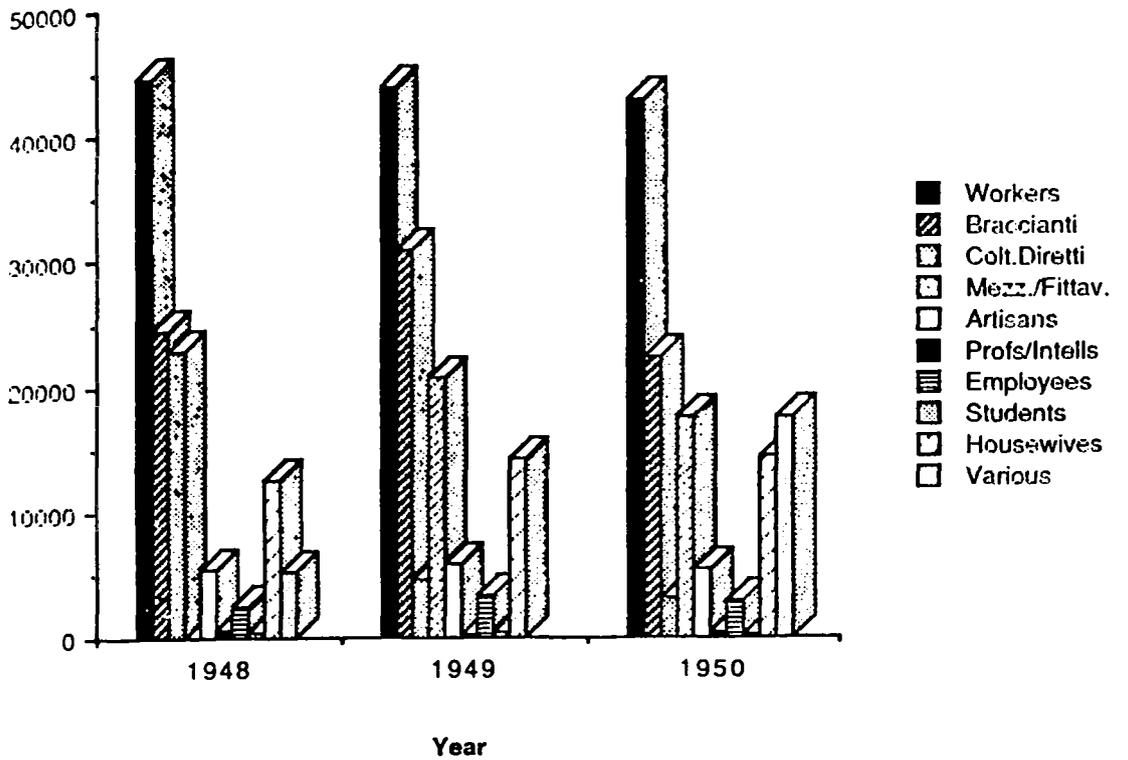
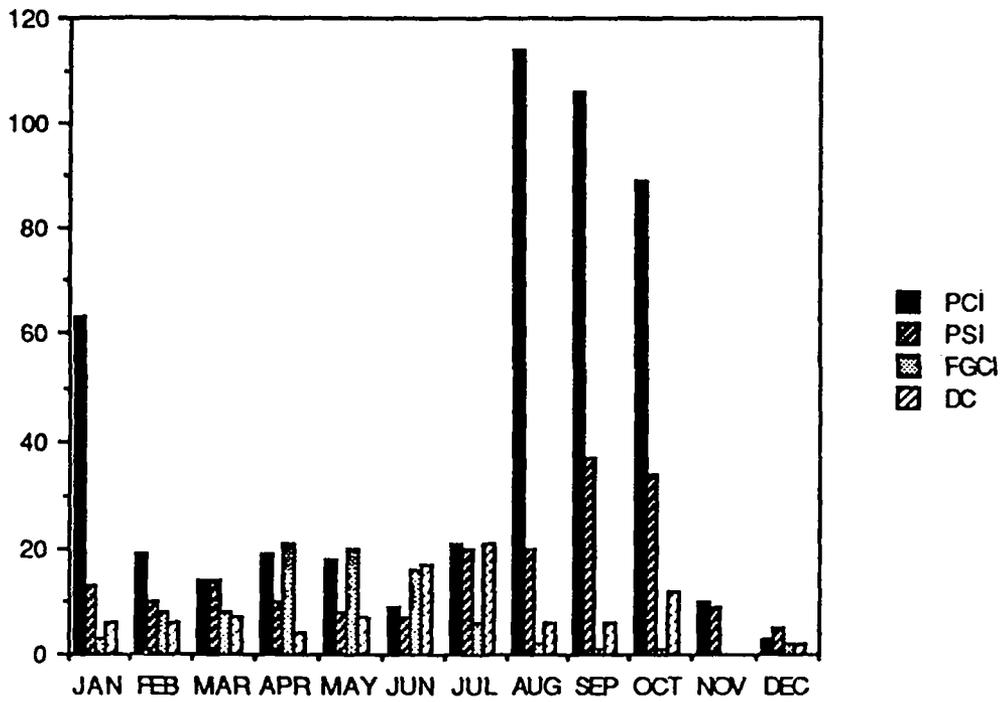


Fig. 2.1.

Membership of the Bologna federation of the PCI by social category 1948-1950

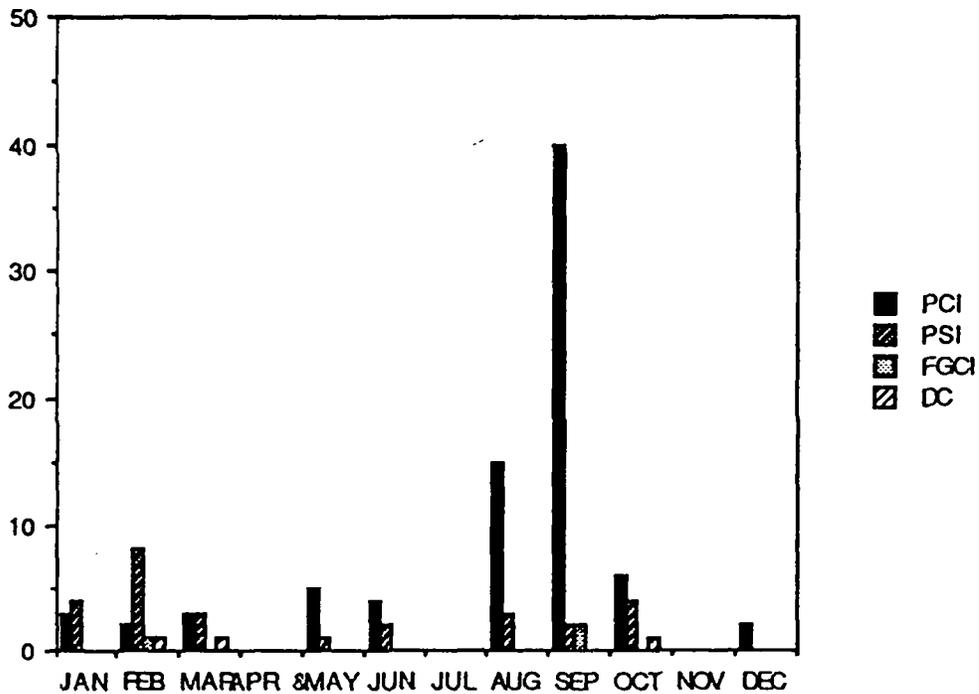


Political meetings in the province of Bologna in 1950
organised by the PCI,PSI, FGCI & DC.



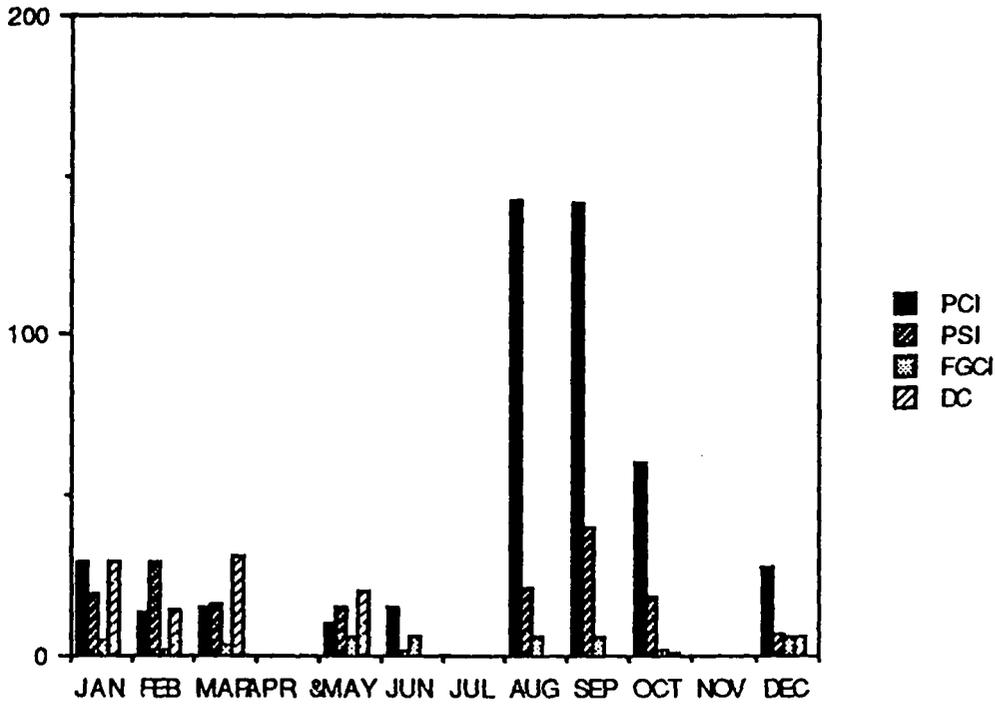
1950

Political meetings in the city of Bologna in 1951
organised by the PCI,PSI,FGCI & DC.



1951

Political meetings in the province of Bologna in 1951
organised by the PCI,PSI,FGCI & DC.



1951

Fig.2.9.1.

Political meetings in the city of Bologna 1952-3
organised by the PCI,PSI,FGCI & DC.

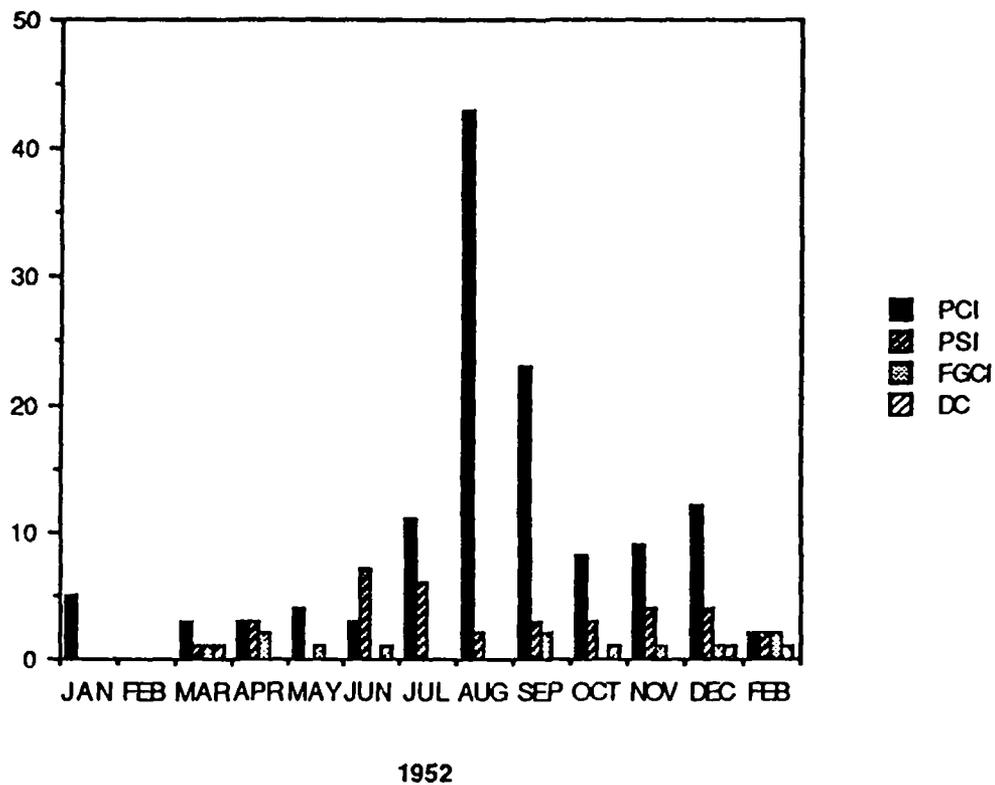


Fig.2.9.2.

Political meetings in the province of Bologna 1952-3
organised by the PCI,PSI,FGCI & DC.

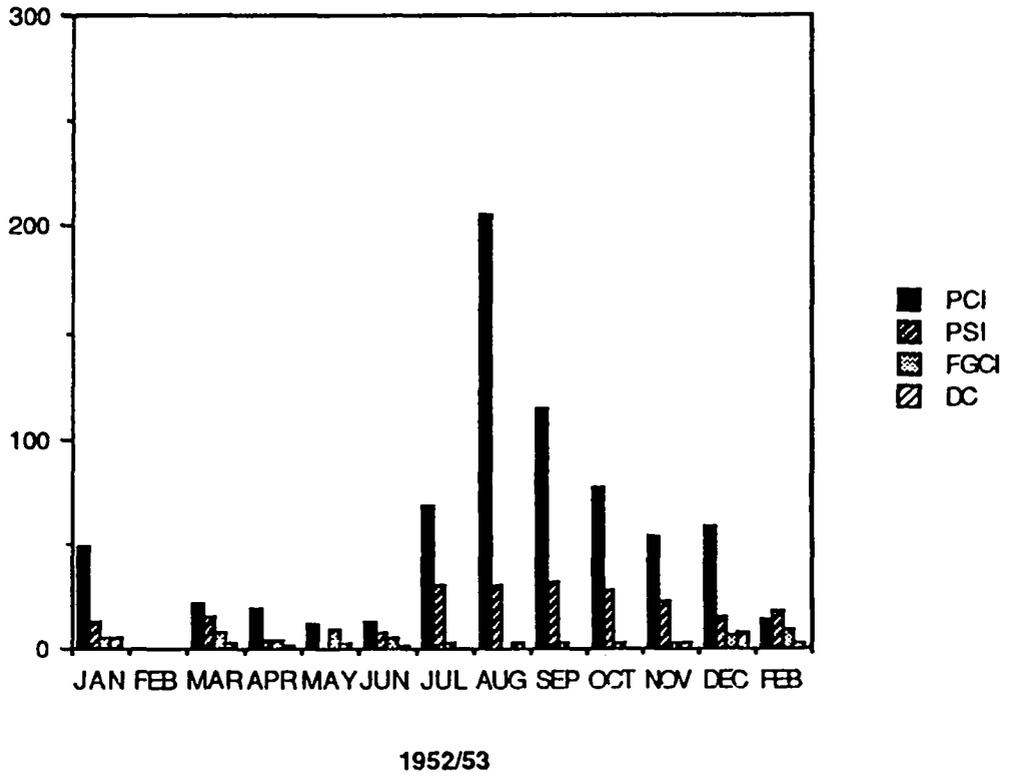
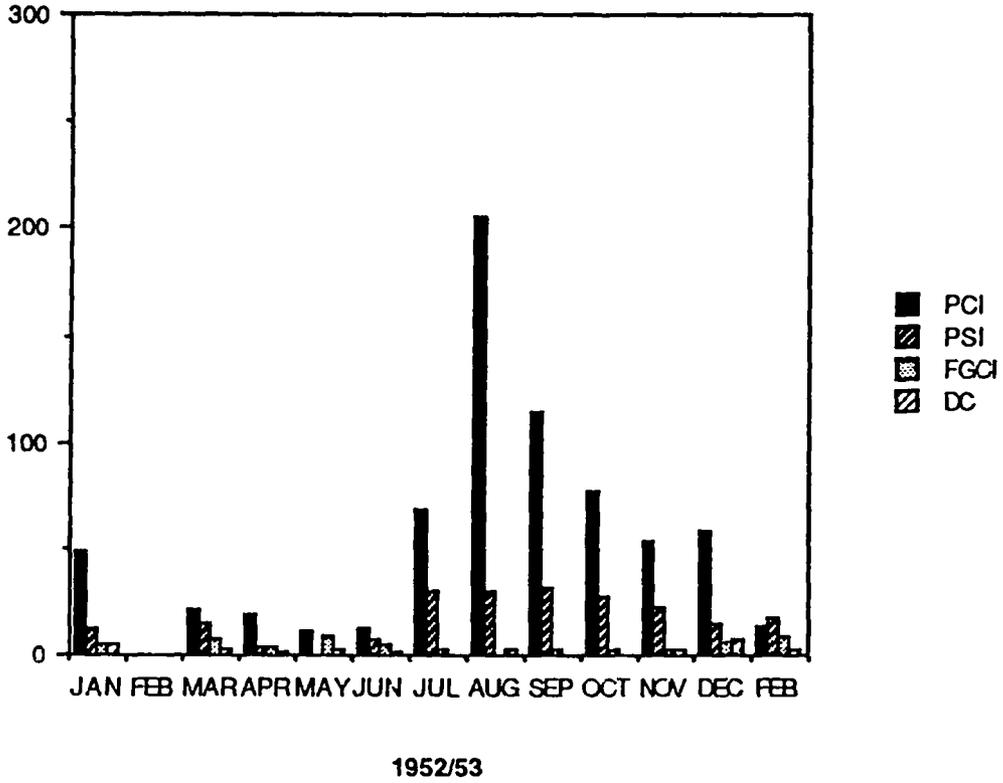


Fig.2.9.2.

Political meetings in the province of Bologna 1952-3
organised by the PCI,PSI,FGCI & DC.



who had obeyed the call to support the constitutional establishment of parliamentary democracy grew disillusioned at the lack of progress towards the economic justice which the Constitution had promised. Paradoxically, the revival of organised protest which the lack of reform generated also revived interest and support for the Communist Party which was seen as the one political force capable of resisting the combined attack of the government and employers with any success. In the second part of this chapter we trace the development of the twin campaigns for new farm contracts and for improved wages and conditions for farm labourers which Confederterra conducted in the 1940s, and we analyse this conflict in the light of the Communist Party's own reform proposals and the centrality of its policy on rural alliances.

Part III. Rural conflict and the growth of peasant militancy after the Liberation.

1. Introduction.

The 'brotherhood of arms' which symbolised the political unity which the Communist Party aimed to build at the base of Bolognese society was firmly rooted in the political culture of the peasant leagues which began to recruit and organise again after the Liberation. The 'Confederation of Agricultural Workers' (Federterra) was undeniably the most powerful force among the agricultural workers of the Emilian countryside and could boast a long tradition of organised struggle against the powerful landowners of the Valle Padana. After the war, Federterra emerged with the experience of twenty years of fascist repression 'on its shoulders' but with new, younger 'capi' who were resolved not to allow the various categories of its membership to be divided against themselves. Helped by the political and military training which the Resistance struggle provided, the Federterra leaders were organised and determined not to allow the landless peasants to face similar or worse levels of unemployment and deprivation than the braccianti experienced during the pre-war years.

Recognition of the disastrous consequences which 'bracciantile' centred 'maximalism' had had on the peasant leagues during the last great rural conflict in 1919/1920 persuaded the PCI's leaders in the peasant leagues that the campaign for better wages and employment for the landless labourers had to be subordinated to the share-croppers' struggle for an improved farm contract if the Party's social alliance strategy was to succeed.⁷¹ Because the DC had virtually abandoned the field to the left, the landowners' intransigence offered the Communist Party an excellent opportunity to build a hegemonic presence within a stratum of the rural workforce which had traditionally been suspicious of and resistant to the appeals of socialism.

Local communist figures such as Luciano Romagnoli, who was to become a provincial and then national leader of Federbraccianti helped to create a unity of purpose among the various components of the rural trade unions which reproduced in many ways the organisational and political discipline of the Resistance.⁷² Romagnoli was an 'organic' Gramscian in his political and economic strategy and he waged the war of position with great skill, holding back the landless labourers from a frontal assault on the landowners until the autumn of 1947 when the entire Valle Padana was convulsed by a series of powerful strikes and boycotts which heralded a new stage in the struggle against landed privilege and exploitation.⁷³ We will return to the events of 1947 later in the chapter but in order to understand the evolution of rural protest in Bologna we now need to consider the impact of the share-croppers' struggle on the political and economic organisation of the province.

⁷¹ On the early history of Federterra in the Province of Bologna see Capecchi, 'Classe operaia e cultura borghese' cit. p.218 and the classic study by Renato Zangheri, Le campagne emiliane nell'epoca moderna, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1957.

⁷² D'Attorre La Politica, cit. p.167.

⁷³ Ginsborg, cit. p.114.

2. The Agrarian Reform Movement and the Share-croppers' Struggle 1945-1947.

Throughout the summer of 1945 wave after wave of demonstrations shook nearly every comune of the province as rural workers protested at dramatically rising prices and the growth of the black market.⁷⁴ Often these protests were linked to more explicitly political demands such as calls for the immediate and comprehensive 'epurazione' (clean-up) of fascists and the admission of partisans into the state police. Increasingly demands for agrarian reform were seen on placards and banners as Federterra and the local labour chambers began a concerted campaign to reform the 'patto colonico'. The 'patto' was the farm contract which regulated the relationship between the share-cropper and the proprietor, and its origins dated at least as far back as the Romans. As we have seen this form of farming was very diffused in Emilia and particularly in the province of Bologna. Essentially the contract which was in force until 1943, when the fall of Mussolini threw the entire agrarian structure into crisis, was the product of the pre-fascist Giolittian regime's reform of 1920 and was known as the 'Patto Paglia-Calda.' Yet this legislation was universally revised in the landowners favour by subsequent fascist decrees.

This complicated national framework was further entangled by local variations of the 'patto' where the authority of custom and tradition was reinforced by the landowners' use of the courts to oblige his farmers to produce certain types of crop (invariably the more profitable) or to divide the produce in his favour. The Federterra maintained that the 'patto colonico' was legally and morally indefensible since it was imposed by force on a mezzadria which had been stripped of its rights and legal protection.

⁷⁴ 30,000 people demonstrated in the towns of Anzola nell'Emilia, S.Giorgio di Piano, Mordano, Minerbio, Bazzano, S.Giovanni in Persiceto, Granarolo, S.Pietro in Casale, Galiera and Pieve di Cento between the end of June and the middle of July 1945. Report of the Commander in Chief of the Carabinieri, 8th August, 1945. ACS (M.I.Gab) 190/21135/II (1945-46).

Unable to produce a revision of farm contracts that would be acceptable to the sharecroppers and the agrari, the agriculture minister Gullo issued what amounted to a holding decree in April 1945 which ordered the deferral of contract revisions until one year after the end of the war.

Against this background of growing rural discontent and a strong antifascist political culture which was directed mainly at the agrarian supporters and members of the blackshirts, it was inevitable that conflict would openly explode between the agrari and the leagues at the first opportunity after the Liberation. The 'vertenza agraria', as the press labelled the dispute between the landowners and Federterra, polarised very rapidly into a demand on one side for a 10% to 15% increase in the peasant's share of the crop and livestock and on the other the owners refusal to accept even the smallest modification of the contract.⁷⁵

The position of the national government under Ferruccio Parri and the territorial Allied Military Government was against revision 'pending legislation' which Federterra regarded as an invitation to the landowners to maintain their intransigent position. Such a policy was unlikely to defuse the rural tensions which led to the blockading of grain stores at Sesto Imolese in August 1945 which the chief of police described as '...una piega drammatica.'⁷⁶ The mobilisation intensified in the harvest season when landowners were at their most vulnerable to strikes and boycotts.

In response to a call from all the labour chambers of Emilia-Romagna, on the 9th August a demonstration in defence of Federterra's campaign and jobs and wages was called in every provincial capital of the region. In Bologna alone the Giornale dell'Emilia reported a crowd of 150,000 demonstrators who had come from many of

⁷⁵ At the provincial conference of Federterra in June 1945, the delegates approved a division of 60% for the farmer and 40% to the owner with all the expenses for the repair of wartime damage to be paid by the owner. (MI.Gab) 192/21221 (1945-46).

⁷⁶ ACS (M.I.Gab) 192/21221 (1945-46) Police report, 4th August, 1945.

the outlying towns of the province winding their way through the streets preceded by 'only one banner, the tricolour of the Labour Chamber and its Executive Committee.'⁷⁷

Demonstrations and protests continued into the autumn as the campaign of the mezzadri assumed an ever greater importance within the agricultural reform movement. On the 4th October, Giuseppe Di Vittorio addressed a crowd of 30,000 people in Bologna's Piazza Maggiore in support of the share-croppers demands for a new farm contract.⁷⁸ The share-croppers dispute was the first important test of the rural solidarity which the Communists and Socialists had tried to build in the countryside during and after the Resistance. It was therefore vital that the agrari were met with a united and disciplined opposition capable of resisting intimidation from the landowners and their police protectors.

A meeting at the regional CLN headquarters in July, 1945 between the landowners, Federterra, the prefect and the AMG provides a unique insight into the political and economic conflict which erupted in the Bolognese countryside that summer. The prefect records that,

'...when the representative of the Labour Chamber intervened declaring that any discussion was irrelevant because the peasants were already sub-dividing their products according to the percentage laid down by Federterra - this outburst irritated the Allied officer who jumped up and punched the table violently declaring "No! We are in charge here; the products will be divided 50-50," and with that he abandoned the meeting without so much as a salute. The prefect followed the Allied officer commenting, "See how they treat us?" to which the representative of the Labour Chamber replied, "It doesn't matter, the revolution is coming." And thus the meeting

⁷⁷ 'La grandiosa dimostrazione delle libere forze del lavoro' Giornale dell'Emilia, 10th August 1945, Vol.1. No.22. in Ventura cit. p.31.

⁷⁸ Ibid. Police report 4th October, 1945.

ended.⁷⁹

Federterra's confidence was born out by successive reports from the authorities which admitted that many landowners 'through fear and intimidation' had agreed to sign new contracts according to the quotas laid down in the 'libretto' issued to every share-cropper by Federterra. This booklet described the proportion of each crop and farm product that the peasant should consign or keep and it varied depending on the quality of the land (for example in the mountain zones much of the land was uncultivable because of mines and unexploded shells). The proportion of crop given up also varied according to whether the peasant had made a contribution for 1944 which many had not been able to because of crop damage or the removal or slaughter of their animals by the Germans. In the face of such a careful and detailed 'autoriduzione' of the share-croppers' dues, the landowners had only the option of legal action and distraint of goods as a remedy. This proved ineffective in a climate of continual mobilisation which even Federterra found hard to control. Indeed the Vice-Commander of the Carabinieri admitted that in August the situation in the province was deteriorating rapidly due to the intransigence of the landowners.⁸⁰ With no agreement in sight by December the prefect was forced to call on the Communist mayors of the comuni to abstain from taking direct initiatives in the disputes while he praised the Federterra leaders for their attempts to calm the situation.⁸¹

In the new year, the prefect's position had changed and he appealed to the Minister of the Interior for permission to endorse the 60:40 division approved by most of the local councils in the province.⁸² In spite of the Interior Ministry's insistence that revised contracts were illegal under a Decree of the 19th October, 1944, increasing pressure was being brought to bear on the agrari by the prefect, the CLN, Minister Gullo and

⁷⁹ ACS (M.I.Gab) 192/21221 (1945-46) 13th July, 1945.

⁸⁰ Ibid. Report of 16th August, 1945.

⁸¹ Ibid. Prefect's report of 16th december, 1945.

⁸² Ibid. Telegram from Prefect to Interior Ministry, 9th January, 1946.

Under-Secretary Segni to accept the new balance of power in the countryside and approve the revised contracts.

A significant obstacle to the resolution of the conflict had been the spate of attacks and killings directed at large landowners following the Liberation. But it is difficult to quantify the number of landowners who were killed as a direct result of the rural mobilisations for new contracts. A list of murdered or disappeared landowners compiled by the Questura di Bologna in 1946 suggests that ordinary criminal motives were responsible for most deaths which often resulted from an attempted robbery, but the police were confident that at least six landowners who were active members of the PNF or known members of Nazifascist squads were killed for revenge. The fate of Enrico Bassi assassinated in July 1945 in the remote village of Crespellano was typical of such 'partisan justice'. His bullet ridden body was found with a sign attached to it which read, 'questa e la fine del segretario del fascio.'⁸³

In order to demonstrate its complete opposition to violence Federterra issued a joint leaflet with the Agriculturalists' Association in March 1946. Both organisations roundly condemned the killings and assaults, but only Federterra referred to the need to stamp out fascist violence which had resulted in the deaths of several former partisans. With the public condemnation by the CLN, the PCI, ANPI and other mass organisations of the perpetrators of these murders, tensions began to ease in the Spring of 1946. By May of that year, the CGIL was confident enough to write to Minister of the Interior Romita quoting the Secretary of the Provincial Labour Chamber's assertion that the 'vertenza' was all but over since nearly all the owners had agreed to the new contracts.⁸⁴ Ironically it was the prefect's delay in signing agreements for the 'Opere Pie'⁸⁵ which was prolonging the unrest in the eastern parts

⁸³ ACS (M.I.Gab) 192/21221 (1945-46) Undated police report.

⁸⁴ ACS (M.I.Gab) 192/21221 (1945-46). Letter to On. Giuseppe Romita 17th May, 1946.

⁸⁵ These were former Church lands administered by the state and the local communes, their income was originally intended to finance the Church's charitable work.

of the province and the trade unions urged the government to intervene to prevent strikes and boycotts continuing into the summer.

The national government had been almost as exasperated by the intransigence of the landowners as the peasant leagues themselves, but because of the dependence of the Christian Democrats on the electoral patronage of the southern 'latifondi', a thoroughgoing reform of Italy's feudal agricultural system was unlikely to succeed. De Gasperi responded to the CGIL's appeal for government intervention to solve the dispute between share-croppers and owners in June 1946 with a recommendation that landlords should make a contribution of 24% of one year's income to make good war damage together with another 10% for improvements to the land. However the Prime Minister refused to alter the 50:50 division in the product which had been the main target of peasant opposition. However limited its provisions the 'lodo De Gasperi' did nevertheless represent the first attempt at improving the situation of the share-cropper population in the teeth of very fierce resistance by the landowners. However, because the 'lodo' was literally a gift or award it was not legally enforceable and the landowners did their best to ignore it.⁸⁶

In July 1946 the prefect reported that the Agriculturalists' Association had refused to declare its position on the 'lodo' because it feared that a movement towards acceptance might be taken as an admission of defeat.⁸⁷ This was an astonishing position for the landowners to adopt since Federterra, as we have seen, had been remarkably successful in implementing its own 60% division of the product on the beleaguered agrari and the association had much to gain by negotiating acceptance of the 'lodo' with Federterra. The following month the landowners' position had hardened into a net rejection of the 'lodo' although some individual landowners had agreed to new contracts. Even the prefect found this stance unreasonable and suggested that the dispute could only be resolved by converting the 'lodo' into

⁸⁶ Ginsborg, cit. p.109.

⁸⁷ (M.I.Gab) 215/22515 (1946) Report of the Prefect, 3rd July, 1946.

legislation.⁸⁸

By the summer of 1948 the two sides in the dispute were no nearer to a formal conclusion of the 'vertenza' than they had been in 1946. At the Christian Democrat national congress on agricultural reform in June, 1948 the party's leadership once again side-stepped the issue fearing the alienation either of the agrarian elites or the small proprietors who constituted a vital electoral force in the south and north east. The party leadership thus avoided open conflict by passing a final resolution which did not state under what conditions land would be conceded to peasant families or which landowners would be required to make the concessions. From a political standpoint this was obviously necessary if the left and right of the DC were to reach an agreement, but the direct consequence was that neither the landowners nor the peasant leagues had any motive for declaring a truce.⁸⁹ Indeed the authorities admitted that far from rapidly eliminating rural strife as the 'lodo' De Gasperi had intended, the organised campaign against the landowners continued into yet another harvest season and the government's refusal to implement a comprehensive reform ensured that the momentum of the rural protest movements remained constantly high.⁹⁰

In the absence of a legal framework for the distribution of the farm product a 'modus vivendi' was arrived at which left the mezzadria with between 50% and 53% of the crop, an arrangement which was authorised by the prefect who gave orders to

⁸⁸ Ibid. 5th August, 1946,

⁸⁹ M.I.(Gab) 85/14903 (1948) Commander-in-Chief of the Carabinieri's report on the political situation in Emilia-Romagna, 23rd June, 1948.

⁹⁰ Emilia-Romagna did not benefit from the piece-meal agrarian reforms introduced to placate the southern peasants such as the 'legge Sila' or the 'legge stralcio'. Segni's bill introduced in November 1950 which aimed at incorporating some of the Federterra demands never progressed beyond the agrarian commission of the Senate where it was killed by a powerful mobilisation of agrarian interests. See Ginsborg, cit. p.138.

confiscate legally any additional products which the peasants had tried to keep.⁹¹ The landowners felt they had been betrayed by the DC but with the declining influence of the agrarian elites in an Italy increasingly dominated by northern industrialists and the politics of Marshall Aid, local Christian Democrat leaders saw more advantage in encouraging the growth of the 'Coldiretti' and independent small farmers than defending the privileges of a landed aristocracy which had always been closer to the politics of the PNF than Don Luigi Sturzo and his followers.

By the end of 1948 although the share-croppers' dispute had not been formally settled, the 'vertenza' of the mezzadri became eclipsed by the landless labourers who now took centre stage in the class struggle of the countryside.

3. Braccianti and Padroni: Rural Unrest in the Province of Bologna, 1947-1950.

In 1951 the rural workforce in the province of Bologna was still overwhelmingly dominated by braccianti who constituted 289,000 of the peasant population compared to 190,000 petty proprietors and share-croppers.⁹² Agricultural production had been severely affected by the war, both in terms of the physical damage done to farms and because vital machinery, fertilizers and transport were all in short supply. The consequences for the landless labourers of Bologna were particularly disastrous. If we take 1938 as a base of 100, the cost of living index rose to 4842 in January 1948 for Italy as a whole while by December 1947 it had reached 5096 in the province of Bologna. In this period retail prices increased by as much as 47 times but the average income of a farm labourer increased by only 20. The desperate condition of the braccianti was further compounded by very high levels of unemployment. In January

⁹¹ Report of the Commander-in-Chief of the Carabinieri on the political situation in Emilia-Romagna, M.I.(Gab) (1948) 85/4903 15th August, 1948.

⁹² Capecchi, 'Classe operaia e cultura borghese', cit. p.196

1947, of the 27,172 farm labourers registered with the municipal labour offices 22,523 were unemployed. Unemployment affected women particularly badly, in the same month, of the 25,412 women workers who registered for work virtually all were unemployed (25,106).

The braccianti had none of the welfare protection which industrial workers enjoyed, such as the 'assegni familiari' (a wage supplement which varied according to the size of a worker's family) or health insurance and welfare assistance. Labourers' incomes especially in the mountain zones had fallen below subsistence levels during the war and remained so in the years immediately following the Liberation.⁹³

In the first ten years after the Liberation working opportunities for the braccianti steadily worsened; in 1946 the yearly average number of working days was 240, in 1949 this had fallen to 170 and in 1953 it had declined to 110. In the 'bassa' town of Crevalcore, for example, the braccianti worked an average of 100 days in 1953, in 1948 they would have earned a total of 159,000 lire a year, in 1953 they earned 110,000 lire. The scarcity of employment could not but have disastrous consequences for the family economy of Bologna's landless labourers. An enquiry into poverty in the

⁹³ In the 1950s the American anthropologist Edward Banfield felt able to write, 'Most people in Montegrano are desperately poor. Many have nothing to eat but bread, and not enough of that...There is no time for political life in a society so poor.' (Edward Banfield, The Moral Basis of a Backward Society, The Free Press, Glencoe, Ill. 1958. p.33). Banfield's research suffered from his a priori refusal to see peasant society as geographically and historically variegated (the political passivity he claimed to observe was not even characteristic of large parts of southern Italy). In the province of Bologna, the 1951 Parliamentary Commission on Poverty found a high percentage of peasant families were malnourished and suffered from skin diseases such as pellagra which were the result of a monotonous diet. But it was from the most poverty stricken zone of the province (the 'bassa Bolognese') that most of the members of the PCI and Federbraccianti came and the 'bassa' established itself as the epicentre of the Valle Padana strike movement.

province of Bologna conducted by La Lotta in 1954 found that among, ‘...braccianti, mezzadri, workers of every kind from the city, from the mountains and hills or from the “bassa”, everywhere there existed,’...a terrible destitution, everywhere a collective struggle against poverty.’⁹⁴

A letter by a woman farm labourer published by La Lotta in 1954 provides a glimpse of what living conditions were like for the great majority of the braccianti of the ‘bassa’ Bolognese in these years,

‘I am a bracciante but I can’t work much because of the baby who is still very young. Last year I made 40,000 lire, and this year I’ve earned only 20,000. My husband is also a bracciante and last year he earned 110,000 lire; let’s hope it will be like that this year. I have a hen, and today she laid an egg and that egg was all that I had to eat today. Even now I’m hungry, my head is spinning. But I’d rather not have any more debts even if I have to go without food. We have no light, no water and no toilet here. I have to go half a kilometer to reach the nearest well and then climb all the steps with the heavy buckets.’⁹⁵

The post-war struggles which Federterra began in the summer of 1946 with its campaign for the implementation of the Gullo reforms must therefore be considered against a background of severe privation which no act of legislation, liberal, fascist or post-war had done anything to improve. Although Federterra’s demands were extremely moderate the tripartite leadership of the CGIL decided that the need to preserve national solidarity and to generate economic recovery meant that the negotiations over wage increases had to be subordinated to the ‘national interest’. If battle was to be joined with the agrari it would have to be postponed until the share-croppers’ dispute had been resolved and for agriculture production to return to pre-war levels.

⁹⁴ Giuseppe Brini, ‘La miseria a Bologna’, Emilia, Year 3, No.30 (New Series), August 1954, pp.237-240.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* p.239.

But if the agrarian 'reforms' had offered little comfort for the northern mezzadri, the DC's proposals were even less attractive to the landless labourers of the Po valley who saw De Gasperi's and Segni's initiatives as only of benefit to the wealthy small farmers.⁹⁶ The conduct of the mezzadria dispute had shown that direct action against individual landowners produced results, and as it became increasingly obvious that the DC had no intention of introducing a comprehensive land redistribution scheme, the focus of the conflict once again moved from Rome to the countryside.

The re-organisation of Federterra as Confederterra in the autumn of 1946 considerably strengthened the organisational capacity of the rural trade unions on a national and local level and the union rapidly established itself as a responsible and intelligent movement for reform which attracted cross-party support.⁹⁷ As we have seen the 'lodo' De Gasperi was in part an acknowledgement of the importance which Confederterra had acquired in the development of agricultural policy. Although the 'lodo' contained no direct provision for landless farm workers it did at least recommend that 4% of a farm's gross production should be set aside for paying casual labour to repair and improve the land and buildings. This was an important provision because it was seen as an early indication of Confederterra's success in linking the campaign over the share-croppers' contract to the problem of rural unemployment among the landless labourers.

By the time of the first provincial conferences of each of the components of Confederterra in the winter of 1946/47, Federmezzadri and Federbraccianti had already registered a strong growth with 29,224 and 51,239 members respectively and

⁹⁶ P.P. D'Attorre, 'La Politica' in, Zangheri, R. (Ed), Bologna. Storia delle città italiane, Laterza, Bari, 1986, p.167.

⁹⁷ The decision to reconstitute Federterra as Confederterra was taken at the 1st National Congress of Federterra which was held in Bologna between 17th and 21st October, 1946. Four distinct categories were created; braccianti and salarjati, coloni (tenants) and mezzadri, farm employees, mechanics and technicians, and direct cultivators. Bozza, cit.

by February 1947 even the Associazione Coltivatori Diretti which had a much smaller potential membership base could claim 8,400 adherents.

The first congress of Federterra/Confederterra was remarkable for the moderate tone of the speeches delivered from the platform,

'We must admit...that in many cases we are not able to manage farms cooperatively in a way that will be agriculturally productive.'⁹⁸

The speaker then went on to insist that the first priority of Confederterra was to defend the welfare of the small peasant farmer. The Communist Party's agricultural expert Ruggero Grieco underlined this strategy when he wrote,

'Socialism will be won in Italy by actively supporting the millions of peasants who have won the title to the land once owned by the great proprietors.'⁹⁹

While this may have been the only policy capable of winning support among the poor peasantry of the mezzogiorno where the Segni reforms had had an appreciable impact, in the north and in Emilia in particular there were very few tangible advantages of the reforms to be seen among any category of farm worker.

The real issue for the landless labourers of the Valle Padana was not the ownership of land but the struggle for a living wage.

The economic condition of the braccianti, the universal experience of poverty wages and the scarcity of employment, not only encouraged a unity of action but also fostered the perpetuation of divisions between the braccianti and other categories of rural workers which the speeches and slogans of politicians and trade union leaders

⁹⁸ Vidimari, address to the 1st Congress of Confederterra, in La Voce dei Lavoratori, Vol.1, No.13, 19th October, 1946 cited in Bozza *ibid*.

⁹⁹ R. Grieco, 'I comunisti e la lotta per la riforma agraria,' Rome, 1949, in Bozza *ibid*.

could not easily overcome.

The first major braccianti strike was called to demand equal benefits and entitlements for rural workers in August 1947 and it rapidly spread throughout the whole of the Valle Padana. The demands of the Confederterra were very straightforward; the elimination of hourly pay and its replacement with a basic rate, the linking of the 'contingenza' to the 'scala mobile' (which already applied to industrial workers), full insurance cover for machine operators and better rates of pay, recognition of the trade union labour exchanges and recognition of the 'farm councils.'¹⁰⁰ The Agriculturalists' Association responded to the accusation that Confederterra was not making these demands anywhere else in Italy and that the strike had only a political objective.

Not only did all the various components of Confederterra endorse the strike call, but all three currents of the executive (Communist, Socialist and Christian Democrat) supported the strikers demands, although in an interview with L'Avvenire d'Italia, Romagnino, the Provincial Secretary of Confederterra for the DC, denounced the socialcommunists for calling a strike for 'narrowly political ends.' Romagnino's 'defection' provided an early indication of the impossibility of sustaining a broad trade union front in an atmosphere of mutual suspicion and hostility.¹⁰¹

The dispute lasted from the 7th to the 16th August 1947 and involved 15,000 braccianti and 1,720 technicians and farm employees. It was a triumphant display of the PCI's non-aggression pact with the smaller and intermediate landowners since the

¹⁰⁰ Anna Maria Bozza, 'Le lotte nelle campagne bolognesi; 1946-1949' in Storia Contemporanea, Year XXVI, No.117, Oct-Dec. 1974, pp.73-98.

¹⁰¹ However the strength and support for 'white unionism' at this time should not be over-estimated. The prefect admitted that in the summer of 1948 ACLI was not yet a significant labour organisation and that, '...public opinion does not support the establishment of rival white unions and would prefer an independent grouping within the CGIL.' ACS M.I.(Gab) 85/4903, 15th August, 1948.

action was exclusively directed against the agrari and capitalist estates. Confederterra claimed 'a net victory for the braccianti' highlighting the massive participation of the base and the solidarity displayed among the different categories of peasants which allowed 'the overcoming of narrowly economic or corporativistic demands.'¹⁰²

The struggle for the imposition of the 'imponibile di mano d'opera' also had a symbolic significance for it divested the large landowners of the power to decide the fate of individual workers and it was seen by the braccianti very much as a liberation from the 'slave's market' of the daily hirings in the piazza. The ability to control the supply of labour to the large estates through the 'uffici di collocamento' was also considered to be a vital step forward in the emancipation of Italy's peasantry from the 'padroni' and the 'signori.' The Communist Party recognised the justice of the landless labourers' cause but it constantly sought to direct the protests through an organisational matrix which would include even categories of farm owners who the braccianti had been traditionally hostile to (such as the small or intermediate proprietors and the wealthier tenant farmers who regularly employed wage labourers).

The PCI attempted to group all these categories under the organisation of the 'Costituente della Terra' which had been established to campaign for the reform of agriculture in Italy and to implement the provisions of the Constitution concerning land ownership and farming. However, the objective of the 'Costituente della Terra', as with the later 'peace commissions' was not only to bring about a change of government policy, but was also intended to expose the DC's increasing dependency on big business and the agrari. By persuading moderate voices in rural society that the PCI's programme was realistic, fair and beneficial to the vast majority of small and intermediate farmers, the Communists hoped to de-couple the rural petty bourgeoisie from the powerful influence of the Church and Christian Democracy.

In order to fulfil this function the 'Costituente della Terra' was organised on a local

¹⁰² Bozza cit.

level through a number of 'comitati della terra' which were directly elected by assemblies of the inhabitants of individual rural comuni and were intended to include representatives of all the economic and social organisations present in each commune (cooperatives, youth associations, war veterans, ex-partisans etc.) together with important local figures such as doctors, teachers, pharmacists, lawyers and 'progressive' entrepreneurs. It was envisaged that the committees would coordinate and support the activities of local agricultural movements such as the land occupations, 'reverse' strikes and struggles over farm contracts as well as more general economic problems such as the development of rural industries, cooperatives, roads and schools. In addition the 'comitati della terra' were expected to play an arbitrating role in disputes between the different categories of farm workers.

It cannot be said that in Bologna or in Emilia-Romagna generally the 'comitati della terra' acquired the same significance as they had in the south. This was undoubtedly because the 1948-49 wave of strikes in the Valle Padana were entirely directed by Confederterra unlike in the mezzogiorno where the absence of a powerful union organisation meant that the 'comitati della terra' did have an important role in directing and coordinating land occupations and strikes. Another important factor in the failure of the committees to establish themselves in Emilia was the Christian Democrats' triumphant victory in the general election of the 18th April which allowed the agrarian bourgeoisie to reassert its domination over the professional and lower-middle class strata of rural society. Under these conditions the type of progressive pluralism which the PCI aimed to promote through the 'comitati della terra' had little chance of success.

When the next major confrontation between the landowners and the Confederterra erupted in May/June of 1948, the parliamentary reform proposals of the PCI appeared completely irrelevant to the resolution of what was to become a violent and protracted struggle between a by now prepared, confident and well organised agrarian elite and a no less determined and motivated landless labourers' movement.

The 1948 strike lasted from the 23rd May to the 3th June, and the first week passed

off peacefully and without incident. Yet when it became clear that the landowners' association had no intention of negotiating on the substantive demands made by *Confederterra*, the anger and militancy of the workforce took even the strike leaders by surprise. At Decima di Persiceto an organised attempt to break the strike by the local landowner and supporters of the PSLI was blocked by a large crowd of demonstrators. However the indiscriminate beatings of the 'Celere' forced the strikers to flee while the union leaders present at the picket were all arrested for public order offences. The intransigent stance of the landowners was also clearly demonstrated at Argelato when the Marquess of Talon insisted on an escort of armoured cars to move his animals and 'crumiri' through the lines of demonstrators, the predictable result was bloodshed and injury caused mainly by the indiscriminate driving of jeeps and motorcycles into the crowds at high speed.¹⁰³

Immediately following the Decima di Persiceto incident a general strike was called in Bologna for the 4th of June which the then federal secretary of *Confederterra*, Enrico Bonazzi described as, 'a truly grandiose demonstration of conscious force, trade union discipline and civil responsibility on the part of union leaders and Bologna's workers,' while the prefect reported that the 'effectiveness of the trade union alliance has surprised public opinion which expected it to be more badly affected by the impact of PSI/PCI divisions.'¹⁰⁴ The 'army of attack' as Bonazzi described the mass of striking labourers and riceworkers was strong enough to persuade 35% of the estate owners to agree to *Confederterra's* demands but by the same token two-thirds of the owners clearly had no intention of making any concessions.

The proposals which *Confederterra* had put forward in the spring of 1948 were

¹⁰³ The Argelato incident is commemorated in a song 'Siamo partite il 5 di luglio' which is discussed in the final part of this chapter.

¹⁰⁴ Enrico Bonazzi, 'Politiche e lotte agrarie, Bologna 1945-1955' in L. Bignami (Ed) I braccianti. Venti anni di lotta, Editrice Sindacale Italiana, Rome, 1969, p.258.

guaranteed to enrage the landowners' association who like the state authorities had not expected to see demonstrations of solidarity between urban and rural workers and between the various categories of their dependents and employees. Confederterra's five demands struck at the roots of the protected relationship between landowner and client which the fascist regime had strengthened and preserved. The union called for a new farm contract for share-croppers, adequate wage increases for salaried workers and mondine, a new contract for small tenants, the renewal of a series of legal provisions for farm improvements, and provision of nurseries for the children of farm labourers.

Although the 1948 strikes ended in stalemate, Confederterra emerged greatly strengthened and began to focus its attention on more strategic objectives such as the defence of trade union control over labour exchanges. This was an issue which the peasant leaguers felt very strongly about since no fewer than 615 worker-controlled offices had been established in the Valle Padana alone in the first few years after the war.¹⁰⁵ A national strike was called on 21st August 1948, and although it mobilised thousands of braccianti against Fanfani's planned nationalisation of the independent labour exchanges, the movement was not strong enough to prevent the bill from passing. By the following April the CGIL was forced to bow to the inevitable and accepted the transfer of the labour exchanges to the state in return for the small concession that workers' representatives would be consulted over the running of the new offices. In Emilia where the establishment of autonomous worker-controlled labour offices had been a hard one achievement which only fascism had been able to take away, the CGIL capitulation was seen as nothing short of total defeat.

The 'collocamento' compromise had a destabilising effect on the conduct of the new round of wage negotiations which inevitably ended in another series of strikes in the province of Bologna in May and June 1949. The weakened position of the CGIL partially explained the intensity of the conflict, but no less important was the shift to

¹⁰⁵ See E. Bonazzi, 'Uniti in difesa del collocamento', La Lotta, Vol.1 No.4, 28th January, 1948.

the right of De Gasperi's government and the free-hand given to his interior ministry to use force to suppress the labour and social movements under the control of the PCI. In response to the violent tactics of the landowners and state authorities, the braccianti adopted new methods of struggle such as the 'sciopero a rovescio' (reverse strike)¹⁰⁶, and forms of active' strike involving the carrying out of tasks and repairs which the landlord had not asked to be done while refusing to perform the jobs that he did. Land occupations which had been a favourite tactic of the southern peasantry were increasingly frequent in parts of the 'bassa' Bolognese where the local mayor, Communist and Socialist deputies and the labour chamber representatives would help to symbolically 'plant' a strip of uncultivated land together with hundreds of braccianti and their families.

Throughout the dispute Confederterra was careful never to allow the smallholders, tenant farmers or share-croppers to suffer from the strike action. In fact striking braccianti often volunteered their labour to help smallholders with farm jobs which the farmer's family could not perform on their own. Luciano Romagnoli described the significance of this cooperation,

'This plan allowed the consolidation of the alliance between the proletariat and the intermediate groups in the great mass of peasantry. The peasant cultivator whether he is a proprietor or a tenant or a share-cropper does not want a strike for the simple reason that on that farm or that small parcel of land he harvests 'his' grain and the fodder for 'his' cow. It does not matter if his grain or his cow will mostly belong to the landlord or go to the capitalist state. To strike against him or worse to force him to strike means making an enemy of him, pushing him into the arms of the agrari,

¹⁰⁶ This involved groups of peasants carrying out improvements to a farm in order to highlight the poor state into which many landowners had allowed their estates to fall and the potential work for unemployed farm labourers which was available if owners were forced to invest their profits.

creating a manipulable mass to be used by the reactionaries against the strikers.'¹⁰⁷

On the 22nd June, 1949 Confederterra called off one of the bloodiest and bitter strikes in post-war Italian history after the strikers had won a promise from Confida that negotiations would begin over a national contract before November, that unemployment rights would be extended to the braccianti and that social insurance and other benefits would also be extended to rural workers. However, only the salariati extracted an immediate concession from the landowners having won the right not to be dismissed without 'just cause'.

The braccianti had to wait until May 1950 before a national agreement was signed with the employers while a separate deal was concluded with the salariati in July, removing the prospect of a single national contract for both categories. By then agricultural production had returned to pre-war levels for the first time and rural unemployment had also slowly begun to decline, the 'struggle' took on new and more institutional forms. Although four years of rural conflict had yielded some positive results, from the labour movement's point of view the overall balance sheet was disappointing. The Catholics and the Social Democrats had both established rival organisations aimed at attacking the dominant position of the PCI within the rural workforce rather than capitalists and landowners, the DC and its 'quadropartito' coalition was stronger and more combative than at any time in the lifetime of the Republic, and the international situation appeared to be degenerating so rapidly that an east/west conflict seemed a strong likelihood. The organisational and mobilising strength of the PCI which by 1950 had become quite considerable was recruited to the international campaign to prevent nuclear conflict between the powers. The 'movimento per la pace' became the new focus for the Communist Party's alternative vision of peaceful co-existence and social progress, and in the province of Bologna it was to achieve an exceptionally high profile.

¹⁰⁷ L. Romagnoli, 'Le alleanze' in Guida dell'operaio agricolo, 1949, Vol.1, No.7, p.26, cited in Bozza cit.

Part IV. The 'Partigiani della Pace' and the Cold War in Bologna, 1949-1953.

1. The Peace Movement in the Province of Bologna.

Of a total population of 3,338,721 inhabitants in Emilia-Romagna, 2,127,044 signed the petition organised by 'Partisans for Peace' in support of the Stockholm Declaration against the use of atomic weapons. Between June and October 1950, 516,977 people out of a resident population of 714,705 signed the appeal in the province of Bologna alone, and with 2,083 individual committees the province had by far the largest number of peace groups in the region.¹⁰⁸ Each committee was organised on one of four levels; by municipality, neighbourhood, firm and village or apartment block. The groups were intended to be non partisan and aimed to include the widest possible cross-section of the local population. The 'movimento per la pace' prided itself on the adhesion of intellectuals, professionals, the lower middle class and Catholics to the anti-nuclear cause.

In order to preserve this broad base of support the peace campaigners declared that 'the Movement does not have its own ideology...neither does it propose to put itself under the flag of this or that ideology or conception of the world.' The leaders of the Movement even made parallels with the unity the alliance between the internationalist proletariat of Imola and the nascent agrarian capitalist bourgeoisie during the Unification and the anti-Nazi front which developed in the province in the Resistance.¹⁰⁹

One of the media for this 'pacific alliance' of social classes was the so-called 'Quaderni della Pace'. The 'quaderni' were records of public meetings, work-place discussions and formal questionnaires which activists organised in order to solicit the broadest range of opinions on the nuclear question and the prospects for world peace

¹⁰⁸ R.M. 'Il plebiscito antiatomico' Emilia, No.9, Year II, August 1950, p.259.

¹⁰⁹ Antonio Del Geurcio, 'I Partigiani della Pace in Emilia', in Emilia, (III), No.14, January 1951, pp.3-7.

and disarmament. The PCI was particularly keen to record 'pro-peace' comments and statements from local churchmen and establishment figures such as school-teachers, university professors, lawyers, doctors and other professionals. The 'best' material was selected for publication and featured in the movement's monthly review 'La Tribuna della Pace.' Although the PCI's opponents were scathing about the genuine plurality of opinions expressed in the publications of the 'Partigiani della Pace', it is reasonable to assume that the atomic threat was also felt by non-Communists and Catholics who may not have taken part in these discussions but were at least prepared to add their names to a petition.

In fact the organisers of the petition claimed that more than two-thirds of all the signatures from Bologna, Modena, Reggio, Ferrara and Ravenna were collected after the Korean War began during the most bitter phase of the anti-Communist assault by the government forces. By stressing the mediating nature of the Stockholm appeal and the non-aligned nature of the peace movement the PCI sought to reinforce the 'progressive alliance' which had characterised the post war politics of Emilia since the Resistance. Del Guercio made this connection more explicitly by citing a passage from Togliatti's 'Ceto medio e Emilia Rossa' in which Togliatti praises even the landowning bourgeoisie for its entrepreneurship, its technical innovations and the implementation of irrigation schemes and land improvements which made some parts of the country 'socially more advanced than the city.'¹¹⁰ The point the author was attempting to make was that even bourgeois and Catholic society had an interest in preventing a further world conflict. If the 'Partigiani della Pace' had managed to achieve this degree of social and political consensus, the movement's achievements would have been considerable. In fact, on an institutional level opposition to the Stockholm appeal and its supporters was very great, and in some ways this made the Movement's success in recording such a high level of support in the province even more remarkable.

¹¹⁰ Ibid p.7.

2. 'La peur du gendarme...': The State's response to organised protest in the 'anni duri.'

The state authorities certainly recognised the peace movement as a potential threat to Italy's continuing membership of the Atlantic Pact and were convinced that the 'Partigiani della Pace' was yet another example of the Communists' cynical and instrumental manipulation of public opinion. In 1950, General Carlo De Simone was dispatched to Bologna as prefect on the instructions of Scelba in order to control the socialcommunists increasingly vociferous and effective propaganda and organisation in the province. De Simone was a committed disciple of Scelba's 'hard-line' strategy which had targetted Emilia-Romagna as the bedrock of Communist subversion and which sought to harass and prosecute leading militants on the slightest of pretexts.

During the anti-Korean War campaign which took on a particular intensity in the latter half of 1950, De Simone issued an ordinance which forbade the collection of signatures calling for a ban on nuclear weapons, '...because of the psychological consequences which it might have in heightening the state of apprehension in the population,' and also because it, 'aimed at exacerbating the already severe division within public opinion.'¹¹¹ The local questura also gave notice that all public meetings dealing with these issues would be banned.

Dozens of arrests followed the ban and activists were prevented from conducting door-to-door signatures and for 'unauthorized' street petitioning. From the many reports which described the arrest and charging of peace petitioners in virtually every comune in the province it was clear that the police and carabinieri were carrying out a

¹¹¹ M.I.(Gab) 28/11422/14, report of the prefect 14th July, 1950.

politically motivated strategy aimed at outlawing the peace movement. Often arrests would be made so that the police would be able to confiscate petition forms as 'evidence'. Because trials took many months to come to court, in this way the authorities could disrupt the peace campaigners very effectively even if (as mostly was the case) the charges were later thrown out.¹¹²

These 'energetic interventions' (as the carabinieri euphemistically described them) against the 'Partigiani della Pace' formed part of a wider pattern of violent confrontation and intimidation which was at the centre of the government's strategy of isolating the Communists from wider society. 1949 and 1950 were two of the most bloody years of social conflict in Emilia which not only included the massacre of striking workers in Modena referred to above, but also the deaths of Maria Margotti, a rice worker, and Loredano Bizzarri a bracciante who were both killed during the rural labourers' strikes of May and June, 1949.

Between the elections of the 18th April, 1948 and January 1950 no fewer than 1,400 people were charged and remanded in custody for various offences, among whom were 44 trade union leaders, 10 Communist Party leaders and 4 mayors. 27 received prison terms, 134 were conditionally discharged, and 203 were found not guilty. Several leading Communists faced criminal prosecution including Bonazzi who had already been found guilty of a previous offence and sentenced to 8 months imprisonment. Dozza and Malaguti the secretary of the Federal Labour Chamber were also charged with 'defamation of the state.'¹¹³

¹¹² M.I.(Gab) 28/11422/14 (1950-52), police report 29th November, 1950.

¹¹³ See table 5.1. Many consigli comunali were dissolved by prefectural decree and their mayors charged with the criminal appropriation of grain (i.e. the distribution of wheat from the 'granai del popolo' to the local population without the permission of the state authorities). In October 1947, nine comuni in the province were without a mayor or had been suspended. See ACS M.I.(Gab) 69/4256, undated prefect's report circa October, 1947. On the prefect's 'over-stepping' of his legal powers for suspending and charging Communist mayors for allowing municipal employees to strike in protest at the

An extraordinary meeting of the central committee of the Bologna federation of the PCI was held in March 1950 to discuss the government's offensive against the left and the labour and social movements allied to it. As secretary of the federation, Enrico Bonazzi described how the government had banned the sale and distribution of the left press (and in particular L'Unità), had outlawed the occupation of uncultivated land, forbidden the holding of factory meetings by the workforce (i.e. trade union and factory council meetings) and had stopped all public meetings and demonstrations for a period of three months.¹¹⁴ However in spite of these difficulties Bonazzi assured his comrades that the Party had no intention of allowing reactionary forces to disrupt its political work.

visit of President Eisenhower see Giuseppe Branca, 'Denunzie e sospensioni di sindaci', Emilia, Year 3, No.16, March 1951, pp.97-98.

¹¹⁴ APC 0325/1231; Extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee of the Bologna Federation of the PCI, 21st March, 1950. See Table 6, MF. 0325/2007-S, Report to 8th Provincial Congress of the Bologna Federation, December 1950.

Table 6. Results of police and judicial action against the PCI, and labour and peace movement in the province of Bologna 1945-1950.

Dead	2
Injured	603
Stopped & questioned	8,600
Detained	1,204
Prosecuted	3,161
*Convicted	1,606
Acquitted	1,397
Amnesties	55
Cases dismissed before trial	105
Awaiting trial	418
On remand	1,352

Source: Federazione PCI di Bologna, APC 0325/2007-8, December 1950.

(* Sentenced to a total of 658 months imprisonment)

Table 6.1. Police and judicial action against the anti-NATO protests and the 'Stockholm Appeal' petition in the province of Bologna, 1950.

Charged	209
*Convicted	84
Acquitted	125

Source: Federazione PCI di Bologna, APC 0325/2007-8, December 1950.

(* fined a total of 324,000 lire)

Among rank-and-file Communists there was a genuine belief that the actions of the socialist countries held the key to world peace and that detente could be effective only if Western governments were besieged by a mass call for disarmament and a reduction in international tension from their electorates. The 'Partisans for Peace' were crucial in the creation of this climate of opinion. Once again Giuseppe Dozza was to symbolise the new Cold War strategy of the PCI with its emphasis on international solidarity and collective mobilisation against the threat of nuclear war. Dozza went through many changes of title from 'mayor of the Resistance' to 'mayor of the Reconstruction' and as a member of the World Peace Council elected in Warsaw the previous November he was awarded the title 'mayor of peace' by Bologna's communists.

From the point of view of the 'Movimento per la Pace' and the PCI this was not an empty claim. Dozza presented 17 million signatures in favour of the Stockholm appeal to the Warsaw congress which included 60% of the inhabitants of his own city. At a time when the Truman Doctrine and United States aggression against socialism as an ideology and as a movement was at its height, for the PCI the importance of the peace movement in Emilia-Romagna and Bologna lay mostly in the opportunity it offered the left to appear as pluralistic and capable of placing 'morality' and 'humanity' above the sordid business of power politics. It was not a representation which convinced all sections of Bolognese society and L'Avvenire d'Italia and Il Resto del Carlino waged an unceasing counter-offensive in their pages to disabuse the Emilian population of the notion of an independent and neutral Communism. Nevertheless the buoyancy of electoral support for the PCI in Bologna in 1951 and 1953 pointed to the Party's establishment of a solid core of support among the working-class and an increasing number of the lower-middle classes of the province which neither the Vatican nor the government parties were able to penetrate.¹¹⁵ In

¹¹⁵ By the summer of 1955 the campaign was still very active and prefect Spasiano was obliged to report that, 'the PCI is working on a fertile ground of support from which it expects to have a major electoral return.' In some of the remoter provinces the prefect also noted that peace activists had established a dialogue with local Catholics. ACS

Workers occupy their 'casa del popolo' in Borgo Panigale on the periphery of Bologna, but are later evicted by the police, August 1954.



the following section we explore the social and cultural factors in the creation of Communist identity which help to explain this political success.

Part V. Communism and Popular Culture in Bologna 1945-1956.

1. Introduction.

The success of the Communist Party as a hegemonic force within the base culture of Bolognese society was connected to its ability to transpose the traditional structures of worker/peasant identity created by the Socialists in the first two decades of this century onto a new ethico-political formation which incorporated the themes of anti-fascism and Resistance and combined these with new forms of solidarity and mass action. Where Emilian Communism differed substantially with its socialist reformist predecessor was in its ability to connect together different struggles, often linked to heterogeneous socio-economic groups, under the same banner. If reformist socialism had been a predominantly rural political movement, reform Communism placed at least equal emphasis on the need to establish a hegemonic presence in the cities. In this task the Party was undoubtedly aided by the influx of rural workers into the capoluogo which took on a spectacular rate of growth in the late 1950s and throughout most of the 1960s.¹¹⁶

The Communist Party was therefore faced with the difficult task of appealing to two quite distinct categories of labour both of which exhibited strong internal differentiation. Unlike in the predominantly 'white' zones of the Valle Padana (such as the Veneto)¹¹⁷, demographic and occupational changes in the province of Bologna

M.I.(Gab) 23/1492/14 25th June, 1955.

¹¹⁶ The implications of this migration for planning policy in the Comune di Bologna are explored in the following chapter.

¹¹⁷ For an excellent account of the impact of migration on radical peasant protest in the Veneto see Piero Brunello, 'Contadini e <<repetini>>: Modelli di

did not lead to a dispersal of radical 'voice'. This was because the PCI's dual presence in the rural and urban working-class community provided a continuity of values and shared experience which helped to counter the disaggregating effects of urbanisation.¹¹⁸ Here we examine how changes in the provincial economy and labour market affected the strategy and political success of the PCI and how social change and collective identity was mediated through cultural practices which challenged as well as legitimated the Party's hegemonic project.

2. Cultural policy in the alliance strategy of the PCI.

Togliatti certainly did not undervalue the cultural question; reflecting on the establishment of the Party's 'cultural commissions' in 1950, he wrote that the duties of its representatives were to, '...consider why cultural expressions which could provide the basis for...a new culture have not yet done so.' Togliatti defined these expressions as having an 'organisational, economic and political nature,' and they included the Party itself, the trade union movement and its capillary organisations, the network of other associations linked to the Party and, '...the intense associative activity which covers all sectors from hunting to fishing.' But if, as Togliatti agreed, these phenomena were already 'culture', they only provided a part of the picture. Organisation was one thing, but concrete cultural activity was quite another, and it

stratificazione,' in Silvio Lanaro (Ed), Il Veneto, Einaudi, Turin, 1987. The author argues that the higher degree of 'proletarianisation' among the peasantry of the lower Po reduced the propensity to immigration which was much higher among the more heterogeneous peasant communities of the north and west.

¹¹⁸ The term 'voice' as used here refers to the work by Hirschman, Exit, Voice and Loyalty and particularly to its application in the Emilian context by Anderlini. See Anderlini, Terra Rossa, cit. p.62.

was here in Togliatti's view that the Party needed to make greater efforts.¹¹⁹

Paolo Fortunati shared Togliatti's concern and his assessment of the cultural activity of the Bologna Party was not optimistic,

'...cultural work does not exist...it is in net decline when in fact it needs to be intensified particularly since we are coming up to the electoral campaign. The Labriola (Circle) is deserted...today there are many more important things than the cinema, there is the problem of war and peace, these are profound problems and in this Circle it's possible to hold debates, conferences and, when the time is right, attract the attention of the general public...', which, '...helps us to prepare ourselves because we must be able to talk and have discussions...we must put ourselves to work, in a city like Bologna we must give the impression that we are addressing the essential problems of the Italian people.'¹²⁰

The PCI had been very successful in conveying its idealism and its political programme to the working mass of Bolognese society but the membership profile and voting patterns of the Communist Party revealed a difficulty in establishing itself as the natural choice of the white-collar and professional classes.¹²¹ Fortunati argued

¹¹⁹ Palmiro Togliatti, *Rinascita*, 26th September, 1964, cited in Salvatore Sechi, 'Politica delle alleanza ed egemonia del PCI in Emilia', in *Inchiesta*, Sept-Dec 1978, pp.61-71.

¹²⁰ Paolo Fortunati, address to the central committee of the Bologna federation of the PCI, APC 0325/1015, 1950. The previous year the prefect had noted that, 'the so-called "national office for cultural work of the PCI" has had no resonance on a local level.' This seems to confirm Fortunati's view that the Bologna Party was not staking a claim to the cultural high-ground of public life. ACS M.I.(Gab) 42/3014, report of the prefect, 1st August, 1949.

¹²¹ For example, the number of student members of the Bologna federation fell from 217 in 1951 to 185 in 1952, 174 in 1953, 140 in 1954 and 133 in 1955. The number of intellectuals enrolled in the Party declined from 513 in 1943 to 354 in 1953. Casali and

that it was the task of the Party's intellectuals to increase the PCI's appeal to the urban middle-classes.¹²² But the Party's ambiguous attitude towards its intellectuals did not help the conduct of the cultural war of position which had been grudgingly delegated to its 'educated' cadres.¹²³

In a speech to the 6th Congress of the PCI in Milan in January, 1948, Togliatti spelled out what he felt to be the deficiencies of the Party's intellectual members. These could be summarised as a tendency towards cliquism, abstruseness, disdain for collective participation and discussion, and perhaps worst of all a certain preoccupation with modes of thought and writing consistent with a decadent and bourgeois tradition.¹²⁴ The remedy offered by Togliatti was an attentive reading of the classics of Marxism and particularly the works of Engels, Marx, Lenin and Stalin who in their work expressed the crystalline purity of thought which the Communist intellectual required.¹²⁵

Gagliani cit. p.272.

¹²² In 1951, Fortunati became a member of the editorial committee of the PCI's re-launched theoretical journal, La Società. It was significant, given Togliatti's conviction that insufficient attention had been devoted to the study of Marxism, that the journal changed its focus from film and literature criticism to the relationship between the human sciences and Marxist doctrine. Ajello Nello, Intellettuale e PCI, 1944-1958, Laterza, Bari, 1979, p.445

¹²³ Bonazzi complained that, '...we are not yet able to make certain that comrade intellectuals are non-sectarian and that there are activists among the intellectuals. All in all it's easier to send a rank-and-file comrade to speak to rank-and-file Saragatians with whom he's maybe quarrelled than to send our comrades to talk politics with the intellectuals.' Meeting of the central committee of the Bologna federation of the PCI, 6th November, 1950. APC 0325/1906.

¹²⁴ Palmiro Togliatti, 'Dal rapporto al VI Congresso del PCI' in La politica culturale, Luciano Gruppi (Ed), Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1974, pp.88-91.

¹²⁵ Ibid p.90.

But if the objective of Party propaganda was to win the allegiance of that part of the bourgeoisie whose political consciousness had been formed through a reading of Croce, Salvemini, Vittorini and other dangerous manifestations of liberal thought and literature it was very unlikely that this social group could be drawn to democratic socialism by Marxist plain-speaking alone.¹²⁶ From his published articles it is easy to gain the impression that Togliatti saw the world of bourgeois culture as the mortal enemy of socialism,

‘The pedagogy of decadent capitalism is that of ‘Reader’s Digest’, of the social weeklies of ‘Azione Cattolica’; the academic and journalistic mafias who block the road to non-conformists; of the press campaigns which impose certain ways of thinking, certain ideal types, tendencies and phobias on ordinary men and women, (and) of the schools run by Catholic or Crocean priests.’¹²⁷

But in the same exposé of the vituperative nature of bourgeois cultural domination, Togliatti defended Eastern European and Soviet artists for their revival of ‘popular’ folk traditions,

‘They tell us that it is wrong, for example, to draw the attention of musicians to the study of popular songs; or for writers to be in continual contact with everyday life.’

But while Togliatti might have been prepared to defend ‘proletarian art’ in the USSR and Eastern Europe, he knew that Italian intellectuals wanted to liberate themselves

¹²⁶ As editor of the philo-Communist critical journal Politecnico, Vittorini could be considered as a maverick Communist intellectual, but his interest in American thought and culture and his openness to non-materialist criticism often antagonised Togliatti who frequently attacked him through the pages of Rinascita. See Stephen Gundle, ‘Communism and Cultural Change in Post-War Italy’, unpublished PhD thesis, Cambridge University, 1985,

¹²⁷ Palmiro Togliatti, ‘Direzione ideologica’, Rinascita, Year VI, 1949, No.5 in Palmiro Togliatti, I corsivi di Roderigo, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1978, cit. p.152.

from the aesthetic dictates of 'official' art, literature, cinema and design which fascism had imposed. The tension between the PCI's need to win over the ceti medi and its disdain for the liberal values associated with this class was evident in the failed campaign to defend the cultural virtue of Emilia-Romagna which the Communist Party initiated in 1949.

The 'Comitato di difesa e valorizzazione del buon nome dell'Emilia' (or Comitato pro Emilia) was a group made up of mayors, politicians, entrepreneurs, industrialists and 'eminent men of science and letters.' Under the chairmanship of Giuseppe Dozza, the committee established several commissions and sub-commissions each of which had a specific responsibility for areas of activity such as sport, science, art, tourism, town planning, theatre and so on. However, after a short time the various groups stopped functioning Bergonzini claimed, 'because of lack of funds.'

In reality, the political polarisation between the forces of the centre-right and the left was bound to have repercussions within the artistic, academic and intellectual community of the region, and the 'Comitato pro Emilia' was an early example of the debilitating effect of the Cold War on the PCI's alliance strategy. But there was another more profound and lasting reason for the failure of the PCI to establish itself as the patron of the entire 'cultural community' in Bologna and Emilia-Romagna. This was because among the Emilian peasantry there already existed a rich and varied sub-culture which had developed through the Risorgimento and the era of socialist reformism and which presented itself in new and combative forms during the great social mobilisations of the 1940s and 1950s. This 'culture of resistance' was deeply hostile to the economic domination of the urban bourgeoisie although often accepting of the bourgeois literary and theatrical tradition. The collective identity of the great mass of the 'compagni' who rallied to the Communist Party in the post-war period was formed in this complex world of cultural resistance and exchange. The re-articulation of the highly structured mentalities of the peasantry and urban working-class in the form of political solidarity and Party loyalty is the key to understanding the successful establishment of Communist hegemony within the subaltern classes of

'Contadini' and
'mondine' of
the bassa Bolognese.
c.1950.



post-war Bolognese society.¹²⁸

3. 'The world the peasants made.' Cultural identity and class politics in post-war Bologna.

The construction of working class identity in the immediate post-war period depended on the Communist Party's ability to combine the 'action oriented' elements which had traditionally existed in the urban and rural labouring classes (from anarcho-syndicalists to socialist reformists and cooperators) with an appeal to the two most powerful 'popular' sentiments which characterised the early years of the Cold War. The first consisted of an oppositional culture based on the powerful dichotomy between 'us and them' where 'they' were principally the (ex) fascists and great proprietors, and the second was the perception of the Soviet Union as a nation in which the Revolution had actually succeeded and worked.¹²⁹ The ethical base of this political/class dichotomy combined with the utopic appeal of the Soviet myth to produce what Anderlini has called a 'universalistic-eschatological' concept of social equality which was as, if not more robust and convincing than the Catholic 'world view' against which the socialcommunist sub-culture actively competed. Indeed the rooted tradition of anti-

¹²⁸ Mentality is used here to describe the coalescence of '...sentiments of integrated social groups, their choices, and wishes; of specific themes (such as attitudes towards miracles or death) or to emergent social categories (such as merchants in feudal society)...', Jaques Le Goff, 'Les mentalites' in Faire de l'Histoire, Gallimard, Paris, 1974, (Part III) p.84.

¹²⁹ Capecchi, V. Classe operaia e cultura borghese cit. p.253. Stephen Gundle writes, 'The PCI's own culture and popular political identity...relied heavily on a Soviet myth in the immediate post-war years. Togliatti may have searched for an original political line, but the banners, portraits, books, propaganda and ideas which the comrades on the ground floor came in contact with were practically all of Russian origin', Gundle cit. p.51.

clericalism which was a feature of both republicanism and social reformism made it even harder for Catholicism to articulate itself as a popular force, particularly given the Church's ambiguous relationship to fascism.

The process of industrialisation and the transition from ancient to modern forms of production, communication and exchange had a profound effect on the subaltern culture which emerged after the Second World War. Two decades of fascism and the severe privations of war and the Resistance all combined to transform the cultural expression of worker and peasant identity, if not in form then certainly in content. Although the dichotomies described above were common to industrial workers and to the braccianti and mezzadri of the Bolognese countryside they were not shared in equal measure. It would be obvious, for example, that the appeal of the Soviet Union would be greater for industrial workers who more readily identified with the image of labour and social equality portrayed in films and the Party literature about the USSR. Rural workers by contrast felt the oppressive presence of the 'padrone' and the social control of the priest much more tangibly than workers in the city, and for this reason alone the peasant's world view was likely to be local rather than global and to offer a rich patrimony of memories of collective struggle and a folk history that their urban counterparts mostly lacked.

Clearly the various manifestations of working-class cultural identity did not appear as static, individuable and self-contained instances. The pattern of cultural life among the rural and urban working class was highly variegated and the degree of cultural and recreative association depended very much on the sparseness or density of population, as well as on the availability of transport (particularly primitive in the mountain comuni), the existence of social spaces (parish halls, case del popolo, osterie), the disposable income of families, their working hours and so on. Land-owners feared that socialising between mezzadri, braccianti and salariati would breed discontent and militancy, for this reason 'osterie' were provided exclusively for the use of mezzadri belonging to a particular estate. It was in order to counter this deliberate isolation of share-croppers and landless peasants that the PCI began to re-open the 'case del popolo' which had been destroyed or taken-over by the fascists before the war, with

the aim of re-establishing that sense of collectivism and solidarity which had been all but removed from working-class life under fascism.¹³⁰

Another fundamental determinant of cultural behaviour was the level of education which individual workers and peasants had acquired. Mass literacy was only beginning to be generalised in the 1940s and 1950s but it was a painfully slow process. The more economically backward and physically remote the settlement, the more likely the inhabitants were to suffer from high levels of illiteracy. Lack of educational development set limits on the Communist Party's ability to cultivate a high level of political consciousness among its members, many of whom had only an elementary education. The Party tried to encourage initiatives such as the 'università popolare' and the evening schools which were mainly involved in vocational training, but obviously the PCI alone could not compensate for the deficiencies of the Italian education system which the DC seemed to be in no great hurry to correct.¹³¹

Rather than relying exclusively on scattering propaganda indirectly at the masses in

¹³⁰ In only the first half of 1921, 121 workers' institutes in Emilia-Romagna were destroyed by fascists; A. Tasca, Nascita e avvento del fascismo. L'Italia dal 1918 al 1922, Florence, 1950, pp.174-175, cited in G. Adani & G. Tamagnini (Eds) Cultura popolare nell'Emilia-Romagna. Strutture rurali e vita contadina, Silvana Editoriale d'Arte, Milan, 1977 p.241. A good account of the fascist suppression of the Socialist and labour movement in the province of Ferrara can be found in Paul Corner, Fascism in Ferrara, 1915-1925, Oxford University Press, London, 1975, especially pp.138-141.

¹³¹ 9.3% of the north-eastern and central provinces of Italy were recorded as illiterate at the 1951 census (Ginsborg, cit., p.440). According to Luciano Bergonzini, in 1950 as many as 40% of the peasants in some communes of the 'bassa ferrarese' could not read and write. The conditions in the 'bassa bolognese' were not much better where the level of unemployment was similar to the province of Ferrara (more than 80% in places). See Luciano Bergonzini, 'Il Piano del Lavoro in Emilia' in Emilia, November, 1950 reprinted in 'I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna' cit. p.88.

the vain hope that some of it might be absorbed,¹³² the Communists applied the Gramscian principle of using militants who had a certain weight and 'presenza' in their local community as organic intellectuals who could be used to channel the ideas and values of the Party to work-mates and friends. These militants, because they volunteered to carry on this type of work for the Party had the merit of being enthusiastic and hard-working, but they often did not possess what the Party called 'mature political consciousness'. In other words the street level or shop-floor activists often lacked a political education as well as a general education. Here lay the essential difference between the Communist Party and its Socialist allies, and between the Communist Party and every other political party in Italy; the PCI had an essentially protestant conception of political behaviour, it held the principle of the 'priesthood of all believers' and wanted its supporters to be able to communicate an intelligent case for socialism as theorised by Engels, Marx, Lenin and (in a truncated form) Stalin to a general public.¹³³ Not every Communist member could fulfil this function (and this was accepted by Togliatti as an inevitable consequence of the 'partito nuovo') but lesser activists could at least be inducted into the moral universe of Italian Communism by reading an appropriate selection of contemporary fiction.

In describing the literature which particularly attracted the Communist militant, Santomassimo provides us with a picture of the cultural references of a typical activist and describes how they were strongly influenced by the reading of socialist classics such as Gorky's The Mother, and the great epics and adventure stories of Victor Hugo, Eugene Sue and Jack London.¹³⁴ But Santomassimo argues that this was

¹³² This is not to say that the PCI doubted the efficacy of centralised propaganda as we see below.

¹³³ If a non-active PCI household possessed one recommended text it was most likely to be Stalin's 'Short Course' History of the CPSU. See Grant Amyot, The Italian Communist Party. The Crisis of the Popular Front Strategy, Croom Helm, London, 1981, p.133.

¹³⁴ G. Santomassimo, 'Radici dell'antifascismo popolare' in Italia Contemporanea, cited in Capecchi 'Classe operaia e cultura borghese', cit. p.253.

often not a 'spontaneous' act of popular cultural consumption because the local 'agitation and propaganda' commission, or if it existed, the cultural commission of a federation would try to recommend literature aimed at promoting a 'social consciousness' among the iscritti.

The extent to which working-class cultural consumption was successfully 'directed' by the Party machine is hard to estimate, but the low circulation rates for Party newspapers including L'Unità suggest that few members 'lived and breathed' the Party in a Bolshevik sense, although many would have attended the PCI's social and recreative institutes such as the case del popolo, the circoli ARCI and USPI, the CRAL and the many trade union dopolavoro organisations which attracted PCI supporters.

The Communist Party was on much firmer ground when it came to organising 'spettacoli', because literacy levels had no bearing on the enjoyment of a game of bowls (boccie), a 'balla liscio' or a dialect play. In the domain of the 'parole' the Communist Party was able to insert itself within the complex matrix of traditional and emergent cultural forms, from hunting and 'alpinismo' to the cinema and photography, not least because Communists were and continued to be the great 'joiners' of Italian society. A Bologna tram driver might for example belong to his trade union's after work club, be a member of the local association which represented his favourite sport, and frequent the local Party section or bar. For women there were less opportunities, but UDI promoted a variety of cultural activities and the FGCI organised dances and shows which attracted young women from inside and outside the Party.¹³⁵

In the years immediately following the war the dopolavoro ferroviarie began its

¹³⁵ For example the 'festa delle donne' held every year on International Women's Day (11th March) was a major social event which UDI organised all over the province. Communist women also sponsored more traditional 'spettacoli' such as 'beautiful baby competitions' and fashion shows.

tradition of holding a summer season of theatre written and performed in Bolognese dialect, and the PCI's cultural review, Emilia, also sponsored an annual dialect poetry festival. Both initiatives indicated the importance which the Party attached to its public perception as the custodian of local cultural tradition and development, but the PCI tended to see 'the arts' and popular entertainment as two quite separate entities. The local and national leadership recognised the need to relate politics to the values, symbols and rituals of the local community but (with the notable exception of Emilia) the party hierarchy did not appear to subscribe to the idea of 'culture teaching politics'.

The ambiguous relationship of the PCI to popular culture was particularly evident in its attitude towards the 'Teatro di massa' which presented its first performance, Sulla via della libertà in Bologna in February, 1951. The play dramatically reconstructed the history of the peasants and workers' struggles from the advent of fascism, and ended with a grand finale in which the 'Battle for Porta Lama' and the killing of the rice worker Maria Margotti were portrayed by many of the actual protagonists. The originality of this piece of theatre lay in the casting of ordinary workers and peasants who performed in front of their own work colleagues and neighbours. The total cast numbered between eight hundred and a thousand non-professional actors. One of its directors, Luciano Leonesi described the interest which the play generated among the local working-class community,

'The crowds at the Teatro Comunale were...like propaganda for the party and the performance was repeated fifteen or sixteen times, always to a full house;...there was certainly a special appeal in seeing a play of this kind put on for such an audience in an elite Bologna theatre where a worker (if he or she went at all) would have to make do with a seat in the Gods.'¹³⁶

However this interest in 'people's theatre' which unwittingly resembled the work of Brecht and the propaganda theatre performed in China during Mao's 'Long March'

¹³⁶ Cited in Capecchi Classe operaia e cultura borghese cit. p.257.

enjoyed only a brief period of Communist Party patronage, as Leonesi again recalls,

'The great boom in the 'Teatro di massa' was from 1950-51, but then the party began to lose interest in it...when in 1952 the first Congress of the Teatri di massa was held in Forlì, what was to have been a positive evaluation of the experience aimed at promoting its greater diffusion, albeit in a different form, was in fact the moment when it was decided to call a halt.'¹³⁷

In their speeches to the conference, many leading Communist intellectuals such as Salinari, Lajolo, Rodari, Schacherl and Del Guercio spoke out in favour of a form of cultural practice which could 'break the bones of bourgeois theatre' and give voice to the experiences of workers and peasants' lives which the arts had either ignored or caricatured. But at a time when Togliatti was trying desperately to reintegrate the Communist Party into the political mainstream of Italian society after a series of domestic and foreign disasters for the left (the Christian Democrat landslide victory of the 18th April, the Saragatian schism, the attempted assassination of Togliatti himself, the break-up of the CGIL, the founding of NATO, the war in Korea, 'Titoism', the suppression of communism in Greece and Turkey, 'Scelbanism' etc.) any attempt at promoting 'class culture' in this way was certain to earn a stern rebuke from the Party leadership. And this was exactly what the Direzione's representative at the conference, Giancarlo Pajetta delivered,

'The summing-up was provided by Pajetta who attacked the introductory speeches. He said that to envisage an attack on bourgeois culture was an act of sectarianism, of closure and mistaken, and in fact it was necessary to open-up bourgeois culture to the working class. Mass theatre is not what comes from the history of the workers but is any type of theatre which has cultural validity. Mass theatre is therefore Shakespeare, Pirandello, Goldoni, etc...it is important for Communists to enter official cultural organisations (established theatres, official cultural organisations, etc.) and to work for

¹³⁷ Ibid. p.258.

the greater availability of culturally valid works.¹³⁸

Pajetta's speech signalled the withdrawal of PCI support for the 'Teatri di massa' on an organisational level and the re-orientation of the Party's intellectuals working in the field of drama into mainstream theatre. It also meant, 'the complete dispersal of that repository of enthusiasm and creativity which came from many little country towns and groups of workers and peasants.' But as Capecechi argues, the PCI leadership failed to understand that the organisers of the 'Teatro di massa' were not trying to achieve a cultural separatism or to develop an anti-bourgeois aesthetic among the masses but rather the reinforcement of working class cultural identity in order to prepare it for an encounter with bourgeois culture on equal terms.¹³⁹

Whether he was conscious of it or not, Pajetta was not simply attacking a small group of radical directors but a long established tradition of popular theatre which had grown out of the Emilian countryside and which reflected the harsh lives and the resistance of its poor inhabitants. The 'Teatro di massa' drew on a rich variety of popular drama from puppet theatre to peasant choirs and travelling players. For example the recital companies, 'le compagnie di prosa girovaghe' were theatre troupes who played all over the region often staying for as long as a month in a large town and performing a different piece every night. Some plays were originally composed by established dramatists (Niccodemi, De Benedetti, Giacometti) who wrote dramas such as 'La morte civile' and other plays with titles such as 'L'Urlo' and 'Primo Maggio' which explicitly foregrounded the political subject matter of the play. Other companies had extensive repertoires which brought precisely the type of plays Pajetta wanted to see left-wing artists exclusively performing to a much wider audience than could be accommodated in the 'establishment theatres' and Melloni refers to the recital of pieces by Shakespeare, Sem Benelli, Berrini, Sardou, Pirandello, Goldoni,

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid. p.259.

Feydeau, Ibsen and Hugo amongst others.¹⁴⁰

Such portrayals helped to reinforce the sense of 'otherness' and conflict inherent in the class relations of the countryside between the twin universes of peasant and 'padrone'.¹⁴¹ A link between this pre-war oral tradition and the post-Resistance struggles of the rural proletariat was provided by masters of the 'cantastoria' such as Marino Piazza (or as he preferred to be known, 'Piazza Marino il poeta contadino') who to write and perform as an octogenarian in the 1970s in the markets and squares of the region.

The more contemporary popular songs reflected the formation of a specifically Communist mentality among the braccianti. The content of the songs thus took on a more global character and the Soviet Union began to symbolise the emancipated land of plenty which awaited the Italian working class after every prospect for socialism in Italy appeared to have been lost with the Christian Democrat landslide victory of the 18th April. A song dedicated to the trade unionist, Guido Cocchi, sentenced to three years imprisonment for organising the braccianti strike of 1948-49 in Bentivoglio expresses the despair of the political prisoner and the desire to flee to a new world

¹⁴⁰ Remo Melloni, 'Il teatro popolare' in Adani, G. & Tamagnini, G. (Eds) Cultura popolare nell'Emilia-Romagna. Espressioni sociali e luoghi d'incontro, Silvana Editoriale D'Arte, Milan, 1978, p.212.

¹⁴¹ It is also interesting to compare the antagonism of the poor farmers of Emilia-Romagna with their counterparts in nineteenth century England and to note how an orally transmitted resistance culture was perpetuated among the urban working-class, '...rural memories were fed into the urban working-class culture through innumerable personal experiences. Throughout the nineteenth century the urban worker made articulate the hatred for the 'landed aristocracy' which perhaps his grandfather had nourished in secret: he liked to see the squire cast in villainous melodramas, and he preferred even a Board of Guardians to the charity of a Lady Bountiful: he felt that the landowner had no 'right' to his wealth whereas if only by foul means, the mill-owner had 'earned' his.' E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class cit. p.253-254.

where at least everyone is given enough bread to eat,

Per una lotta giusta m'han condannato,
lor m'han promesso il pane non me l'han dato,
lor m'han promesso il pane non me l'han dato.

Sentii chiamar: 'Giancarlo, fatti coraggio,
tre anni di galera son di passaggio,
tre anni di galera son di passaggio.'

Andrem tanto lontano, tanto lontano
dove la bela Russia ci dona il pane,
dove la bela Russia ci dona il pane.

Dove la bela Russia ci dona il pane,
non vogliam più menzogne democristiane,
non vogliam più menzogne democristiane.¹⁴²

The peace movement also had its campaign songs and predictably these were directed at the architects of the Atlantic Pact and at De Gasperi's political allies and in particular Saragat's break-away PSLI. The sense of having won the battle for freedom and democracy only to see it snatched from the hands of Italy's liberators by the Church and the forces of reaction comes across very strongly in the song 'La Colomba della pace',

Siam stati partigiani contro i fasisti,
nei campi internati contro i nazisti
hanno versato sangue molti compagni
ma non per dar l'Italia agli americani.

¹⁴² 'O cancellier che tieni' in Various authors, Emilia-Romagna. I canti, le fiabe, le feste nella tradizione popolare, Lato Side Editori, Rome, 1981, p.37

O colomba che sei
della patria il vessillo
ti vogliam con noi per nostro idillio,
pan, pace e libertà.

Quel dì che in aprile andammo tutti a votar
quel che siamo stati molti pronti a sbagliar;
fu allor che la patria stava in nostre man,
fu allor che ce l'han rapita i democristian.

Ci hanno promesso pane, pace e lavoro,
invece ci hanno dato piombo e bastone,
ma noi gridiamo: 'Basta ai democristiani,
Magnani, Cucchi, Scelba e saragattiani.'

O colomba che sei...¹⁴³

These examples give an impression of the vibrancy of cultural expression that existed within the social and labour movements in the province during the most intense years of social conflict. But although individual Communists were the inspiration for these

¹⁴³ 'La colomba della pace' was a familiar tune throughout the region and could be heard on the mass demonstrations which the 'Partigiani della Pace' organised after 1948. It is likely that the references to Scelba and Saragat were added later, probably in 1953 or 1954. Curra, cit. p.39. Magnani and Cucchi were two former Communist partisans who 'defected' from the PCI in the 1950s. They later formed a tiny 'Risorgimento socialista' list in the 1953 elections which helped to frustrate the coming to power of the DC 'truffa' coalition but the exit of these two heroes of the Resistance gave rise to an extremely bitter polemic between the two sides which has continued until recent years. See 'In memoria di Valdo Magnani. Il dissenso nel comunismo', in G. Boccolari & L. Casali (Eds), I Magnacucchi, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1991, p.17.

songs and dramas, and the experience of singing, playing or watching was shared by thousands more, as we suggested earlier the Communist Party continued to regard these forms of cultural expression as valid only insofar as they allowed the Party in Rosa Luxembourge's words, 'to play the schoolmaster' with them.

Similarly the 'falce e martello', the Party hymn 'bandiera rossa', and the celebration of the 1st May all served to unite an increasingly broad spectrum of Communists behind the Party's programme. Revolutionary symbols, songs and images acted as an ideological cement which held individuals as disparate as insurgent partisans and socially-concerned school teachers to an organisation which had to become increasingly multi-faceted. These traditional and modern cultural celebrations were amalgamated in the most successful and enduring of the PCI's cultural institutions, the 'Festa dell'Unità' which from the end of the 1940s became the main focus of the Party's social and cultural activity.

4. From the sacred to the profane: the Festa dell'Unità between folk ritual and political hegemony.

The American anthropologist, David Kertzer, has compared the 'Festa dell'Unità' in Bologna to the Catholic festivals which celebrate local saints or particularly significant days in the religious calendar.¹⁴⁴ The first 'Festa dell'Unità' in Bologna was held in 1946, and by the 1950s the Communist festival had become the most important cultural focus in the province having completely eclipsed the traditional religious

¹⁴⁴ In a 1958 editorial in La Lotta, the Communists made no secret of the fact that the 'Festa dell'Unità' was seen as a weapon in the battle for the hearts and minds of the local population, a battle which the Church was losing; 'What scorches the priests: 276 section festivals, 1,500 branch evenings, an unprecedented provincial festival, 28 millions in subscriptions,' cited in, David Kertzer, 'La lotta per l'egemonia rituale in un quartiere comunista', Il Mulino, XXV No.244, March-April 1976, pp.225-248. See also 'Politics and Ritual: Communist Festa in Italy', Anthropological Quarterly, 47, October 1974, pp.374-389.

celebrations and 'sagre'.¹⁴⁵ By maintaining the festive and populist elements of the religious festival, the 'feste di partito' (and especially the 'Festa dell'Unità') were able to establish themselves as a permanent fixture in the cultural life of the local community.

The 'Festa dell'Unità' did originally begin as a fund-raising event for the Party press but it quickly became obvious that the festival's attractions provided a unique opportunity for the Party to establish a more 'organic' relationship with the local population than could be achieved by any number of newspaper sales. Although the PCI was fully aware of the commercial importance of the festival, the 'festa' increasingly came to be seen as a 'shop-window' for its ideas, values and activities, especially for its own members and supporters.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ For example the 'Festa della Spiga' (Corticella), the Sagra dei 'balconi fioriti e l'albana' (Dozza). There were even culinary festivals such as the 'Sagra dei tortelloni' (Granaglione), and the 'Sagra del ciaccio' (Montecatone delle Alpi). In Bologna's Piazza Maggiore a 'Sagra di cantastorie' was held every July, highlighting once again the importance of folksong in the popular culture of the Bolognese. All these 'sagre' would be accompanied by the procession of the local Madonna and the priest or bishop (depending on the importance of the festival) would bless the crowd and the object of the 'sagra'. Enrico Dall'Olio 'Le Sagre' in Adani & Tamagnini Espressioni sociali e luoghi d'incontro, cit. p.120. Dall'Olio suggests that the 'political festival' is leading to the death of these popular celebrations of the seasons and food and wine. Without further research it is impossible to prove, but it is just as likely that the Church appropriated these essentially pagan rituals to invent its own festive traditions and is therefore as guilty as any political party of corrupting 'folklore' for ideological ends.

¹⁴⁶ This point was not lost on the prefect who remarked that the first festival had been organised, '...with the evident aim of galvanizing its own members, and through the attractions of the feste, also developing that ideological conviction which in spite of all contradictory appearances is nevertheless lacking.'

ACS M.I.(Gab) 85/4903, 22nd September, 1948.

Each Party section was encouraged to organise its own show every year, and dozens of Party members spent months arranging the food and entertainment and hundreds more gave up their holidays every year to wait on tables or take tickets. Even more work would be put into the provincial festival which would attract the leading exponents of the Party such as Amendola, Longo, or Secchia. The provincial 'festa' was the highlight of the Communist year in Bologna and it not only served a rallying and unifying function for the Party's supporters but confirmed the PCI's undisputed leadership of the working masses. Neither the Church nor the city's other political parties could rival the size and quality of the 'Festa dell'Unità' although both the Socialists (in friendly rivalry) and the Christian Democrats (in open competition) tried unsuccessfully to supplant the Communists' summer celebrations.

The form the festival took depended on its size and location, but every 'festa' had a restaurant, a book stand, a tombola, and a variety of entertainments. At the provincial 'Festa dell'Unità' which the PCI held in Bologna in September 1951, an impressive range of cultural activities could be seen, from an exhibition of Chinese art, to the 'teatro di massa' production, 'Il grano cresce sulla palude' by Sartarelli, which won a prize at the international youth festival in Berlin, and like 'Sulla via della libertà' involved young rice-workers and braccianti from the province. The CGIL, local cooperatives and artisans also provided displays of their work and activity in the local community (the provincial CGIL, for example, exhibited its ideas for the 'Piano del Lavoro'). The highlight of the festival was a large procession of 'amici dell'Unità' involving workers, farm labourers, mondine, fishermen and young Communists which paraded through the streets of Bologna accompanied by musicians and PCI and trade union banners.¹⁴⁷

Interestingly, in its review of the 'Festa dell'Unità', Emilia made a point of discussing the appeal which the 'folklore del lavoro' would have for those interested in the history of dress, in sociology and political history. The attractive presentation of the photographs of the 'festa' were also clearly directed at a middle-class readership

¹⁴⁷ S.A. Emilia, Year 3, No.21, September 1951, pp.302-305.

which could extract some cultural value and vicarious pride from such an impressive demonstration of working-class identity and politics.¹⁴⁸ At the opposite end of the alliance spectrum, the PCI could boast of its establishment of the festival as the highlight of the holiday season in the province and claimed that many poor mountain families made their one annual trip to the 'city' in order to take in the 'festa'. This was a significant accomplishment because it relegated the annual procession of the 'Madonna di San Luca' to a demonstration of faith for an embattled Catholic minority who could not begin to challenge the popular attraction of the Communist festivals.

By the middle of the 1950s, the PCI had established itself as the 'modern prince' of Bologna, loved by its friends and feared and hated by its enemies.¹⁴⁹ The Party had established a dominant position within the rural and urban working-class and it was also beginning to make progress among the target occupations identified by Togliatti at Reggio in 1946; the skilled workers, artisans, lower professionals and white-collar employees. In the economic and cultural fields the Communist Party had set the agenda, even if the central state and to an extent the local opposition, denied the Party a complete autonomy of manoeuvre.

Together with economic and social movements and cultural institutions, local administration constituted the third leg on which the Reggio doctrine rested. Through its control of nearly all of the province's 60 comuni the PCI was able to intervene on behalf of its real and aspirant electorate in many areas of administrative life. In the following chapter we consider how the Togliatti/Dozza alliance strategy was applied in

¹⁴⁸ The Communist Party claimed an attendance of 400,000 at the 'national' festa held in Bologna on the 23rd September. Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ As Gramsci wrote, 'The history of a party...can only be the history of a particular social group. But this group is not isolated ; it has friends, kindred groups, opponents enemies. The history of any given party can only emerge from the complex portrayal of the totality of society and State...' from 'The Modern Prince' in Hoare, Q. & Nowell-Smith, G. (Eds) Antonio Gramsci. Selections From the Prison Notebooks, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1971, p.151.

the first ten years of PCI/PSI rule in the Comune di Bologna, focusing in particular on administrative reform and urban planning.

CHAPTER TWO

Political and Urban Renewal in the Communist Administration of Bologna 1945-1956.

1. 'Il Comune Democratico' - Municipal Reform during the Reconstruction.

If the impact of the war had been disastrous for Bologna's industries, the effects of the allied bombardment had been no less catastrophic for the city's housing and amenities. Of 280,000 residential rooms available before the war, 45,000 were completely destroyed and 80,000 seriously damaged by the end of the conflict. Approximately 44% of houses were either hit or damaged by bombing, and many in the suburbs and in the centre were completely razed to the ground. Particularly badly affected was the zone around the station to the north of the centre and the district on either side of the Via Emilia to the west.¹ The immediate task of the reconstruction was the resolution of the two most urgent social problems facing the city; public order and the housing crisis.

In September 1945, the prefect of Bologna faced with a growing health and public order problem ordered the compulsory repatriation of non-residents, refugees or immigrants who had entered the city before 1942.² The prefect also established a commission on housing aimed at resolving the growing conflicts between the population over accommodation.³ Grave risks to public health were created by large numbers of animals and refugees sheltering in the porticoes and galleries of the

¹ Fregna, R. 'Urbanistica e città: Bologna', in D'Atorre, P. (Ed) La ricostruzione in Emilia-Romagna, Pratiche Editore, Parma, 1980. p.83.

² Ventura notes that Bologna's normal peace time population of 330,000 swelled to over 400,000 as a consequence of the massive influx of refugees. Ventura, D. Sindacato e ricostruzione a Bologna 1945-1948, Editrice Sindacale Italiana, Rome, 1981, p.17.

³ 'Il problema degli sfollati, e alimentazione e alloggi', Corriere dell'Emilia, 20th May, 1945.

ancient city, while temporary housing had been provided by the conversion of parish halls and schools into dormitories. Clearly these had to be restored to their original function if civilian life was to be resumed and this further complicated the comune's re-housing strategy.⁴

The 'Giunta Comunale' was reconstituted just one month after the Liberation of Bologna while the provincial council reconvened in December of 1945. Dozza and his collaborators felt it was essential that the local civil authorities be restored as quickly as possible, not only to provide a representative body to which the Allied Military Government could address itself, but perhaps more importantly, to supplant the ad hoc committees of the CLN which were beginning to demand a political role in the process of reconstruction.

Conflict between the 'legal' and the Resistance leaderships was lower in Bologna however, because the CLN had been limited in its operations to the periphery of the city and the outlying villages and some towns of the province. Undoubtedly the domination of the Resistance movement by the PCI helped to smooth the process of transition, with Dozza's elevation to mayor of the city providing a vital continuity of leadership between pre and post Liberation government in the province. Moreover, the ex-partisans seemed content to assume the important but subordinate task of co-ordinating the 'ripresa' on the ground, rather than establishing themselves as a diverse and lasting means of popular representation.

Consequently the CLN increasingly assumed the character of an urban social movement representing the interests of the local population in their dealings with the civilian and municipal authorities. The CLN itself was resolved to renounce its support for extra-legal forms of organisation at a central and local level in the region which conformed with the positions calling for a rapid re-establishment of legality agreed by the constituent parties of the CLNAI, with the exception of the Action

⁴ For an account of the housing conditions during and immediately following the war see Bergonzini, L. Bologna 1943-1945. Politica ed economia in un centro urbano nei venti mesi dell'occupazione nazista, CLUEB, Bologna, particularly pp.84-87.

Party.⁵

At the first meeting of the consiglio comunale on the 19th December, 1945, Dozza in his opening speech declared

'...up until now the democratic character of the 'giunta municipale' (council executive) has been expressed through its roots in the liberation struggle and in its links with the representative organs of the people, the political parties, the district and organisational CLNs which have been a major help in the common struggle, trades councils, youth clubs, the union of Italian women, the Italian women's centres, union of young Italian women, artisans' associations, traders, intellectuals and various other different categories.'

The inference was intended to convey the importance of the new administrative demarcation which had been approved by the Allied Military Government (AMG) and which was intended to reduce the administrative scope of the ad hoc resistance groups and confirm the role of the (as yet unelected) giunta as the sole legitimate interlocutor of the AMG and the provisional government on the local level.

Dozza's continuing pre-occupation in the first months of the Liberation was to restore Bologna's appetite for democracy after over four years of war and twenty years of fascism. Having established the giunta's legitimacy at a local level, the sindaco pressed the demands of the communal administrations for a much greater role in the political life of the new Italy,

⁵ On the Parri government and the CLNAI see Ginsborg, cit. pp.58-59 & 90 and also F.Catalano, Una difficile democrazia, Italia 1943-48. Documenti, Vol.I, D'Anna, Florence, 1980; G.Vaccarino, 'Il governo Parri e le forze politiche' in Istituto Nazionale per la storia del Movimento di Liberazione in Italia, L'Italia dalla Liberazione alla repubblica, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1976; David Ellwood, L'alleato nemico - la politica dell'occupazione anglo-americana in Italia 1943-1945, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1977.

'Administrative autonomy, decentralisation...are as vital as the air that we breathe for a normal, sane and democratic development of the local authorities: and it is for this (reason) that the mayors of the principal cities of the region are in unanimous agreement regardless of party distinction or opinions. The Constituent Assembly will be called upon to decide how to resolve this problem at the highest level; in the meantime life as well as its pressing demands must go on.'⁶

Reform of local government and the creation of a new tier of regional government had been a theme of several political party programmes during and after the war, but it assumed a particular significance in the run-up to the administrative and national elections in 1946 when the parties began to advance their proposals for the constitutional charter. In 1944, the Republican Party (PRI) saw the new state as,

'a nation of regions with their own assemblies and organs of government'

At this time the CLN was still seen as a vital link between the base and the state and as a possible nucleus for consultation and development for the regional authorities. On all sides the discussion revolved around the need to institute something similar to the local administrations founded by the local committees of the CLN which were seen as the model for later models of decentralisation. The PCI, however, seemed to devote much more time to the importance of the comune itself in the life of towns and cities in the new Italy:

'The comune should also actively intervene in the economic life of the population', claiming for itself, 'the most complete autonomy over taxation' and intervening positively in the field of 'food, hygiene, reconstruction and public health, help for the poor, education and finance.'⁷

⁶ Archivio del Comune di Bologna, Atti del Consiglio Comunale, speech by Giuseppe Dozza, 19th December 1945.

⁷ PCI Federazione di Bologna internal document April (unreferenced), 1945 in Ceccarelli, F. & Galligani, M., Bologna: Decentramento. Quartieri, Città, 1945-1974, Ufficio per

The only space conceded to forms of direct citizen democracy was that approved by the national council of the Christian Democrats in January, 1946 which contemplated the use of the referendum as an instrument of mass democracy.⁸ As well as criticising the right's lack of imagination, the conference was critical of the left's call for the complete re-establishment of the prefascist state apparatus which was denounced as inadequate to the task of building a modern economy and national infrastructure. This position cannot however be reconciled with the later stance of the De Gasperi government or indeed the entire post-war record of the DC; rather it represented the apotheosis of the temporarily influential 'social catholic' faction around Giuseppe Dossetti. His supporters such as Fanfani and La Pira argued with some success for a more interventionist policy for the DC between 1945 and 1946 but were eclipsed by the skillful *realpolitik* of De Gasperi who persuaded even the sceptical Americans that root and branch reforms would only encourage the political pretensions of the 'revolutionary left' and frighten away investment.⁹

il decentramento del comune di Bologna, 1980, p.14. This study, commissioned by the Comune di Bologna, remains the most important historical work on post-war decentralisation in Bologna. It was also written using sources which are unavailable to the public, such as the Dozza Archive of the Istituto Gramsci [Emilia-Romagna] (now in the process of re-organisation), making frequent references to this text unavoidable.

⁸ Ironically, the DC was to be one of the staunchest opponents of the referendum when in government, delaying the parliamentary approval of this constitutional provision until 1970 when the regional governments were also instituted for the first time. See Ginsborg cit., p.327.

⁹ Baget-Bozzo, G. *Il partito cristiano al potere*, Valecchi, Florence, 1974, pp. 71-97; G. Campanini, *Fede e politica, 1943-1951. La vicenda ideologica della sinistra DC*, Morcelliana, Brescia, 1976; Ginsborg, cit. p.91; Pombeni, P. *Il gruppo dossettiano e la fondazione della democrazia italiana (1938-1948)*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1979. On Fanfani's social policy in the years immediately following the end of the war, Pombeni (p.149) argues that, 'The model proposed is substantially that of the 'welfare state'' and by this the author intended the British model whose twin architects were considered to be Beveridge and Keynes. In an important but neglected article in *Cronache Sociali* (which Dossetti edited), F. Duchini notes that the work of the Commission for the Reform of Social Welfare had 'directed its project of reform according to the principles of the first Beveridge plan...' (F. Duchini, 'Il 'piano Beveridge' e la lotta contro la miseria,' *Cronache Sociali* 10, 31st May, 1948. It must be said however, that such influences on central government were short lived and depended on the enthusiasm of their ministerial sponsor.

Although provision was made for local government autonomy in Article 5 of the constitution, the courts and the government itself continued to rely on the pre-fascist and fascist legislation of 1915 and 1934 on local administration and local finance. New legislation in 1970 and 1976 partially implemented some of these constitutional provisions, but central government powers actually increased in relation to the comuni and province, provoking criticism even from the government's own supporters.¹⁰

2. Funding the Reconstruction: The Problems of Local Authority Finance and the Municipal Rating Councils.

Until the introduction of fiscal control in 1973, local authorities in Italy were able to use a range of financial impositions to fund their service provisions through direct and indirect taxation.¹¹ This fiscal autonomy gave the comuni and province a substantial contractual force in their dealings with central government and provided for a major cohesion over and above political divisions. In spite of these statutory provisions many large city authorities even after applying local taxes to the maximum permitted by law were still unable to balance their budgets and sank further and further into deficit.¹²

In these cases the state would make a contribution from its capital account, but the

¹⁰ On central government control of local authorities see Ginsborg, cit., pp.152-153. For the history of local government reform since the Unification see the still important collection of essays by Ernesto Ragionieri, Politica e amministrazione nella storia dell'Italia unita, Laterza, Bari, 1967.

¹¹ Allum, P. Italy: Republic Without Government?, London, 1973; and Rotelli, E. (Ed) Tendenze di amministrazione locale nel dopoguerra, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1981.

¹² Until 1950/51 the city of Bologna and many of the surrounding comuni of the province faced a grave financial crisis occasioned primarily by the high cost of repairing the municipal infrastructure which had been seriously damaged by the war, but also by the low level of economic activity which had a drastic impact on the taxation revenue of these authorities. The prefect made persistent appeals to central government for additional contributions from its local authorities' aid fund. However, the small grants which were made available were entirely inadequate to tackle a crisis of this magnitude, and many comuni incurred huge debts which remained a serious burden on their expenditure for years after. See the Reports of the Prefect contained in M.I. Gab. 190/21135/II (1946), 215/22515 (1946), 81/14814 (1948), 42/3014 (1949).

credit raising powers of local councils were strictly limited to lending institutions which were assigned by the state and such loans were only for the purpose of balancing the expenditure and income of local authorities and not for the deficit financing of capital programmes.¹³ This had severe implications for the general functioning of local authorities in urban centres experiencing a rapidly expanding population. In these comuni, the process of planning and allocating funds for mass housing projects was made tortuously slow by the formidable bureaucratic apparatus which capital spending plans had to go through in order to win final approval.

In 1951 the Comune di Bologna became the first major Italian city to balance its budget since the war. This achievement was even more remarkable in light of the fact that rateable values for domestic and business property had not been revised since the 1930s, thus leading to a progressive decline in real income from local authority direct taxation. Despite the obvious attraction of relying on the more dependable and efficient local consumer taxes, the giunta took the political decision to actually reduce the proportion of the comune's revenue which came from indirect sources. In 1946 taxes on consumption amounted to 60% of all local taxes and 58% of all income, but by 1951 the percentages were respectively 47% and 39%, a clear indication of the giunta's commitment to shifting the burden of taxation away from general consumption to more progressive forms of direct taxation.¹⁴

The main direct contribution which local authorities had at their disposal was the family tax (or 'imposta di famiglia') which was calculated on the basis of the size and quality of the family dwelling space. Because the tax could be varied within the limits set down by the T.U. ('testo unico' - unified code or statute) of 1915 on local authorities, the giunta had some discretion in the targetting of the levy, a facility which Dozza and his colleagues exploited to the full.

¹³ Articles 254 & 332, Legge comunale e provinciale (T.U. 1915), Law of the 2nd July, 1952 (No. 703).

¹⁴ Compared with a city like Milan however, the figures are less impressive, in 1946 consumption tax accounted for 56.8% of all municipal revenue, while in 1950 the burden had fallen to 39.2%. Source: Rotelli, cit. p.87.

In narrowing the tax bands for the 'imposta di famiglia' the socialcommunist administration made explicit its ambition to transfer the greater share of local authority taxation from the low and middle-income middle classes to the 'affluent middle-class'; a policy which affirmed the administration's economic solidarity with the urban petty-bourgeoisie and which reflected the Communist Party's effective use of the instruments of local government for the realisation of its policy objectives.

Commenting on the importance of the giunta's financial strategy Renato Cenerini, Director of Accounting at the City Treasury and a senior member of the federal committee of the PCI observed that,

'..from the balancing of the budget a lot depends on our future possible work...in the sense of a greater autonomy of action..in the sense of making possible specific internal reforms...or at the end of the day for the achievement of other wider progress in the general field of council activities.'¹⁵

It was significant that Cenerini's remarks were published in the weekly newspaper of the Bologna Federation of the PCI which clearly recognised the political value of such financial independence.

From the early 1950s the council was moving from the position of consolidating the achievements of the reconstruction to a cautious expansionist phase which began seriously to examine plans for urban and economic expansion in the city. After the 1951 budget, approval was given for the first piano regolatore (PR) which expressed the administration's confidence in addressing the complex reality of post-war urban growth in a regional economic centre.

In the same year a list of 'great tax evaders' was published which exposed the wealthy Bolognese who had not made a tax declaration and were therefore avoiding making a

¹⁵ Cenerini, R. 'Il pareggio del bilancio preventivo, 1951 - Raggiunta una meta che onora la nostra Amministrazione democratica.' La Lotta, 5th January, 1951.

contribution to local services.¹⁶ By this stage the municipality's attention had shifted almost entirely to forms of direct taxation which through the *Imposta di Famiglia* could be specifically directed against the normally tax-resistant bourgeoisie since,

'...the wealth of families could be deduced from income or proceeds whatever their nature and from every other sign of wealth'¹⁷

Wealth could be calculated not just from local income but also luxury of housing as well as social position. Families of more than seven children were exempted altogether from the tax as well as those whose income was equal to or less than a minimum imposition.¹⁸

These rates were decided not by the local authority itself but by the Giunta provinciale amministrativa, which was a state appointed committee whose function was to oversee the income and expenditure of individual councils on a table of national values and according to the proposed rates advanced by the various comuni.¹⁹ Although the

¹⁶ Tax evasion was a major problem for the comune. Of 100,000 families in Bologna, only 75,000 had registered for municipal taxes and of these only 45,000 paid. Assessore Paolo Fortunati's report to the federal committee of the Bologna PCI, APC MF. 141/32-96 (1947), p.21.

¹⁷ Article 117, T.U. on local finance.

¹⁸ The PCI in its electoral programme for 1951, referring to the balancing of the city budget claimed, '...(this) has been achieved under a financial and taxation policy which only the myopic, egoists, fanatical anti-Communists and anti-democrats have...defined as sectarian, exclusivist, unilateral and anti-economic.' Un Libero Comune cit.

¹⁹ By law, major financial and institutional decisions made by the comuni and province had to be approved by the prefect's office as well as in some cases by the 'Giunta Provinciale Amministrativa' (GPA), a government appointed council chaired by the prefect which oversaw the activities of local authorities. Until the local government reforms of the 1970s, such state authorities could and did dissolve councils and remove mayors who they considered to be 'exceeding their powers'. With the institution of the regions, a new regulatory body was established, the 'Comitato Regionale di Controllo' (Coreco) which was intended to guarantee greater independence from central government, although many administrators regard the new 'tutorial' authorities as even more interventionist and partisan than the system it replaced. On the function of the GPA see

comune was constricted in its revenue raising and expenditure powers by the GPA, the assessore for taxation, Paolo Fortunati, did implement what was to be one of the first acts of local 'nationalisation' when he municipalised the collection of consumption tax in the Comune di Bologna.

As early as the 1890s, private tax collection firms had been licenced to collect the imposta di consumo on behalf of local authorities in return for a large commission, a practice which encouraged corruption and fraud on a massive scale. By 1947, at Fortunati's instigation, 24 comuni in the province of Bologna had taken back control of consumption tax collection and 100 other administrations in Emilia were in the process of switching to municipal collection. This action may have been largely symbolic but it provided an early indication of the commitment of Communist administrators to make the best possible use of existing municipal law as hopes for a thorough-going national reform began to fade.²⁰

By launching initiatives such as the municipalisation of consumer levies, the socialcommunist giunta of the city council saw a perfect opportunity to involve the local community directly in one of the most contentious functions of municipal government. A model already existed in the anti-black market and food rationing committees of the Resistance which had been established under the CLN and also in the anti-speculation squads formed by municipal police and volunteers on the orders of the prefect in the months following the Liberation. Nurturing and encouraging what the Communists called this popular sense of economic justice was considered vital if the comune was to intervene actively in the local economy and offer an alternative to the increasingly anti-interventionist economic policy of the De Gasperi government.²¹

R.C. Fried, The Italian Prefects, Yale University Press, London, 1963, p.254.

²⁰ P. Fortunati, APC MF. 141/32-96 (1947).

²¹ However, on a national level Ginsborg argues that the left's '...poverty of ideas and analysis resulted in a substantial subordination to the neo-liberalism of the employees.' Ginsborg cit. pp.93-94.

The Consigli Tributari Municipali (municipal rating councils) which were also the brainchild of assessore Fortunati, signified a new relationship between the town hall and the Bolognese which was to have a great influence on Communist political culture, namely that 'transparency' in institutional affairs had to be the basis for any transaction between the town's citizens and its administration.

On the 11th December, 1945 four such 'councils' were instituted by the giunta comprising ten townspeople who were co-opted on the recommendation of the CLNs.²² Each council elected its own president and the institutional status of these bodies was that of 'cooperative agencies' with a 'secretariat function'. This essentially meant that in order to comply with the 1915 and 1934 legislation, the CTMs' were to be non-policy making administrative committees. This distinction also served to underline the clear demarcation which the giunta intended to maintain between the executive authority of the comune itself and the consultative committees which it established from time to time to assist it in its administrative tasks. This 'institutional' view of citizens' organisations as necessarily subordinate to the directly elected central authority was to remain a major obstacle to a thorough-going decentralisation of political power in the years ahead.

It would be wrong, however, to see the CTM's as mere agents of the municipal will. The councils were, for example, charged with the delicate task of extending the list of contributors liable to local taxation and assessing their taxable income on the basis of an agreed tariff of charges. In this endeavour they were supported by a team of accountants and financial experts who processed the records and implemented the

²² In 1956, the composition of the consigli tributari was the following: agricultural workers (6), artisans (9), small farmers (6), salesmen and shopkeepers (15), white-collar workers (36), industrialists (6), workers (18), pensioners (7), professionals and students (7), sales representatives (5), travelling salesmen (2), other categories (3); source: Electoral programme for the 'Due Torri' (PCI) list, May 1956, p.22. The constitution of the CTMs clearly reflected the PCI's 'participatory' bias towards the ceti medi who far outnumbered 'workers' on the committees despite the fact that more than 50% of family heads in 7 out of 15 quartieri in Bologna in 1957 were working-class; source: Athos Bellettini, La città e i gruppi sociali. Bologna fra gli anni cinquanta e settanta, CLUEB, Bologna, 1984, p.39.

CTMs' recommendations.²³

Each council was assigned a territorial area of the city, and the partition of the city into four taxation districts was decided simply by using the axes of Via dell'Indipendenza - Via D'Azeglio and Strada Maggiore - Via San Felice which were the ancient medieval (and roman) thoroughfares of Bologna. After the administrative elections of 1946, the CTMs nominated by the CLN were reconfirmed and the expectation was that a national provision would be made sanctioning the activities of such sub-municipal committees. The failure of this legislation to materialise was to have significant negative consequences, not only for the work of the CTMs, but for every future project involving public participation in municipal administration. Nevertheless, the propaganda value of this fledgling democratic initiative was effectively exploited by the Communists in the 1951 administrative elections. In the PCI electoral programme Dozza wrote,

'In the most delicate sector of administrative life, that of local taxation, the Comune di Bologna has the historical merit of having given life to a democratic control of tax assessment without precedent in the public life of our country, and of having created for that purpose organisations which have (positively) impressed...the overwhelming majority of contributors for their civil mindedness, evenhandedness, responsibility and dignity...(and) for the tone and style of the new service which has destroyed for ever the sense of obscurity and mystery which surrounded the application of local tributes.'²⁴
 taxes

The idea of seeing 'taxation democracy' as a prelude to a more extensive participatory democracy was developed in a speech to the consiglio comunale of Bologna in June 1946,

²³ In fact Ceccarelli notes that the quota of contributors increased from 41% in 1949 to 59% in 1951 and 61% in 1956. On this level alone the CTMs could be considered as having proved their worth. Ceccarelli cit. p.20

²⁴ Un Libero Comune cit. 1951, p.19.

'...the experience (of the CTMs) will...show us the road to follow so that taxation justice does not remain (simply) a vain rhetorical expression.'²⁵

The CTMs increasingly assumed a more explicitly political role as an 'instrument of moralisation' and in the period immediately following the war, 'one was looking in substance at creating instruments of assessment which were capable of explaining their efficacy not just in terms of their direct power but for the influence which they exercise on the consciousness of the contributors with the aim of developing...that new political and moral education which would be capable of effective taxation justice.'²⁶

For Fortunati and his Communist colleagues 'taxation justice' meant shifting as much of the 'imposta di famiglia' as possible onto the richest 1 or 2% of Bologna's population while greatly reducing or even eliminating payments for the vast majority of middle-income families.²⁷ The political objective behind this strategy was openly admitted by the PCI,

'...we will succeed in this way, Fortunati boasted, 'in exempting 50% of the middle-class, through which we believe in concretely translating the politics of alliance.'²⁸

By the early 1950s, with the intensification of the Cold War and the persistent isolation of the Socialist/Communist left by the coalition government, the PCI was

²⁵ Assessore Fortunati's intervention in the debate on taxation policy, in ACC 22nd June, 1946.

²⁶ P. Fortunati, ACC 10th July, 1947.

²⁷ For example, in their electoral programme for 1951, the Communists claimed that the owner of a shoe shop who paid 63,000 lire to the comune in 1949, contributed only 17,000 lire in 1950, while a clothes retailer's local tax bill went down from 56,000 lire to 21,200. Due Torri, 'Un libero comune...' cit. p.17.

²⁸ P. Fortunati, 'Per le scuole di partito, la politica tributaria dei comuni', ciclostat; Lecture course for administrators, 1949, Dozza Archive of the Istituto Gramsci, Bologna; Ceccarelli cit.

increasingly concerned to counter the government's ideological offensive by highlighting its own achievements in the field of local administration as a responsible, democratic and populist political movement.²⁹ The provincial federation of the PCI was conscious that more could be done to demonstrate the achievements of the left but that this must not be done in a sectarian or class exclusive way; instead there was a need to,

'...make the public more aware of our activities in the local authorities,' through overcoming, 'the scarce contact existing between council administrators and the population', while at the same time emphasising that, '...the administrations of the local authorities are not under the jurisdiction of the party: they are obedient to democratic law (and) are composed of representatives of diverse political tendencies.'³⁰

But although the PCI clearly had to promote a non-partisan image of the CTMs to the general public, many activists on the federal committee could not see the advantage in devolving power (even if symbolic) to individuals who did not share the political commitment of the Party's councillors and assessori. Fortunati revealed his sensitivity to this internal criticism when he 'clarified' the function of the CTMs to his comrades at a meeting of the federal committee,

'...we were concerned that everyone should be represented but at a certain point we realised that admitting every occupation into the CTs would involve the risk of creating class conflict with all its contradictions. Therefore, although there may be a few commercial traders inside these organisations they won't be represented 'in quanto tale'. An individual would participate as a man chosen by us who had our

²⁹ Ellwood, D. 'Il piano Marshall e il processo di modernizzazione in Italia,' in Aga-Rossi (Ed) Il piano Marshall e l'Europa. Rome, 1983; Ginsborg cit. pp.157-58.

³⁰ Sabbioni, 'Far conoscere meglio ai cittadini la nostra attività negli enti locali,' La Lotta, 19th February, 1954. See also the resolution of the Provincial Conference of the PCI on Local Authorities reported in La Lotta, 15th October, 1954.

trust.³¹

Guido Fanti, who succeeded Dozza as mayor in 1966, recalled that the PCI's opponents were very hostile to the CTMs because they saw them as a means by which the Communists could 'sovietise' the city. But according to Fanti, the Communist administrators' aim was simply to de-bureaucratise the administration and to remove the mystery and secrecy surrounding municipal finance.³² However, not all the activists on the federal committee shared the pluralist instincts of the Party's administrators. Replying to a question which suggested that there had been a tough battle between the 'pluralist' and the 'instrumentalist' faction on the regional committee of the PCI, Fanti confirmed that the administrators had won out;

'...I said before that our opponents accused us of wanting to sovietise everything...but in actual fact there was a similar concept within the Party...but it was beaten. It was defeated...and this was another particularly important development which subsequently came to an end when the national fiscal reform [1971-73] removed all the positive powers which the communes had over municipal taxation.'³³

The acceptance of the need for greater administrative accountability was acknowledged by the periodical of the Bologna federation of the PCI. On the eve of the public deliberations on the budget plans for 1955,

'The new development of (instituting) prior discussions with the inhabitants has allowed democratic administrators to make more people aware of the justice of our local government policies and also to forge greater links with those who are outside our (sphere of) influence.'³⁴

³¹ P. Fortunati, APC MF. 141/32-96 (1947).

³² Interview with Guido Fanti, 13th February, 1991, Rome.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ R. Manini, 'Raccolte nei bilanci comunali le esigenze della popolazione,' La Lotta, 7th January, 1955.

However, despite their innovative characteristics, the CTMs remained fundamentally a creature of the municipal administration and therefore something of an appendage to the local state. Other organic forms of democratic organisation which were locally based and independent from the comune were equally important in shaping the future form of administrative and democratic decentralisation. The most important and nationally significant of these 'grass-roots' associations were the 'consulte popolari' or people's councils.

3. Widening the Participatory Basis of Local Government: the 'Consulte Popolari.'

The consulte popolari in Emilia-Romagna and especially in Bologna where they were also known as 'consulte rionali cittadine' were established by the CLN in the period of the reconstruction.³⁵ The consulte were organs of popular initiative on diverse themes which concerned the local citizens and they were linked to the consiglio comunale in a non-institutional form, although their activities were described in some deliberative acts recorded in the archives of the city council.

However the non-executive status of the CPs, which was to re-emerge as a problematic in later designs for local democratic representation, undermined the 'people's councils' legitimacy as an interlocutor between the consiglio comunale and their grass-roots neighbourhood constituencies. A weakness which the Communist Party acknowledged but was unable to suggest a remedy for in the absence of a thorough-going national reform of local and provincial government.³⁶

The CPs had their origins in Milan³⁷ in 1946 as an emanation of that city's National

³⁵ Luigi Arbizzani 'Giuseppe Dozza' in Storia illustrata di Bologna. 4/V. N.E.A., Milan, 1990, p.70.

³⁶ 'Le consulte popolari', Rinascita, 11-12, Nov-Dec, 1947.

³⁷ A detailed examination of the post-war administration of Milan is provided by Fabio Rugge in 'Il Comune di Milano' in Ettore Rotelli (Ed) Tendenze di amministrazione locale nel dopoguerra, cit. pp.27-92.

Liberation Committee, but they also existed in the south, particularly in Naples where a number of similar organisations grew up in the periferia around this time.³⁸ In Milan there were as many as 46 CPs which were organised on a ward basis, matching the fascist urban divisions.

In the first few months of their existence, the consulte were generally representative of the social and political composition of the electoral ward (or circoscrizione). Even the Christian Democrats who opposed the CPs for being 'anti-democratic' (i.e. partisan inspired association which were too often critical of the civil and military authorities) continued to participate in their activities. The rhythms of their meetings were adjusted to local conditions and concerns and their activities predominantly centred around a single pressing local problem, such as lack of sanitation or water or inadequate transport services.

These local problems were articulated in the 'quaderni di rivendicazione' (petitions of demands) which were presented to the comune or the relevant council committees involved with the area of municipal activity which most required attention in the locality. Contacts between the council and the consulte were carried out via the 'citizens' co-ordinating committee.'

However, the 'pluralism' of the consulte was to be short lived, such an expression of localised public opinion inevitably became vitiated by the sharp and rapid polarisation of Italian politics which was evident even before the Communists' expulsion from the coalition government in 1947. Although the consulte continually strove to present themselves as 'apolitical' citizens' forums, the new republican state was not convinced that these groups had even the slightest autonomy from the socialcommunist block which through its 'collateral' organisations appeared to be advancing with ever greater

³⁸ In 1949 the Interior Ministry recorded the existence of 'consulte popolari' in 10 provinces in Italy: Bologna, Bari, Ferrara, Livorno, Milano, Rieti, Roma, Salerno, Napoli and Rovigo, M.I. Gab. 125/7149/14 (1949).

determination into every corner of civil society.³⁹

For its part, the PCI continued to regard such manifestations of popular participation, not as potential instruments for building party hegemony as Leninism would prescribe, but as an important grounding in democratic education which could ween Italians away from the authoritarian subjugation of fascism and into a new era of active citizenship.

'The consulta popolare was a school of democracy, of responsibility, of civics and of administrative cadres besides being an organ of popular control.'⁴⁰

In Bologna the CPs began their activities at the end of 1947 and their work as in many other provinces in Italy was connected with the urgent tasks of reconstruction; such as street lighting, re-paving streets, sewage and urban hygiene. The consulte in Bologna also even had their own journal, il Consultore which was published from the town hall.

According to Ceccarelli, the consulte in Bologna at their peak numbered some 37 local organizations and were to be found in every part of the city often meeting in cafes or latterie. The CPs were active in many areas of social life including cultural activities and health, where the groups were closely involved in the re-building of the city's largest hospital, Ospedale Maggiore. Their small size contributed to the 'neighbourhood' feeling of the groups and there was no attempt to reproduce the pre-war administrative boundaries as in Milan or Livorno.⁴¹ This may also have indicated a reluctance on the part of the CPs to take on a distinct sub-communal administrative role, preferring to remain a local voice rather than a local authority.

³⁹ From the calculations made by the prefecture of Bologna it is clear that the consulte popolari were assigned to the category of 'organisations and parties of the left' when the Interior Ministry began to make the distinction between 'left forces' and 'others' in January, 1952. M.I. Gab. 69/11911/14 (1950-1953).

⁴⁰ Supplement to Il Comune Democratico, 1950, p.70.

⁴¹ Ceccarelli cit. pp.41-42.

However, from Ceccarelli's account one might assume mistakenly that the consulte were an exclusively urban phenomena. In fact, although the CPs were initially mostly active in the provincial capital itself, they become more numerous and more active in the small towns and villages of the province in the early years of the 1950s. The prefecture recorded 175 meetings of the consulte popolari between January 1949 and December 1952, of which only 84 were held in the 'capoluogo'. Whereas in 1949, 31 out of 49 meetings of the consulte were held in the city of Bologna, in 1950 the figure has dropped to 16 out of 39, while in the most intensive year of activity for the CPs in 1951, 31 of their 52 meetings were held in the communes of the Bolognese hinterland, a trend which continued into 1952 with only 16 of the 35 reunions held that year taking place in the capital of the province.⁴² It would seem therefore that few of the 37 consulte that Ceccarelli attributes to Bologna could have met regularly, if at all, during the most intensive period of popular democracy following the Christian Democrats' landslide victory of April, 1948.⁴³

The importance of the CPs lay perhaps more in their capacity to re-focus the attention of administrators on the specifically local dimension of municipal government rather than in any direct representational function. While the CPs never pretended to offer a democratic alternative to the comune, the relationship between the CPs and the consiglio comunale was often discussed in the pages of il Consultore,

'The CPs today already represent a new form of administration...they have been successful in constructing a fecund collaboration and an extensive contact between the popular masses and the directive organs of the public administration...they must strengthen the relationship and the collaboration between the administration and the citizenry on the basis of concrete programmes.'⁴⁴

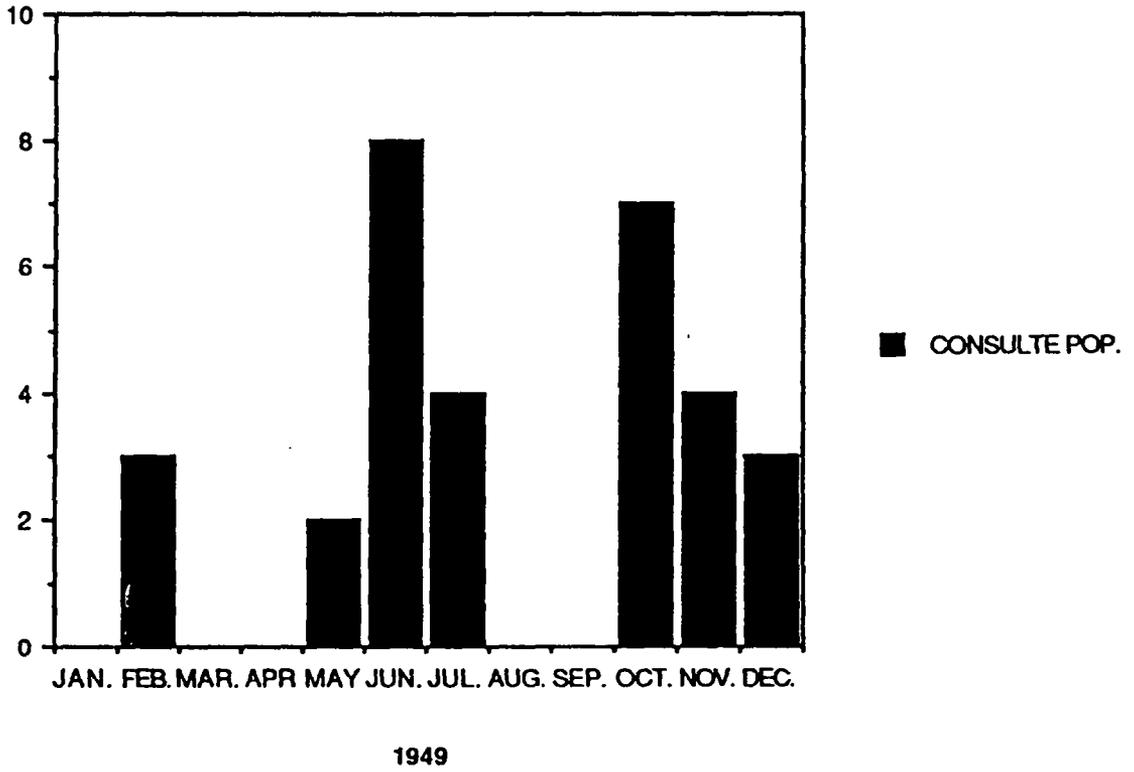
⁴² M.I. Gab. 122/7071 (1949) & 11911/14 (1950-53).

⁴³ See figures 3.1 to 3.9: Meetings of CPs in city and province 1947-1953.

⁴⁴ 'L'Autonomia comunale e le consulte popolari', unsigned article in Il Consultore, I No.5, 1950.

Fig.3.1.

Meetings of the Consulte Popolari in the city of Bologna, 1949.



1.3.2.

Meetings of the Consulte Popolari in the province of Bologna, 1949.

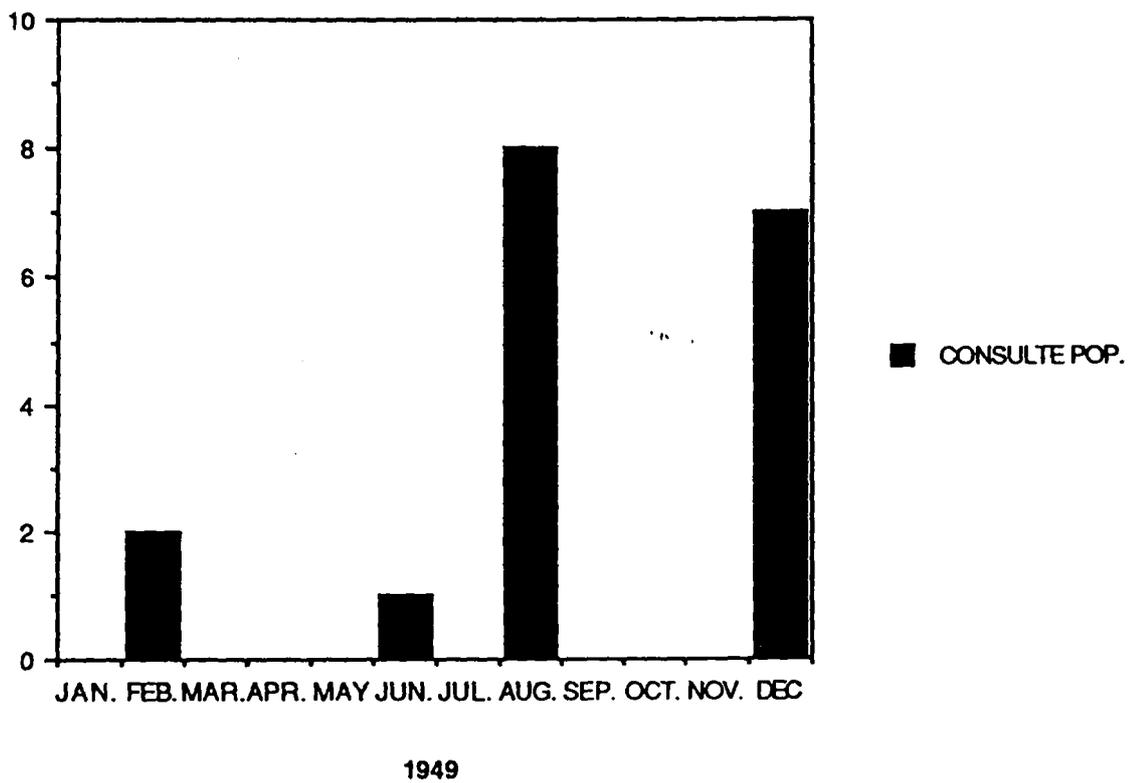
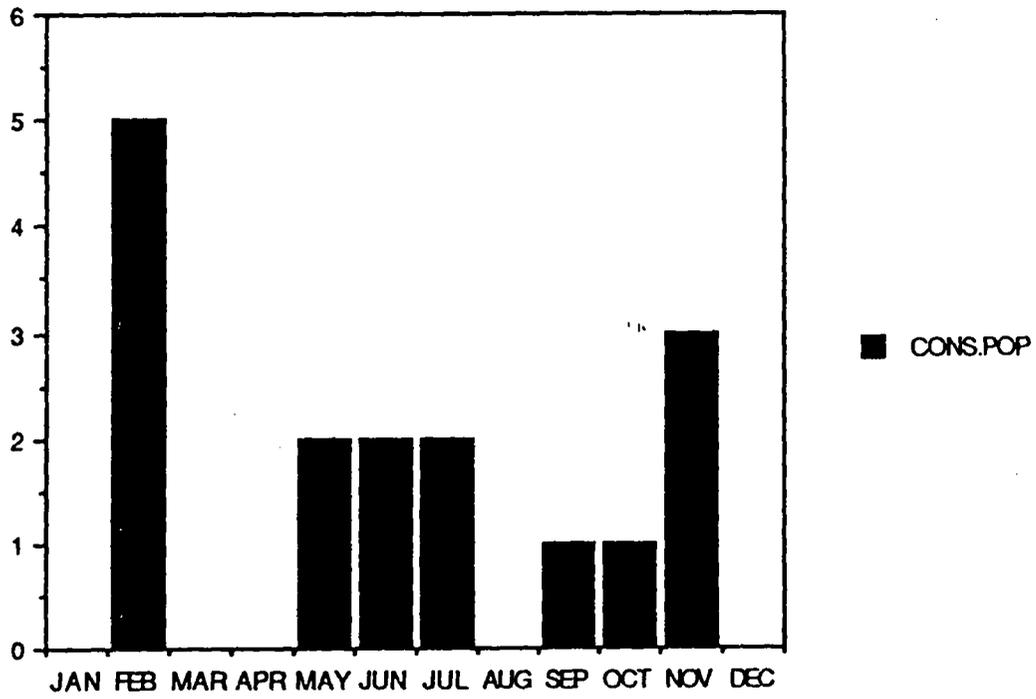
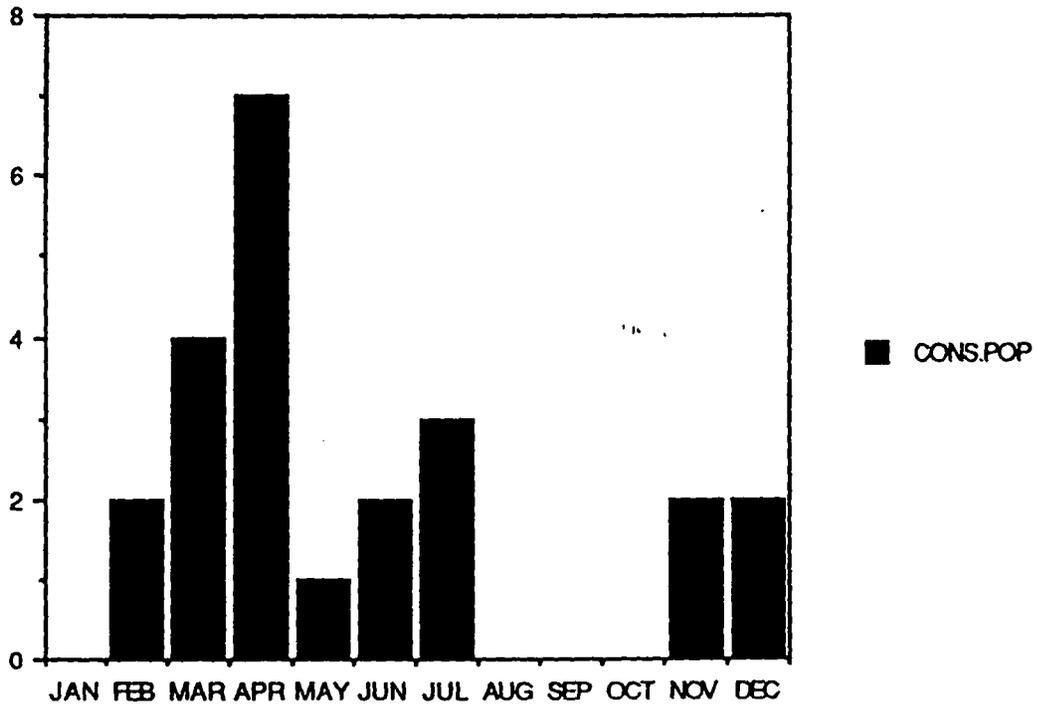


Fig.3.4. Meetings of the Consulte Popolari in the city of Bologna, 1950,



1950

Fig.3.5. Meetings of the Consulte Popolari in the province of Bologna, 1950.



1950

Fig.3.6. Consulte popolari and peace organisations in the city of Bologna, 1951.

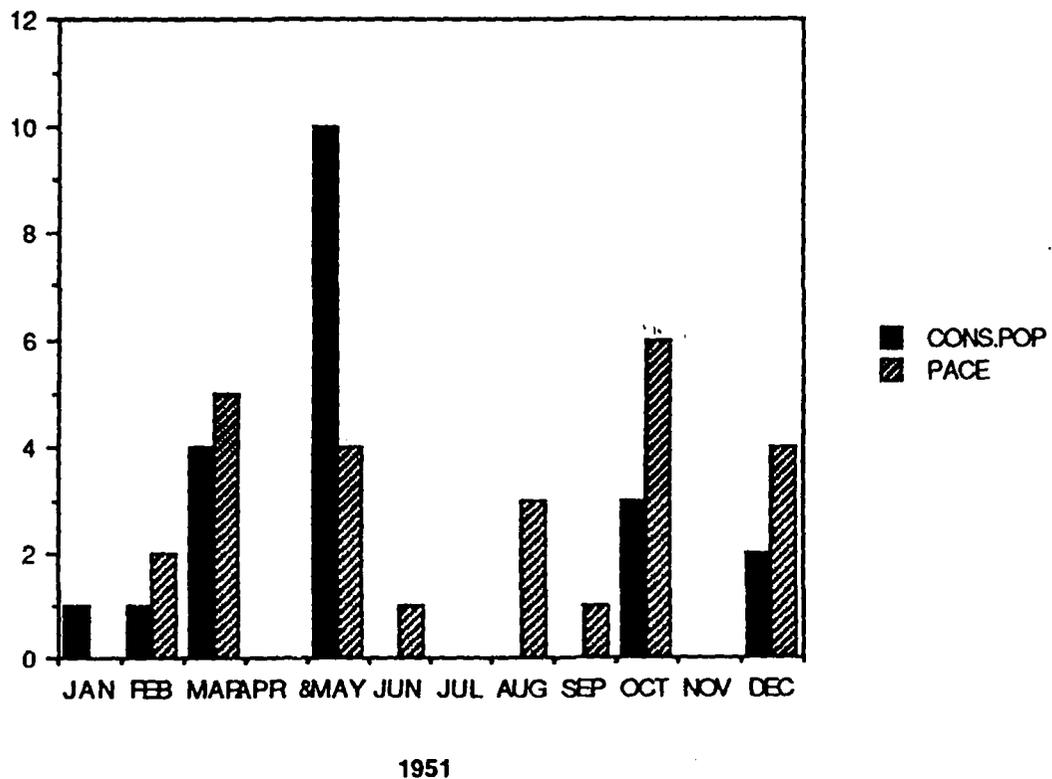


Fig.3.7.

Consulte popolari and peace organisations in the province in Bologna, 1951.

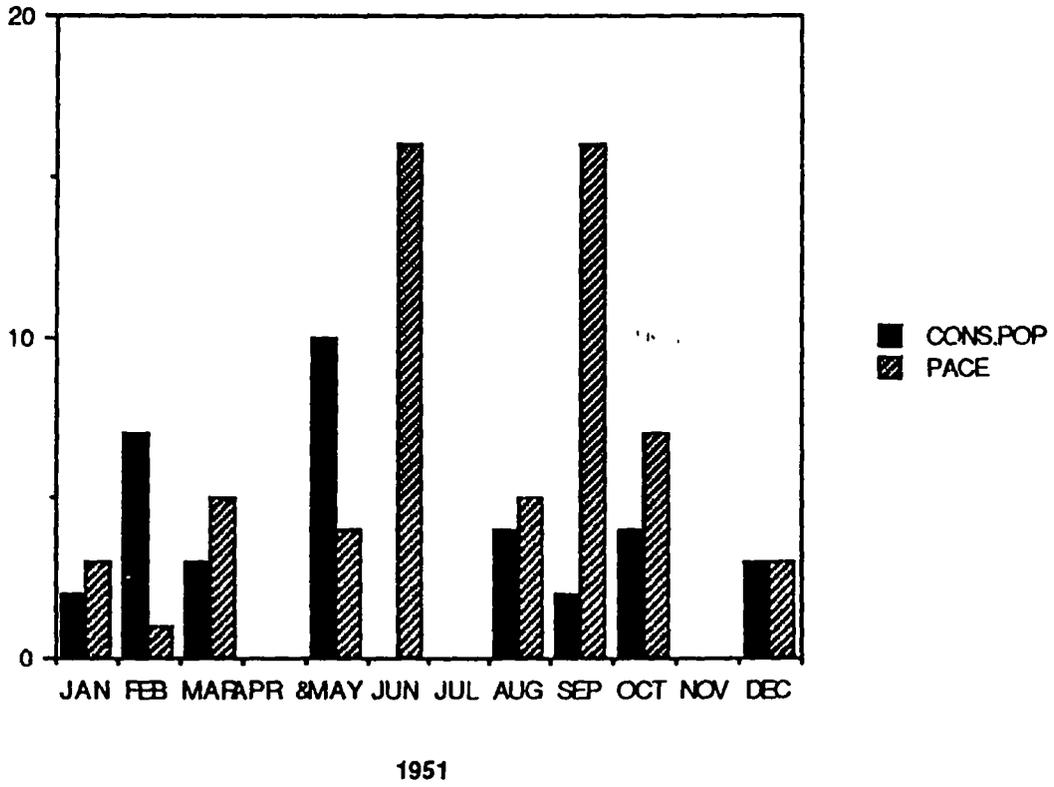
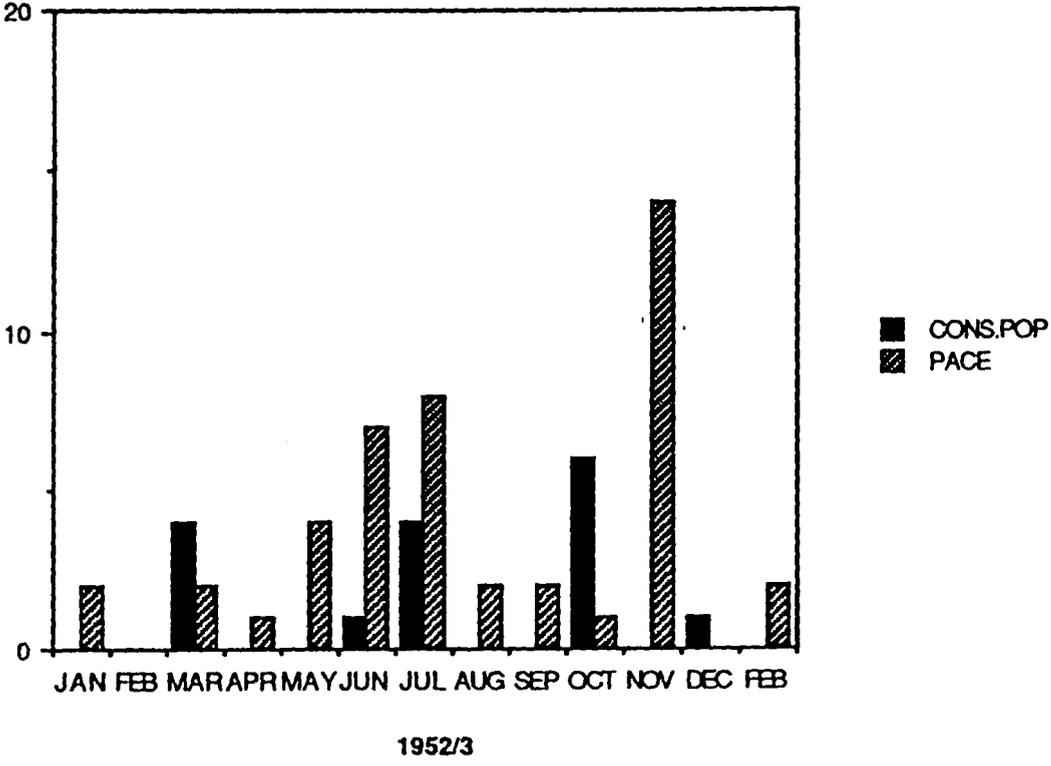


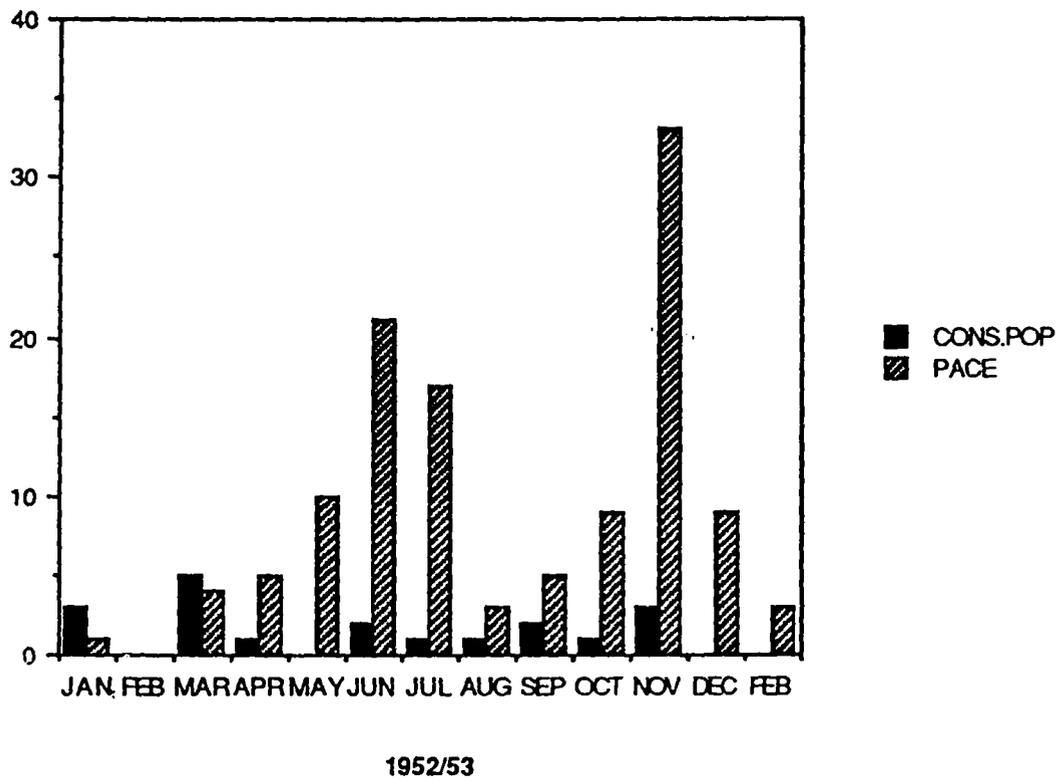
Fig.3.8.

Consulte popolari and peace organisations in Bologna city in 1952-3.



13.9.

Consulte popolari and peace organisations in the province of Bologna, 1952-3.



On the eve of the administrative elections of 1951 the new citizens' convention of the CPs took place on the 22nd April. For the first time Mayor Dozza acknowledged the important petitioning function performed by the consulte and declared that of 229 requests made by them, 137 were granted (about 60%). Yet the effect of the CPs on the political work of the council was limited; in the debates recorded by the acts of the council the CPs rarely featured and it is difficult to assess the impact of the consulte on the giunta itself apart from the occasional public pronouncements of its members.

After the 1951 elections which witnessed a further confirmation of the Christian Democrats' dominance of the national political landscape, Bologna was the only regional capital to remain under the control of the left, albeit with a slender 2,000 vote majority.⁴⁵ This moment represented the nadir of the consulte and after the new council was sworn in, further official reference to them became increasingly rare.⁴⁶

The 8th Congress of the Bologna Federation of the PCI talked once again of the need to service and maximize the potential of the consulte '...which over time have lost their characteristics of small petitioning organisations concerned with specific urban themes.' In 1954 there appeared to be a revival of interest in the consulte experiment when at the provincial conference on local authorities held by the PCI in Bologna in September, the slogan read, 'A greater dedication to parallel organisations' but the CPs themselves appeared to have been emptied of their original characteristics and the exercise in popular participation seemed destined to have exhausted its potential.

The demise of the CPs within Bolognese political culture appeared to be confirmed

⁴⁵ The 'lista di apparentamento' was a fore-runner of the 'legge maggioritaria' or ('legge truffa' as it was called by its opponents) and it allowed parties presenting separate lists in administrative elections to pool their votes and win a greater number of seats than would otherwise have been possible. This system almost invariably worked in favour of the DC and the government parties, but was abolished together with the 'legge maggioritaria' after the elections of 1953. For a fuller discussion of this election and that of 1956 see chapter five, p.186.

⁴⁶ La Lotta, 5th March, 1954.

when in the same year as the PCI conference on local government, the consiglio comunale heard a Communist administrator speak openly about the lack of communication between the administration and the administered, curiously choosing to ignore, or forgetting the informal consultative organisations which his party had encouraged so enthusiastically at the end of the 1940s.⁴⁷

Dozza himself returned to the theme of the consulte when in the debate before the division of the city into quartieri he stated

'in different Italian cities there exist various types of consulte popolari which cover the serious gap in our local public life, they have assumed different names according to the various political origins of the initiatives but they are all equally useful...some prefects have even gone as far as reporting them in official circulars to the police so that these dangerous movements can be surveilled.'⁴⁸

Dozza's speech seemed to imply that the CPs were a new phenomenon and not something which had already seen ten years of activity in Bologna. Yet such collective amnesia in regard to the first consulte did not mean that the ideas for a more fully collective participation in civic life had disappeared. As the debates on the future development of the Emilian capital revealed, in their preoccupation with the need for an active bilateral relationship between civil society and the local state and the stress on territorial autonomy and identity, the experience of the local CLNs and the consulte popolari had left a lasting impression on Bologna's municipal psyche.

⁴⁷ Ceccarelli cit. p.27.

⁴⁸ Due Torri, 1957, p.17.

4. The City, Urban Planning and the Proposals for Decentralisation up to 1960.

(i) The Urban Plans.

A Bolognese administrator complained in 1955 that,

'Perhaps with a little more courage, rather than ruining the city, a few generous spaces would have enriched it with a wider perspective, with light (and) more life, holding off that opaque provincialism which continued to predominate in too many of its parts.'⁴⁹

The administrator was the Communist assessore Renato Cenerini and his comments were directed against the general town plan (PRG) which was to form the basis of the 'new Bologna'.

A critique of the monocentric conception of the city which Cenerini described was implicit in an earlier plan developed and coordinated by Marconi which was produced shortly before the town planning order of 1942 (1150)⁵⁰ came into force. Marconi's scheme was not simply limited to the city but was intended to assume the characteristics of an inter-urban plan which would encompass the territorial limits of Casalecchio di Reno in the extreme west and San Lazzaro di Savenna in the east.⁵¹

This 'polycentric' model of Bologna was by-passed in the first town plan (il piano di ricostruzione) by an even older scheme which had been elaborated between 1936 and 1938 when the idea of the 'greater Bologna' was the sine qua non of fascist urban

⁴⁹ R. Cenerini, 'Lo sviluppo urbanistico di Bologna' Emilia, No.1, 1955, p.264.

⁵⁰ The Town Planning law which remained in force until the 1980s in Italy.

⁵¹ E. Avioti, 'Il dibattito sulla grande Bologna' in P P D'Attorre (Ed) Bologna: Città e territorio tra '800 e '900, Franco Angeli, Milan, 1983.

planning. Subsequent amendments were made in 1944 and 1945 to take account of the wartime damage, but the plan which was unveiled at a public exhibition organised by the CLN shortly after the Liberation was substantially the blueprint approved by the deposed regime. The planning commission reaffirmed the grandiose vision which had accompanied the original PRG when in October 1945 it described Bologna città futura:

'We believe that Bologna should be a great city of commercial traffic and tourism and an industrial city at the same time.'⁵²

Less than three years later, the reconstruction plan was approved on the 16th January, 1948 by ministerial decree. The piano di ricostruzione (PR)⁵³ detailed the zones which were destined for demolition and reconstruction as well as the new parts of the city which were to be assigned as service zones outside the perimeter of the urbanised area. The plan had a five year time-table but its terms of reference had to be in accordance with the 1942 legislation described above, later amended by a ministerial decree of 1951.⁵⁴

So urgent was the task of reconstruction that little thought appeared to have been given to sanctioning an urban plan which privileged the centralising obsessions of the fascist authorities. Although there was vague talk of a popular referendum on the PR in 1945, the planning process essentially remained confined to the technical offices of the comune and the desks of the relevant assessori, a situation which Dozza belatedly criticised in 1950,

'The administrative town planning instruments must cease to be a secret for the

⁵² Cited in Fregna cit. p.83

⁵³ The piano di ricostruzione effectively formed part of the piano regolatore generale but because of the 'emergency' nature of its provisions, the PR received government approval before the city 'structure plan' which was approved by the city council in 1955, and by the Ministry of Public Works in 1958.

⁵⁴ Decree No. 1042, 27th October 1951.

initiated few so that they become known to the vast masses, participating consciously in municipal activity.’⁵⁵

Something of that participatory initiative could be seen in the work of the ex-partisan brigades on the level of the quartieri (see above) where a certain fusion was created between the reconstructive spirit of the CLNs and the town planning culture. But as Fregna notes, after 1945 no major innovations in the concept of town planning were developed in the period immediately following the twenty years of dictatorship,

‘It would not appear legitimate to recognise in the urbanist experience of the immediate post-war period a real...movement away from the methodological elaborations of the second half of the 1930s and the directions contained within the law of 1942’⁵⁶

The traditionalist nature of the plan was revealed in its conceptualisation of the centripetal function of the city centre, while nothing was conceded to the elements of decentralisation contained in the earlier Marconi plan, or to outline proposals for the inclusion of a politica dei servizi (a plan for service provision).⁵⁷

The continuity between pre and post Liberation administrations was at least stylistically disrupted by the administrative/public dialogue which Dozza attempted to establish via exhibitions and public meetings on the town planning scheme in 1945 and 1946. However it would be wrong to interpret these initiatives as any form of ‘joint planning’ since although the comune was keen to provide information about the new

⁵⁵ G. Dozza Bologna - Rivista del Comune, 1950.

⁵⁶ Fregna cit. p.83.

⁵⁷ The leading authority on post-war town planning in Bologna has described the piano di ricostruzione as being ‘subordinant to a private vision of urban development’ while the political apparatus ‘accepted unconsciously the hegemony of speculative capital’ which in turn led to a ‘congested and service-less city.’ G. Campos Venuti, ‘L’urbanistica riformista a Bologna dalla ricostruzione all’espansione’ in W. Tega (Ed) Storia illustrata di Bologna 5/V, N.E.A., Milan 1990, pp.81-82.

scheme, it was much less prepared to solicit the public's opinion on whether the proposals should be implemented. A separate but connected preoccupation of the giunta with regard to the PR did however address the deficiencies of the original fascist plan on the 'classist' division of the city which the pre-war developments had done much to exacerbate.⁵⁸

This was reflected in the authority's opposition to the construction of ghettos of working class housing in the new quartieri,

'We certainly do not envisage the city divided into quartieri with special characteristics, we certainly do not imagine that the best thing is to create entire neighbourhoods for workers and heavy industry. We do not want, through the pretext of housing, recreational clubs, nurseries, welfare provision and so on, to make it possible to in some enslave these workers to this same industry.'⁵⁹

In 1948 the repairs of wartime damage were advanced enough to permit the first assault on building the area outlined in the civic reconstruction plan. As we saw in chapter one, Bologna had not been exempted from the economic downturn which had afflicted the whole of the peninsula, and post-war austerity re-launched the problems of housing and urban space in ever more urgent terms.⁶⁰

The 'Fanfani Plan' was the government's response to the crisis and it envisaged a seven year programme of public works (subsequently renewed in 1956) which came

⁵⁸ D'Atorre, P.P. Bologna: Città e Territorio cit. An example of such 'working-class ghettos' constructed during the twenty years of fascism are the 'railway suburbs' of Bolognina and San Donato to the north and north-east of the city.

⁵⁹ Commissione per lo studio del piano di ricostruzione. Relazione, October 1945, p.3 also in D'Atorre cit, Città e Territorio p.38.

⁶⁰ In the winter of 1946-7 unemployment in Bologna rose to over 100,000, but began to fall gradually in the months ahead. Particularly badly hit were the industrial and agricultural sectors of the economy. Ventura cit. p.61. Unemployment in Italy as a whole had risen from 1,654,872 in 1946 to 2,142,474 in 1948.

into executive force in February 1949.⁶¹ One of the most significant features of this provision was the institution of the autonomous housing authority INA-Casa (Istituto Nazionale Abitazione) whose original scope as well as building affordable rented accommodation was to combat unemployment through large public investments in the construction and building materials industry.⁶²

The labour movement responded to the government's initiative with one of its own in 1949 the 'Plan for Labour' in which the themes of building and public works were advanced as a Keynesian solution to the problems of economic slump and the business cycle. The CGIL plan, in contrast to Fanfani, laid strong emphasis on worker participation in the new projects, and it was against the background of these dual offensives that two tendencies emerged in the discussions over the implementation of the first stage of the PR in Bologna. However it was the dominant modernist and 'professionalist' vision rather than the trade union organic, 'collectivist' view which imposed itself through a diffuse realisation of projects, theories and research on the underlying solutions to urban planning.

The problem for the planners centred on the effects of urban growth which had begun to have a profound impact on Bologna since the early 1950s when migration into the city during the decade 1951-1961 increased the city's population by half.⁶³ The proportionate impact of this demographic growth in Bologna was second only to Turin although the geographic and social origins of the immigrant population represented less of a cultural contrast.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Ceccarelli cit. p.47. Ginsborg cit. p.247, see above.

⁶² Ginsborg, *ibid.*

⁶³ The population of Bologna increased in this period from 340,000 to 445,000 but the greater part of this expansion occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Source: Comune di Bologna, Annuario statistico 1986.

⁶⁴ On intra-regional immigration into Bologna in the post war period see Capeocchi, 'Classe operaia e cultura borghese' cit. pp.159-283. See also Campos Venuti, 'L'urbanistica riformista a Bologna...', cit. p.84.

This demographic surge gave rise to an intense period of building activity both public and private in the 1950s, much of it undertaken by the growing number of cooperative construction firms, the most important being the Cooperativa per la costruzione e la risanamento di case per lavoratori.⁶⁵

Important though the work of INA-Casa was in providing low-cost mass housing, it was not sufficient to meet the demand generated by the urban migration which was inundating every major northern Italian city and a sister agency, the Istituto autonomo case popolari (IACP) was created to bridge the gap. This semi-autonomous state agency operated throughout the country, constructing and managing residential properties itself but accepting building contracts and referrals from local authorities and local voluntary and charitable associations.⁶⁶

The INA-Casa 'village' of the Due Madonne for example, was an example of a spacious and well-planned 'new build' community which combined traditional and modern dwellings in an eclectic mix of apartments and which preserved a 'human scale' by limiting the height of the tower blocks to six stories. The generous provision of light and space which the inhabitants of the Due Madonne inhabitants enjoyed was not a feature of later popular housing projects such as the 'Barca' development where the architectural design of the new quartieri reflected the economic constraints imposed by the central housing authority rather than the local styles and traditions of housing in the province.⁶⁷

The IACP extended the urban continuum of the city but also opened it up to forestieri (strangers) who were obliged to found their own communities amid the concrete and pastel-coloured plaster of the peripheral estates. The idea of integrating the arriviste

⁶⁵ Cooperativa per la costruzione e la risanamento di case per lavoratori, 90 anniversario della fondazione 1884-1974, Bologna, 1974.

⁶⁶ Such charitable associations were almost exclusively Catholic.

⁶⁷ On post-war housing design and the impact of changing land use on the outlying districts of Bologna see P. Guidicini (Ed) I segni del sociale. Ipotesi su Bologna periferica minore, Franco Angeli, Milan, 1980.

population with the indigenous Bolognese was not contemplated by the planners of the first PRG (1955),⁶⁸ and hence the fears expressed by Dozza and the Christian Democrats surrounding the creation of a new ghetto culture seemed well founded.

A typical example of the 'first wave' of peripheral development was the Ucellino neighbourhood in the locality of San Ruffillo which was considered the jewel in the crown of the IACP and constituted the third phase of Francesco Santini's mass housing project on the south-eastern periphery of the city. Santini was the leader of the Emilian old-guard of rationalist architects and was the chief designer of the 'villaggio della rivoluzione'⁶⁹. For the Ucellino project Santini adopted a scheme which was more open and less hurried and which represented a return to the architectural pre-occupations of the IACP in the inter-war period.⁷⁰

Nevertheless projects such as Santini's were all characterised by the isolation of the new neighbourhoods from the established residential community. This was a policy which the comune sanctioned in its piano di ricostruzione by assigning virtually all of the bomb damaged zones in the centre to commercial and high-cost private residential use.⁷¹

⁶⁸ The plan received final approval from the Ministry of Public Works in 1958. For a discussion of the 1958 PRG in relation to the PEEP programme (piano per l'edilizia economica e popolare - public housing plan) see below, chapter seven, part three.

⁶⁹ The 'villaggio della rivoluzione' was built between 1936 and 1938 to commemorate the fascist 'revolution' of 1922 in the small suburban town of Borgo Panigale at the north-western end of the via Emilia. See S.Zagnoni, Bologna Moderna 1860-1980, Bologna, 1984 pp. 140-143; Bologna - Rivista del Comune, Nov-Dec 1936; Various authors, Housing in Europa, Bologna 1978, cited in Ceccarelli cit. p.48.

⁷⁰ On the inter-war history of the IACP see A. Grassi, 'Realizzazione dello IACP di Bologna' in Edilizia Popolare, No.11, 1956 pp.15-21 and IACP 1906-1956, Bologna, 1956.

⁷¹ 28% of buildings in the centre were partially destroyed by the war and 16% were totally destroyed. This meant that nearly one quarter of the 'centro storico' was included in plans for redevelopment but only a small proportion of that area was assigned for 'public housing'. Campos Venuti cit. p.81.

Suburban Bologna in the 1950s. New residential developments "a machia d'olio."



The argument which Dozza and his colleagues repeatedly used in their public speeches and in the election programmes of the 'Due Torri' (PCI) and PSI in 1946 and 1951 was that the pressing homelessness problem compounded by the influx of immigrants from the rural hinterland required a rapid solution through decentred mass housing schemes. These pragmatic considerations outweighed the political fears which the Communists shared of the creation of a class divided city. Significantly the small scale developments of via di Barbiano and via delle Scaline in the predominantly middle-class hill districts to the south of Bologna were not the high-density low-cost settlements which were spreading like a 'machia d'olio' (oil stain) across the northern pianura.

Here the new developments were more harmoniously integrated into the rural-urban fabric leading some critics of the PR to conclude that two planning agendas existed, one for the workers' suburbs of the plains and another for the 'exclusive' well-to-do districts of the colli and the historic centre. The suspicion was that Dozza's support for the politics of alliance was undermining the Socialists' and Communists' commitment to the elimination of class inequality, a charge which was to reoccur in the 1970s over a similar spatial conflict.⁷²

(ii) The Integration of INA-Casa into the Piano Regolatore.

The first real attempt to introduce a spatial element into new housing and which perceived such projects as communities in embryo furnished with their own internal cohesion and provided with a satisfactory quota of services, was achieved only after the experience of the first seven years of INA-Casa. As has been shown, in the immediate post-war period the planners had been unresponsive to the idea of neighbourhood unity (unita di vicinato) which was first theorised by the Associazione per l'architettura organica (APO) and spread through its journal edited by Bruno Zevi - Metron.

⁷² The 'PEEP-Centro Storico' project, see P.L. Cervellati and R. Scannavini Bologna: Politica e metodologia del restauro nei centri storici, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1973.

Metron signified an important break with the monumentalism and the anonymity of pre-war architecture and its contributors were much inspired by the example of Roosevelt's Garden Cities, which was also to feature strongly in new town planning in Britain after the war.⁷³

The theme of the 'urban village' was taken up on a national level and featured in the later version of the Fanfani Plan thus providing the concept with the legitimacy necessary for its incorporation into the planning designs of INA-Casa and the IACP.⁷⁴ An emphasis on the spatial element of urban development combined with a new accent on the administrative dimension of urban planning.

'The choice of areas for the INA-Casa quartieri should bear in mind the need to organically integrate the new residential nuclei into the strategy of the comune's regulatory plan and according to the future development anticipated by it.'⁷⁵

However, such a recommendation could only remain an aspiration while the more prosaic considerations of cost and economies of scale dominated the planning agenda. Because INA-Casa would only build where a room could be constructed for 400,000 lire or less, there were strong constraints on the location of the new quartieri which outweighed other aesthetic concerns.

These considerations notwithstanding, the INA-Casa planners urged the comune to create as much social diversity in the neighbourhood as possible, once again reflecting an organicist conception of the new estates which was now becoming universal in planning circles. However it was less easy to appreciate how the institute's request for

⁷³ Ceccarelli cit. p.49.

⁷⁴ On the post-war activities of INA-Casa see Urbanistica, No.17 special supplement on the 4th INU (Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica - National Town Planning Institute) Conference, Venice 1952; R. Caligara, 'I complessi INA-Casa', in Centro Sociale, Nos 30-31, pp.48n ; G. Astegno, 'Nuovi quartieri in Italia', Urbanistica, No.7, 1951; Ceccarelli ibid.

⁷⁵ Ludovico Quaroni, 'La politica del quartiere', Urbanistica, No.22, 1958.

'naturalism' and 'continuity' with the countryside could be achieved given the constraints on building materials and the decision to construct the new suburbs on the pianura which offered no natural relief and required intensive artificial 'greening'.

This lack of variety in the new residential landscapes was compensated for by the creation of different types of building, heights, finishes and interiors⁷⁶ which could be seen in the two neighbourhoods built by INA-Casa in Bologna in the first seven years of its activity. The quartieri were located at the extreme western and eastern poles of the city. The western development was built around the existing nucleus of the flourishing market town of Borgo Panigale which was home to the Ducati electronics factory, while the other site, the Due Madonne bounded the city limits and the parish of San Donato.

The intention was to create two neighbourhoods which were intended to look 'disordered' or at least which would be free of the fearful symmetry of fascist architecture epitomised in the neo-brutalist monolithism of the EUR district in Rome. The co-ordinating architect, Franco Santini wanted the area to feel like an 'unravelling jersey' and through its use of materials and visible structures the sensation was akin to that of a 'local late neorealism.'⁷⁷

However although the 'social dimension' of town planning emerged more strongly in the early 1940s, 'technical solutions' continued to dominate the criteria for dimensioning and zoning new urban areas. But as the tenor of the debate on urbanism changed in the 1950s, with new concerns being expressed at the dehumanising effects of the metropolitanization of the peripheries of the large cities,⁷⁸ the argument returned to the need to create an urban environment a misura di uomo (on a human

⁷⁶ L. Benevolo, 'La progettazione del quartiere INA-Casa', Centro Sociale, Nos.30-31, 1960, p.64.

⁷⁷ Ceccarelli cit. p.51.

⁷⁸ This debate featured strongly in the pages of Adriano Olivetti's journal Comunità and in the Catholic architectural and town planning journal Chiesa e quartiere.

scale).

The 'Borgo Panigale' and 'Due Madonne' plans were innovative in anticipating some of the criticisms of metropolitan expansion in their recognition that the future development of the new quartieri lay in the 'creation of organic residential communities.'⁷⁹

The reorganization of the new urban centres envisaged by the PRG would be for communities of 8 to 12,000 inhabitants made up of 'units primarily served by centres of life, with a school, nursery, playing field and comprising in addition elements of the primary unit such as the church, an eventual high school, a market, a local council office (registry of births, deaths and marriages, municipal police station etc), a welfare centre with a clinic, a post-office, bank, workshops etc.'⁸⁰

This elaboration represented an advance on many other town plans of the time although it continued to view the urban entity in demographic rather than spatial terms, and therefore saw new urban growth as an addition to the pre-existing city structure instead of as a potentially integral part of the urban fabric.

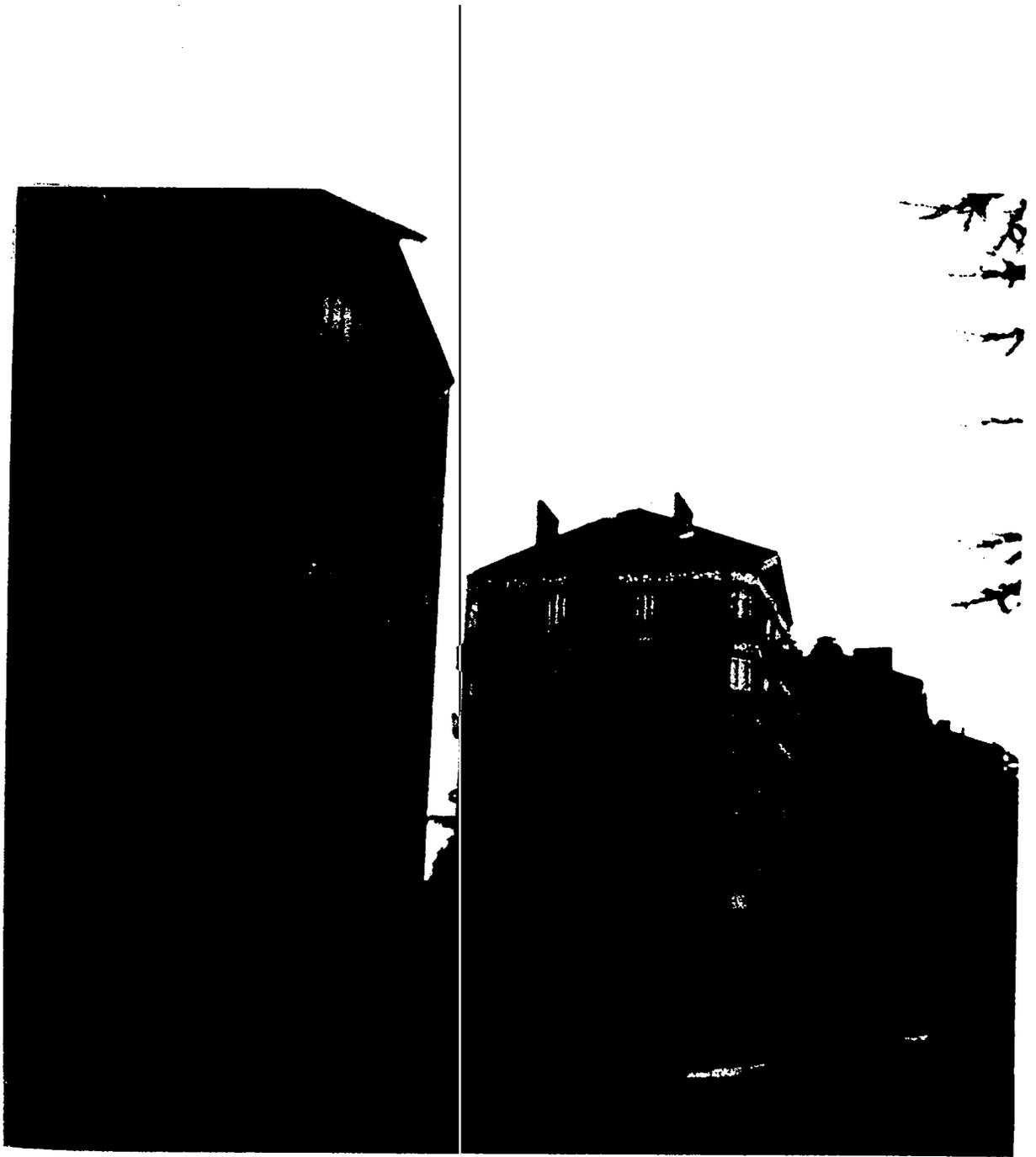
It was only by the mid-1950s that the full implications of 'professionalist' led planning appeared to be realized by the ruling Communist group on the council. In the first years after the war, Dozza and his colleagues seemed almost to accept the town planning function of the local authority as 'ideologically neutral' and significantly chose not to purge the architects' department of the comune of its leading figures, even permitting the original town planning team which drew up the first PR under the auspices of the fascist authorities in 1942 to continue their work (see above).

However with the publication of the new comprehensive town plan of 1955, the

⁷⁹ Relation of the Giunta Municipale on the Piano Regolatore Generale of the City of Bologna, 12th October, 1955.

⁸⁰ Ibid. p.37

Part of the Due Madonne Ina-Casa complex.



Olivetti's utopia was a hybrid of socialism and evangelism which called for a moral reorganisation and a reunification of what he considered to be the false dichotomy between ethics and culture through the recomposition of the political order of the community. Society would thus be refounded on strong solidaristic links based on the 'communion' and not by the sum of individual goods to which each person aspires.

'The comune cannot transform itself into a community because the city lacks the social ethic and a communal goal.'⁸⁴

In this respect Olivetti's conception of the city is very close to the ethical formulae of the early Chicago School of urban sociology and particularly the work of Wirth and Park.⁸⁵

Olivetti believed that the city would return to being the site of the utopia and reconstitute itself as a 'polis' in counter-opposition to the state which had overthrown the harmony and the authenticity of human relations, and he argued that the responsibility for creating this new urban civilisation belonged to the town planners themselves.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Olivetti, A. Intervention at the 4th Congress of the INU, Genoa, 14th October 1954; Dozza Archive, Istituto Gramsci, Bologna.

⁸⁵ See in particular Wirth, L. 'Urbanism as a Way of Life, American Journal of Sociology, July, 1938 and On Cities and Social Life, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill. 1964, and Park, R.E. 'The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behaviour', in Park, Burgess & Mackenzie, The City, University of Chicago Press, 1925.

⁸⁶ This theme was importantly echoed in the Dossetti inspired Libro Bianco of the Bologna DC which Olivetti anticipated in his speech: '...when a city constructs without the help of the state something important, it is on the way to becoming a community. The objective conditions for this passage are:

- 1) The existence of an optimum organizeable life space;
- 2) An adequate organizational structure;
- 3) The organization of the city in (full) view of its manifestations... This action is not in our power...But the responsibility for the work is ours and this we cannot avoid.'

Adriano Olivetti, intervention at the 4th Congress of INU, cit.

But by this time (in the mid-1950s) town planning in all of its manifestations was becoming the main site of local political confrontation over the form of development which the city should adopt. Bologna along with many other Italian cities was becoming aware of the growing contradictions of rapid urbanisation, and politicians from all sides were accepting that solutions to the emerging problems could not simply be technical or managerial in nature.

The social and political characteristics of the new urban and suburban settlements could no longer be considered as an 'extension' of the city *ex ante*. New problems and concerns were articulated which called for an institutional response from the city authorities. As the first party to examine in a detailed way the problems and opportunities of the new Bologna, the following chapter examines how the Christian Democrats forced the issue of 'decentralisation' in its several aspects onto the political agenda during the administrative election campaign of 1956.

CHAPTER THREE

The Battle for Bologna: the 'Libro Bianco su Bologna' and the Administrative Elections of 1956.

1. The 'Libro Bianco' as a Critique of Modernity.

The publication of the Libro Bianco su Bologna by the Christian Democrats in May of 1956, not only marked a 'svolta' in the internal politics of the Bolognese party, it was also the first time a comprehensive decentralist vision of urban life was used to launch an Italian election campaign. The authors of the Libro Bianco, Achille Ardigò and Beniamino Andreatta, formidable intellectuals in their own right, were the maximum expression of this desire to change the DC's traditional relationship with the left, but their intellectual and ideological formation was strongly influenced by the leader of the 'left opposition' in the Christian Democrat party, Giuseppe Dossetti who was chosen as capolista (first choice candidate) for the DC for the Bologna 1956 elections.¹

Dossetti's acceptance of the candidature for mayor of Bologna marked the end of four years of political exile when in 1951 he announced his resignation from the directorate of the DC and in the following year gave up his parliamentary seat. Dossetti's withdrawal from politics reflected the failure of the 'Dossettian programme' which his followers tried to sustain on a national level both inside and outside the DC. The pre-occupation of Dossetti and his followers, which continued after the debates in the

¹ Boiardi, F. Dossetti e la crisi politica dei cattolici, Parenti, Florence, 1956 p.224n; Tesini, M. Oltre la città rossa. L'alternativa mancata di Dossetti a Bologna (1956-58), Il Mulino, Bologna, 1986; the latter written by a DC member of Bologna council, in spite of its rather combative title, offers a comprehensive and mostly judicious account of the electoral battle of 1956 from a 'neo-Dossettian' perspective.

Constituent Assembly, was with elaborating the ideas contained in Article 5 of the Constitution which related to the 'rights and obligations of citizens'.

This synthesis between theory and concrete politics, which became modified subsequently, owed much to the personalismo comunitario of the French theologians Emmanuel Mounier and more specifically Jacques Maritain. Writing during the depression of the thirties, Maritain and Mounier saw the decadence of Western civilisation as irreversible and believed that the failure of 'real socialism' demonstrated that salvation could only come from a 'new humanism'.² But since as Maritain argued, the Kingdom of God cannot exist in time and space, the notion of a temporal Christian city could only be an intermediate concept which had as its spiritual end the celestial city of God.

The transient nature of this project was reflected in Maritain's description of the imaginary temporal Christian city,

'...this city is a society not of men in permanent residence but of men in transit.'³

The idea of the urban community providing a celestial transmission belt for the faithful, while at the same time offering the real possibility of 'here and now' justice and democracy, was thoroughly consistent with Dossetti's unique version of Christian Democracy. His acceptance of the candidature for the elections of 1956 was from this perspective, proof of his commitment to unite the two strands of the Olivettian dialectic; the individualism of 'communion' with the collectivism of 'solidarity' (solidarismo).⁴

² Ceccarelli cit. p.58.

³ Maritain, J. Humanisme intégrale. Problèmes temporels et spirituels d'une nouvelle chrétienté, Aubier, Paris, 1936. p.174.

⁴ For the background to Dossetti's candidature see, Nicola Matteucci, 'Dossetti a Bologna', Il Mulino, Vol.V, No.6, 1956, pp.382-390.

The city was defined in the Libro Bianco as 'a moral organism' and for the Christian Democrats, good government signified most importantly an understanding of the social and personal needs of the citizens who in their complexity constituted the 'social urban life' of the city. This organicism was posed mainly in terms of an ethical or solidaristic concept and as such could be considered above or apart from the wider concept of faith which assumed the prior existence of a homogeneous religious community.

As the visionary Adriano Olivetti insisted, 'the projection of the organic community necessitated the use of scientific instruments in order to understand the reality (of urban society).' What was required, he argued, was social research based on the great social investigations (national and local censuses etc.) and more generally an appreciation of the help which sociology could provide for the understanding of urban problems.⁵

However the originators of the Libro Bianco did not consider sociology or urban studies to be sufficient in itself because a 'complete knowledge of social needs' will only be arrived at when the citizens are made the medium of their own feelings and inspirations.

'The traditional channels through which the single citizen or groups, agencies and associations make contact with authority (i.e. - the communal administration)... (the means available for) the expression of need, of deprivation, requests for help, proposals...are outdated.'⁶

⁵ On the contradictory positions taken by the Italian left with respect to emerging sociological critiques of urban society, see L. Albo & V. Rieser, 'La sinistra e lo sviluppo della sociologia' in Problemi del socialismo, No.3 1962, cited in Ceccarelli, cit. p.65. As we saw in the preceding chapter, Olivetti's influence among architects and town-planners was not only limited to the Catholic world.

⁶ Libro Bianco cit, p.10

The 'Libro Biancisti' hoped that an affirmation of autonomy would translate itself into self-government which was defined as a collaboration between citizens and administration and which would be articulated in turn according to, 'real and organic de facto relations existing between citizens themselves.'

The social characteristics of these organic relations were expressed in the following terms,

'Every inhabitant recognises himself not only as a citizen of a whole urban corpus, or a whole city, which is more vast than the group of houses or apartments in which his neighbours live...this minor organisation of the city, even when its not the intention of the constructors (as we in fact see in the case of the 'villagi' of INA-Casa) acquire characteristics which are not just physical, urbanistic, or (defined by) the economic and professional groups that prevail in the zone, but which also give rise to relations between people, whether spontaneous (human relations), or as a function of specific responsibilities, interests and concrete links (social relations).⁷

The argument sustained in the pages of the Libro Bianco was that the bureaucratic boundaries of the city and the administrative districts did not correspond necessarily to the neighbourhood boundaries within which people identified themselves in their local surroundings. Apart from the boundaries detailed in the PRG there also existed (as alternatives) the parish boundaries, the school catchment boundaries, the territorial boundaries of the Ente Comunale di Assistenza (ECA)⁸, and the census and taxation zones. These were all different expressions of the territorial division of the city, but a real delimitation of the urban totality, the authors argued, should be done with the guidance of the inhabitants of the various residential zones.

The comune for its part should give a 'form to the new suburban neighbourhoods resulting from the spontaneous building expansion guaranteeing comfort, services and

⁷ Ibid. p.32

⁸ Municipal Relief Board

an environment similar to that found in small comuni.⁹ The inference was that a large part of greater Bologna had developed without any planning and the need therefore was to provide an organic unity which had been lost in the rush towards mass housing.

'Organic unity' for the Christian Democrats meant a type of micro-stratification in which all social groups would find themselves represented and where the conditions for a harmonious rapport between classes could be best facilitated. The new quartieri showed an alarming tendency towards becoming a working class fringe, 'una cintura operaia' around the affluent 'traditional city.' In this context it was difficult to distinguish Communist preoccupations from those of the DC.¹⁰

'The comune should prevent the formation of great building complexes destined for the same social class, but favour where possible the integration of working class dwellings with those of the ceto medio ... (and) therefore (create) not a city of satellites, but (one) of organic neighbourhoods.'¹¹

2. The Christian Democrat Campaign.

After many years of aggressive open conflict between the majority Socialist/Communist administration and the Christian Democrat-led opposition, the actual conduct of the election campaign of 1956 appeared to herald a changing atmosphere of political competition. The divisions still existed between the historic rivals, but the campaigning language was more muted, more conciliatory and often couched in terms of universal concerns, in spite of the strong personal attacks that Dozza in particular launched against his protagonist.

⁹ Ibid. p.33

¹⁰ See above.

¹¹ Ibid.

The conduct of the DC electoral campaign centred on a circuit of so-called 'flying election meetings' (comizi volanti) in the course of which 'il pubblico domanda e Dossetti risponde' (the public asks and Dossetti replies) discussions attempted to make real contact with the city's population, in the new peripheral neighbourhoods as well as the centre.¹² Through the questions which were proposed by the local residents the arguments were elaborated by the DC which were to form part of their electoral campaign. In these encounters Dossetti reiterated the themes of family, community and organic identity as the cornerstones of civil society.¹³

The problem of 'belonging' and of identification with the organic community was a theme which greatly pre-occupied those who draughted the Libro Bianco, and as they sought to encourage a better and more extensive dialogue between administrator and administered their concerns also embraced the tenuous status of the 'new Bolognese' whose impact on the traditional life of Bologna had been limited as we have seen by their location fuori le mura^e (beyond the walls).

¹² As well as travelling election platforms, the DC used motorised squads of priests known as 'flying monks' (frati volanti) who would dash between electoral districts on motorscooters in order to chase up Catholic voters; Nazario S. Onofri, Le due anime di Cardinale Lercaro, Capelli Editore, Bologna, 1987 discusses the use of the 'frati volanti' in the 1956 elections in chapter three. Dozza was especially indignant about this practice claiming that the direct intervention of the Church in local politics represented a type of neo-legationism, a return to pontifical interference in the administrative life of the city. He reminded the Catholics that the Lateran Treaties while providing guarantees for the Church and 'Catholic Action' required them to 'follow their activities outside any party organisation'; this they were patently not doing. G. Dozza 'Le elezioni amministrative a Bologna: linee per un programma', Press Conference held at the Teatro "La Ribalta" 17th March, 1956, in Giuseppe Dozza: Il buon governo e la rinascita della città. 1945-1966, Cappelli Editore, 1987, pp.289-301.

¹³ L'Avvenire d'Italia, 18th, 19th & 21st April, 1955; Il Resto del Carlino, 19th & 21st April, 1956 in the Dozza Archive, cartons 233 & 256; Ceccarelli cit. p.90.

'We need to point to the dangers of the growing numbers of citizens who are ignoring or no longer living in direct daily contact with the most authentic and most immediate roots of the Bolognese tradition, in the soul of Bologna: particularly exposed to this danger are, on the one hand, the inhabitants of the new quartieri who have nothing more in common with the traditional character of the city, and on the other, the new citizens who provide the city with its organic renewal which can no longer be entrusted to the natural increase in births and must depend on immigration from outside.'¹⁴

This 'lonely crowd' as Ceccarelli refers to it, mingles with the equally solitary crowd of the immigrants who have recently arrived in an unknown city peopled with unknown faces.¹⁵ As the suburbs extended themselves into the arable plains of the province, the constituent features of the Bologna storica had started to disappear warned the authors of the Libro Bianco.

This perceived erosion of the communal spirit of the city was described also in terms of the 'renouncement of night-life' and was seen in the decline in the use of the city centre for recreation and culture, leaving the new inhabitants dependent on local entertainments '...the cinema thus became the only grand form of recreation and passive relaxation for the masses...together with television, or a bar, or a parish association or party branch when these provided social activities.'¹⁶

There was no reflection on the material and practical obstacles to maintaining this communal spirit when public transport services ceased to run to the suburbs after

¹⁴ Il Libro Bianco, cit.

¹⁵ The authors draw attention to the significance of the publication in Bologna in 1956 of a translation of David Riesman's The Lonely Crowd as La folla solitaria, by il Mulino which would almost certainly have been read by one of the authors of the Libro Bianco, Achille Ardigo who was and remains a professor of sociology at the University of Bologna.

¹⁶ Ceccarelli cit. p.61

dark and disposable income for the working class even during the initial period of economic recovery in the mid-1950s could not often stretch to outside entertainment.

Television in the Italy of these years was still an unaffordable luxury for the vast majority of workers and therefore it had to be watched in the local bar or parish hall. Although the Communist Party considered the RAI to be an instrument of DC propaganda, the Party was aware that its supporters would not want to be excluded from the new media and some case del popolo even bought sets of their own. The collective provision of entertainment was seen as important for the establishment of the kind of organic solidarity which the Libro Bianco urged, and it is interesting that these years witnessed a large growth in the number of cinema parrocchiali, particularly in the church halls of the new urban periphery.¹⁷

The need to integrate the new urban migrants was considered especially vital for the 'marginal' population of the periphery which included the unemployed, the underemployed and the socially vulnerable. The comune, Dossetti argued, should actively intervene to ensure that newly arrived families were provided with everything from residence certificates to books on the history of Bologna.¹⁸

This goal could only be achieved, it was argued, by multiplying and giving more significance to these small communities or 'urban villages' (as they might be tentatively described). Indeed it was only through the realization of the social and

¹⁷ Stephen Gundle in his forthcoming book Italy Transformed: The Communist Party, Cultural Change and Modernization 1944-1989, assigns little significance to the number of parish cinemas built in the 1950s, arguing that the construction of a small sala cinematografica was almost a standard design feature for new churches and it is doubtful that the films shown had any direct propaganda purpose other than not promoting the morally questionable (and extremely popular!) Hollywood features of the period. See also his 'L'Americanizzazione del quotidiano. Televisione e consumismo nell'Italia degli anni Cinquanta' in Quaderni Storici, Vol. XXI (1986), No. 62, pp. 561-94.

¹⁸ Libro Bianco, cit. p. 56.

cultural potential of these small organic communities that the 'common civic good' could be reached. A no lesser authority than Pope Pius XI had argued similarly in the Quadrogesimo Anno

'to entrust to a greater and higher society that which can be done by lesser and smaller communities...is a grave injury (to) and dislocation of the proper social order.'¹⁹

The Church had been traditionally cautious in its endorsement of the social interventionist role of the Italian national and local state, although the inclusion of the Lateran Treaties into the constitution of the Republic and the closer relationship of the governing Christian Democrat party with the Vatican had helped to soften the Church's attitudes to modern 'welfarism' and to the participation of Catholics in civic and political life. In Bologna this rapprochement between Catholics and the civil authorities even appeared to extend to supporting the welfare functions of the socialist/communist administration provided that such social policy was not overtly motivated by ideological ambitions.

This sentiment was evident in the programmatic statement of the DC in the 1956 municipal election campaign

'The Christian Democrat party will assume...the social and urban reorganisation of the city...(in the interests of)...the organic neighbourhoods. On the basis of this proposal the DC is committed to...the provision of...administrative choices through a real and systematic consultation with the people...Starting from the most out-lying (neighbourhoods) and with those whose needs and potential appear to be the greatest, the comune will promote periodic meetings and the coordination of authorities, associations, institutions, and private citizens who are willing to and capable of collaborating (in this task) with the aim of better understanding and improving the life of their neighbourhood...This cooperation will be organised through

¹⁹ Maritain, J. Humanisme intégrale, cit.

the consulte di quartiere for particular problems and sectors (and these will be sited) next to the offices and centres of the decentred municipality.²⁰

Initially though, these participatory bodies would be used for the collection and processing of information for the large-scale survey of Bolognese society which was proposed in the introduction to the Libro Bianco by Ardigò who lamented the lack of a sociological profile of the city and its inhabitants.

The Christian Democrats' conception of 'intermediate communities' comunità intermedia, was a Catholic model of society and state which had a Sturzian authority and therefore represented an important legacy from the 'Partito Popolare' for the DC.²¹ By accepting that there existed an autonomous society outside the Christian family, the communion of the Church and the Kingdom Of God, the Catholic authorities appeared to be arriving at some of the same pre-occupations as Rerum Novarum in acknowledging the importance of secular social institutions.

3. The Communist Campaign.

The PCI presented itself in the same elections with a programme which also included the theme of the quartieri. But the emphasis was quite different from that of the DC. For the 'communitarian theme', the PCI substituted the notion of the 'efficient administration' and the quartiere was seen above all in terms of its spatial coherence and in the possibility it gave for urban management which favoured, 'the development of the city through the systematisation of the quartieri which in part exist already, and in part have still to spring up, (and) is indicated by the types of construction - more or

²⁰ Libro Bianco, cit. pp.12-13.

²¹ Don Sturzo was the historic leader of the Partito Popolare and was forced into exile during the years of fascism. He returned to help form the new Christian Democratic Party and was a major influence on its post-war leader and long-serving Italian prime minister, Alcide De Gasperi. See also Ginsborg cit. p.170.

less intensive - which are adapted to the surrounding environment.’²²

This was a technocratic solution to the organisation of life in the new periphery which had none of the moral precepts of the DC programme; instead it promised a thorough overhaul of the municipal apparatus aimed at making the representative organs more responsive to the needs of the new (and traditional) communities,

‘We maintain that there is a need to move towards a reform of the municipal organisation, at least in the cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants - and therefore also in Bologna - which would allow the formation of administrative district nuclei in which the citizens can find a more direct and immediate response to their needs and...local problems.’²³

The manifesto also drew upon the experience of the consulte popolari as an example of the tradition of popular representation which the Communists intended to revive. A spectre of civic participation which had returned once again to haunt the council chamber.²⁴

As a concrete expression of their intention, the PCI proposed to develop the idea of the case del popolo, the traditional institution of the Italian workers’ movement which was to form the model for the new civic nuclei of the quartiere, the case del cittadino,

‘The administration is thinking...of establishing case del cittadino where social activities would be combined: social services, a clinic, a library, a meeting room and the municipal office.’²⁵

²² Vota Due Torri - Vota PCI, Programme for the administrative elections of 1956, p.33.

²³ Ibid. p.48.

²⁴ See section three, chapter two above.

²⁵ Vota Due Torri, cit. p.33.

For its part the PSI saw the quartieri as a simple hypothesis for the rationalisation of urban development, without specifying the future character which the party expected them to take.²⁶

The socialists' decisive intervention in the field of administrative reform had to wait until 1960 when the first proposals for the re-organisation of the city were unveiled by the giunta. The history of decentralised planning in the 1950s was therefore unquestionably dominated by the Catholic social reformers who in the absence of executive administrative power set out to find their own solutions to the 'moral crisis' of metropolitan Bologna

4. The Defeat of Dossetti and the New Politics of the Comune.

On the 27th May, 1956, Giuseppe Dossetti was soundly defeated by Giuseppe Dozza who was overwhelmingly confirmed as the Bolognese's first choice for mayor.²⁷ This defeat however also represented something of a victory for the electoral campaign which Dossetti and his colleagues fought, in that the 10 seats won by the DC in 1951

²⁶ Programme of the PSI for the administrative elections of 1956 for the list 'Alleanza Socialista.'

²⁷ In fact Dozza received 31,007 first preference votes, the highest number than at any time during his political career. However, in 1951 Dozza polled a greater share of the total Due Torri votes - 32.6% compared to the 25.54% share he obtained in 1956. Dossetti received 13,144 first preferences which accounted for less than 18% of the total DC vote.

were increased to 17 in 1956.²⁸

Table 7. Results of the 1956 Administrative Elections for the Comune di Bologna.

Party	Votes	%	Seats
PCI	121,404	45.80	29
PSI	19,957	7.40	4
PSDI	23,253	8.65	5
PLI	12,496	4.65	2
MSI-PNM	13,622	5.07	3
PR-PRI	3,487	1.30	0
DC	74,501	27.73	17

Source: Tesini, p.194.

The Christian Democrat minority while it intended to 'oppose' the giunta,

²⁸ See Table 7. Although the PCI polled 40.4% of the vote in 1951, (5% less than in 1956), in 1956 their number of seats actually went down from 33 to 29. This was because under the 'lista di appontamento' the left were able to combine with the tiny citizens' party 'Il Gigante' to produce a slim 2,000 vote majority. The PCI and its allies polled 48.79% of the vote and obtained a total of 40 seats while the government parties with 47.86% of the vote won only 19 seats because of the refusal of the MSI to join the 'pact'. As Tesini perhaps a little hopefully observes, '...it would in fact have been enough for the left to have polled a few hundred less votes and there to have been slightly less support for the MSI, and Bologna would never have become the symbolic city of Western communism,' Tesini, cit. p.178.

demonstrated early on that it had no intention of adopting 'senseless' blocking tactics to score spurious political points. If anything, an atmosphere of reconciliation was in the air at the first council meeting on the budget proposals for 1957, the need for the provision of 'adequate social means' as Dozza put it for the rapidly growing city brought with it the need for an increase in the council's expenditure of several billion lire. The proposal to extend the authority's scope for social intervention was supported at least in principle in the Libro Bianco.

Intervening in the debate on the budget, Dossetti remarked that the way in which the electoral campaign had been conducted meant that it was legitimate to expect more from this administration, and rhetorically demanded,

'Is it really illegitimate, too pretentious, our fundamental conviction? Does it fail to take into account the objective limits and does it not offer a reasoned comparison with the situations of other local authorities? I do not believe that this can be true, (and) if it was true I should have to say that to a certain extent the responsibility could not be ours alone, in a sense the blame would be primarily yours, because it was you (Communists) who first gave rise to, not only in us, but in all the people, the hope, the conviction, the expectation that this administration was an administration in a league of its own...which in a certain sense was above the limits, the conditions, the mediocrity in which the others had to move.'²⁹

Dozza's response was typically peremptory,

'The forecasts of Professor Dossetti are completely out of touch with reality.'³⁰

Dossetti could not easily respond to the accusation of being 'unworldly', he was rarely predisposed to talk in public, did not read newspapers, or listen to the radio and was prone on his occasional interventions in the council chamber to proclaim his faith and

²⁹ Meeting of the consiglio comunale, ACC 4th March, 1957.

³⁰ Ibid.

cite the scriptures to his bewildered fellow councillors.

'I believe in the angels, I believe in the intervention of the Madonna, I believe in the saints, I believe in all these things which belong to the invisible world which operates on the visible world, I believe above all you see, beyond this poor human word (mine the weakest and most fallible of all), in the Word of God.'³¹

It was therefore with little surprise that the city council of Bologna heard the mayor read Dossetti's letter of resignation on the 29th March, 1958.³² With the announcement of his intention to take-up the priesthood, Dossetti signalled his last exit from politics. At the same time the left opposition inside the Christian Democratic Party lost perhaps the only figure who might have been capable of steering the party towards a more socially committed politics.³³ But the debate which Dossetti stimulated and developed in those two years was, as Renato Zangheri admitted, vital to the entire process of decentralisation which the Communists were to begin in the 1960s.³⁴ Paradoxically therefore, 'Don Pippo's' vision was to have much more of an impact on the socialcommunist leadership than among his Church's sceptical and conservative flock.³⁵

Arbizzani claimed that Dossetti's principal merit lay in his attempt to give a 'respiro nuovo' to Christian Democracy in Bologna. He was also a 'galantuomo' who conducted himself with great civility throughout the contest. His preoccupation with

³¹ Giuseppe Dossetti, speech to the consiglio comunale, ACC 12th November 1956.

³² The letter read, '...I would not have thought of leaving it (the council), but for one sole reason, which has now come to pass; the Lord through His Church has deigned to call me to the priesthood of Christ and the religious life. I therefore must beg you to place before the council my absolute and definite resignation.' Tesini, cit. p.269.

³³ Baget-Bozzo cit.

³⁴ Interview, Rome, February 1991.

³⁵ Interview with Renato Zangheri, Rome, March 1991.

new and better forms of urban life and the proposals for the quartieri (as we see in the next chapter) were to win widespread political consensus across the political divide. But essentially Dossetti remained in Arbizzani's words, 'an isolated prophet', and his convincing defeat by Giuseppe Dozza facilitated a conservative backlash within the Bologna DC which left little space for the communitarian pluralism which Dossetti espoused.³⁶

Although Dossetti's followers such as Achille Ardigò continued to elaborate the former's vision of organic renewal in urban society, it would be fair to say that hopes for a radical Catholic alternative to the PCI's practice of 'buon governo' ended with the political career of Dossetti himself.

But '1956' was also significant for the younger generation of reformers inside the PCI who were inspired by Togliatti's call for a redefinition of the 'via italiana al socialismo' at the 5th Congress of the PCI to launch their own campaign for organisational change within the Emilian federations. The elections of 1956 overshadowed the process of transformation which was underway in the Bologna federation and which was to finally result in the PCI's regional conference in 1959. In the following chapter we consider the political background to this conference and explain why it was to have a profound importance for the future orientation of Communist strategy in Emilia-Romagna.

³⁶ Luigi Arbizzani, Giuseppe Dozza a un'anno della morte, Comune di Bologna. Documenti del Comune, 9, 1975, p.132.

CHAPTER FOUR

Bad Godesberg on the Reno? The 1959 Regional Conference, the Amendola 'Revolution' and Political Renewal in the Bologna Federation of the PCI.

1. Introduction.

In 1945, the then leader of the German SPD, Kurt Schumacher wrote an article which had important implications for the post-war strategy of West German social democracy.

'Socialism is no longer the affair of the working class in the old narrow sense of the term. It is the program for workers, farmers, craftsmen, tradesmen, and the intellectual occupations. They all stand in unbridgeable opposition to the real exploiting groups. That the groups in the so-called middle classes (Mittelstand) were taken in by the propaganda of the reactionaries, the militarists, and the Nazis, and thereby let themselves be used as political cannon fodder against democracy and socialism, led to national and economic catastrophe...The German future depends on what kind of position the middle classes take with respect to Social Democracy.'¹

If we compare this text to the transcript of the speech which Togliatti delivered to the Reggio Communists in 1946², it is clear that the leaders of two of Europe's greatest workers' parties both agreed that without the support of the lower middle classes, socialists would remain marginalised and excluded from the democratic governments of post-war Europe. At the 5th party congress of the PCI, Togliatti returned to the same theme when he declared:

¹ Schumacher, K. Turmwaechter der Demokratie, 2, pp.39n cited in Douglas Chalmers, The Social Democratic Party in Germany, Yale University Press, London, 1964, p.210.

² See below, chapter two, part one.

'...with the increasingly crushing control of these (monopolistic) groups over the distribution and circulation of goods, as well as on the productive process itself, new social strata find themselves objectively interested in a socialist transformation of our society.

In the cities as in the countryside, millions of small and medium producers see their enterprises' margins of independence and security reduced. They see them becoming subsidiary to the monopolies, geared to serve the end of maximizing the monopolies' profits. There is, therefore, an objective concordance of aims developing between the working class, which is struggling to defeat capitalism, and no longer only the proletarian and semiproletarian masses, but the bulk of agrarian smallholders and an important part of the productive middle strata in the cities...'³

The new bases of class solidarity were to be found in the cities (rather than in the depopulating countryside) where according to Togliatti, 'a very numerous population of craftsmen' exists that finds itself in direct conflict with a capitalist system which forces it into a marginal economic existence.'⁴ This community of exploited wage-earners and small producers had an objective interest in joining with the Communist Party in the struggle against monopoly capitalism.

'Fighting an effective battle against the great private monopolies is in the immediate interests, and in fact today it is a necessity, for the defence of the productive activity

³ Palmiro Togliatti, La dichiarazione programmatica e le Tesi dell'VIII Congresso del PCI, Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1957, p.39 cited in Stephen Hellman, 'The PCI's Alliance Strategy and the Case of the Middle Classes' in Blackmer, D. & Tarrow, S. Communism in Italy and France, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1975, p.373. The emphasis is Hellman's.

⁴ Palmiro Togliatti, report to the 5th Congress of the Italian Communist Party, Rome, December, 1956 in Gruppi, L. (Ed), Teoria e politica della via italiana al socialismo, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1979, p.94.

of the major part of the population, including vast groups of small and medium-sized producers whose income is being squeezed in favour of the great monopolies because of the way they dominate the market.⁵

It may seem paradoxical that the Bad Godesberg programme which the SPD approved in 1959, with its strong emphasis on anti-communism and its support for the NATO alliance and free market capitalism, might in any way be compared with the 'via italiana al socialismo' which Togliatti launched in 1956. Indeed some years after, L'Unità expressly denounced, 'the fallacy of projecting certain ideas about an Italian Bad Godesberg within the PCI' at a time when the Communist Party had embarked on Berlinguer's eventful journey towards 'historic compromise'.⁶

Yet although official condemnations of 'revisionist' socialist parties might seem to confirm the Marxist-Leninist purity of the 'Italian road', often such condemnations were aimed at re-assuring grass roots militants that the party leadership's increasingly pluri-class and reformist strategy was merely a conjunctural expedient. Communist ideologues such as Lombardo Radice could not accept that social democracy had anything to teach the PCI, and once again L'Unità warned its readers of the dangers of the egalitarian mirage of northern social democracy:

'There is no doubt that English and Scandinavian social democracy have limited themselves to a good, and even at times excellent social-welfarist administration within the capitalist system, without ever posing the question of how to overcome it.'(Original emphasis)⁷

⁵ Ibid. p.97.

⁶ L'Unità 6th March, 1977. Cited in Domenico Fisichella, Quel Giano Bifronte del PCI. Da Togliatti a Berlinguer e oltre, Editoriale Nuova, Milan, 1979, p.58.

⁷ Ibid. L'Unità, 5th September, 1978.

Radice was expressing a view still widely held among the PCI hierarchy that the Party must not fall into the old socialist reformist trap of mistaking means for ends.

Communists knew that the local administrations and institutions they controlled were only to be compared to trenches in the 'war of position' between the revolutionary class and bourgeois capitalist society. Indeed, Luigi Longo speaking to the Central Committee of the PCI in his capacity as vice-secretary in October, 1956 insisted on the need to maintain 'proletarian direction' even if this is, 'always accompanied by the concept of alliance with other social groups.'⁸ Sassoon describes this concept as, 'the direction of the proletariat within a coalition of classes which in turn exercises a political direction over the rest of society.' This is essentially what Longo understood by Marx's projection of a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' where the working class seeks to exercise hegemony over its allies and dictatorship over its opponents.⁹

The Communists' attitude towards 'bourgeois democracy' therefore remained an ambiguous one, because although Longo and Togliatti accepted that the Constitution should be respected (especially by the Christian Democrats who refused to apply it in many areas of government), parliamentary democracy remained an instrument of bourgeois domination and it had to be radically transformed if a truly socialist society was to prevail.

Opportunities did exist, however, for a socialist transformation of the Italian state if the devolutionary provisions of the Constitution were fully implemented. The experience of Communist administration in the 'red belt' had pointed the way to a territorial advance towards socialism, initially through the comuni and the province and later, it was to be hoped, via the regions. Togliatti described the nature of the task which faced Communist administrators,

⁸ Luigi Longo, Documenti per l'VIII Congresso del PCI - Un partito più forte e rinnovato. Supplement to Voce Comunista, No.38, October 4th, 1956, p.7 cited in Donald Sassoon, The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party. From the Resistance to the Historic Compromise, Frances Pinter, London, 1981, p.125.

⁹ Ibid.

'...the struggle for local autonomy is in the first place a struggle for the thorough transformation of the administrative and political order and for the implementation of the Constitution.'¹⁰ Political decentralisation represented a need to, 'bring closer the people to the exercise of power by creating a democratic system territorially articulated in three instances: the municipality, the province and the region.'¹¹

But perhaps the real significance of the Communist leadership's enthusiasm for local autonomy was that it demonstrated a serious concern with the functioning of local democratic institutions. In the past there had been a tendency to down-grade the significance of administrative reform, because if the Communist Party was certain of one thing, it was that a future socialist state would have nothing in common with the bourgeois-democratic structures it replaced. After 1956, with the perils of the total centralisation of political power only too obvious, Togliatti reasoned that local autonomy could provide an effective counterweight to overwieldy state bureaucracies, particularly in the area of economic planning.¹²

Considered in the round, there was much in the 1956 version of the 'via italiana' to encourage the Amendolan reform wing of the Party, particularly in the area of class alliances and local government. Equally there was more than a grain of comfort for the conservative fraction of the PCI who noted Togliatti's reluctance to condemn the CPSU for the 'fatti di Ungheria' and the unequivocal privileging of 'socialist democracy' (flawed though it might be) over even the most advanced form of bourgeois democracy.

Paolo Spriano's masterly evaluation of the 8th Congress highlights this very major and persistent tension of the 'Italian road.'

¹⁰ 'Mozione politica' to the 8th Congress of the PCI, cited in Sassoon, The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party, cit. p.135.

¹¹ 'Elementi per una dichiarazione programmatica del Partito Comunista Italiano', 8th Congress of the PCI, in Sassoon, *ibid.* The translation is Sassoon's.

¹² *Ibid.* p.135.

'...if one thinks of the 8th Congress of the PCI, but also of the congresses which came after, the 9th, 10th, 11th; one sees a much more articulate discourse on Italian society emerge. It abandons the schema which was born out of the Lyons Theses¹³ in which the northern workers and the southern peasants were seen as the only motive force of the revolution, and we start to hear talk of the productive middle class as an active element and an essential component for a democratic and socialist development. Certain fundamental choices on freedom and democracy are re-articulated, and the argument on the state also moves forward, albeit timidly. However, Togliatti himself continued to claim that in its complexity, inspite of its degenerations, the nature and the substance of the Soviet regime remained more democratic than capitalist regimes, even those, which as we said, possessed a bourgeois-democratic parliamentary system.'¹⁴

¹³ The 'Lyons Theses' refers to the revolutionary programme which Antonio Gramsci advocated at the 1926 Congress of the PCI.

¹⁴ Paolo Spriano, Intervista sulla storia del PCI, Laterza, Bari, 1978, pp.215-216.

2. The ascendancy of the 'Amendola faction' and organisational renewal in the Bologna Federation of the PCI.

The Bad Godesberg metaphor also provides a key to understanding the process of transformation at work in the Emilian economy and within the leadership of Emilia's ruling political class in the years immediately following the 8th Congress. In Italy even more than in Germany, these years witnessed an unprecedented growth in industrial production, accompanied at the same time by rising real incomes for the producer/employee categories who constituted the target constituency of the SPD and PCI. In Emilia-Romagna the active pursuit of the productive middle class, which had been an aspiration in 1946, now became an urgent requirement as the former skilled workers of the region's manufacturing industries (and particularly those in the Bologna industrial zone) increasingly established themselves as independent businesses.¹⁵

The younger leaders in the Bologna federation such as Guido Fanti, the vice-secretary, and a group of administrators who included Renato Zangheri and Pier Luigi Cervellati recognised that the PCI had to adapt to the changing socio-economic climate or fall victim to it. The 'old-guard' of intransigent leaders had been seriously weakened by the 're-organisations' of the late 1940s and 1950s. The demotion of the Stalinist MP, Giovanni Botonelli, to the mayorship of Marzabotto was symbolic of the waning influence of the hard-liners who had also been dealt a major blow by D'Alema's

¹⁵ This process can be seen as early as 1950, when of six metal mechanical firms surveyed, 9.5% of those made redundant established themselves as artisans or small industrialists. This figure compares with 43.72% who returned to industrial production as employees and 11.7% who found work in other non-productive employment. Elia Barbiani & Giorgio Conti, Politiques urbaines et luttes sociales à Bologne. Reconstruction, 'miracle italien' et crise dans une municipalité rouge. Vol.1, Centre de Sociologie Urbaine, Paris, 1980, p.22. See also chapter seven, part one below.

purge of the Modena federation leadership.¹⁶

The 1959 conference was to be the occasion for the final assault on the remaining enclaves of 'maximalist' support among the grass-roots party sections and cells. In this sense, Fanti and his colleagues were embarking on a no less ambitious reformation of the socialist movement than Erich Ollenhauer's exorcism of the ghost of Trier.

Although the 1956 administrative elections could be considered as an endorsement of the socialcommunist 'buon governo' of the previous decade, there was a feeling particularly among the 'new wave' of administrators that the PCI was squandering its political opportunities by merely 'occupying' the citadels of local power. The local PCI hierarchy continued to emphasise the importance of local government as a symbolic instrument of struggle against the repressive controls of the prefect and the interior ministry; but the institution itself remained, in Anderlini's judgement, a passive sounding block for the social forces which made up the Party's political constituency.¹⁷ The comune could only ever be a static symbol of the Party's popular legitimacy, and never the agent of revolutionary change. As Gramsci insisted, the role of 'condottiere' was reserved exclusively for the party itself.¹⁸ However, inside the Bologna federation a new generation of activists had begun to challenge the conservative position taken by the war-time leadership of the party both inside and outside of local government.

¹⁶ See Amyot, The Italian Communist Party, cit.

¹⁷ Anderlini, Terra rossa, cit. p.86.

¹⁸ Gramsci wrote, 'The modern prince, the myth-prince, cannot be a real person, a concrete individual. It can only be an organism, a complex element of society in which a collective will, which has already been recognised and has to some extent exerted itself in action, begins to take concrete form. History has already provided for this organism, and it is the political party...' Antonio Gramsci, 'The Modern Prince' in Selections from the Prison Notebooks, cit. p.129.

The period which preceded the 8th Congress was characterised by an internal debate on the definition to be given to the 'via italiana'. But just as the 'svolta di Salerno' was seen by many activists as a regrettable but necessary detour from the revolutionary path, the 'via Italiana' appeared as a vague and malleable concept which could lend itself to many interpretations, as Fanti recalled:

'...the interpretation which Togliatti gave to progressive democracy...was always seen in an instrumental way, that is - we accept the rules of democracy in expectation of the arrival of the 'hour X', waiting for a certain moment when there would be a general rebellion which would change everything, and so on. And we all grew up in this...it was the prevailing political culture...and so we arrived at 1956 when this element came out in the open.¹⁹

The element which Fanti was referring to was the intransigent old-guard of senior Communist militants who had never accepted the need for a separate Italian road to socialism and who were strongly committed to the 'partito guidato' role of the CPSU. This group was particularly well represented on the direzione of the Part as Fanti explained,

'The leaders of the Party were prepared to accept the Togliattian line, but with this profound conviction that it was only a tactical, instrumental moment...'²⁰

The reasoning behind this explicit admission of the 'doppiezza' strategy lay in the bourgeois nature of the post-war Constitution:

'The Constitution was a democratic constitution, (but) bourgeois-democratic not progressive-democratic, and it was both valid and not valid; and the rupture between the new generation and the old leaders...Colombi, Bonazzi and the rest...occurred on this terrain, that is on the recognition to be given to the Constitution as a means of

¹⁹ Interview with Guido Fanti, cit.

²⁰ Ibid.

advance towards socialism and above all...on the choice of the Italian road to socialism.’²¹

But as Fanti admitted, the stand-off conflict between the ‘instrumentalists’ and those who supported the idea of a peaceful and progressive transition to socialism was to become manifest some time after the 8th Congress.

‘...this rupture...only had an outcome in 1959 when...also with Amendola’s encouragement, those of us who thought in this way and who were backing the Togliattian line to the hilt - with the Italian, democratic road etc...we decided to join the political battle...and to have an open fight inside the party.’

Anderlini argues that the Bologna federation needed to have Togliatti, Amendola, the regional conference of 1959 and an entire change in leadership to realise 1956 on a local level.²² In some ways this is true, but Anderlini seems to imply a collusion between Togliatti and the reformist right in the Party over the imposition of the ‘via italiana’ on the doubters and the opponents.

As Fanti explains, Togliatti and the other members of the direzione were far from convinced of the desirability of such a conference,

‘...there was a period of preparation which saw on the one hand a group from Bologna and Emilia, on the other there was an open conflict among the national leadership of the Party. There was a group which wanted to have nothing to do with it, and they were particularly supported by the leaders with an Emilian background on the direzione, Colombi, Romagnoli...who threw obstacles in its way, who were against it, naturally with the additional support of all the older leaders, D’Onofri and so on...There was a whole group of the direzione of the Party who were against, it

²¹ Ibid.

²² Anderlini, Terra rossa, cit. p.88

and they pushed and pressured Togliatti so that he would not agree to it...How did we respond? How did we operate? We agreed with Amendola to form a working group to develop a set of discussion documents. We would then hold a regional conference (which) would be prepared on the basis of the political theses...we submitted these for discussion at the regional committee and at the end we arrived at the regional conference.'

Some indication of the importance which the national leadership attached to the proposals for a regional conference can be gained from the confrontation at 'Botteghe Oscure'²³ which Fanti again describes:

'Before this...there was a dramatic moment because these theses were discussed here in Rome in an open confrontation between those who said okay and those who said it's not okay. And we just succeeded in winning a majority with the open support of Amendola in particular, and with Togliatti's position which was favourable but with some reservations of his own...and in fact

Togliatti came to participate in this conference in '59 still uncertain as to which position to take.'

The proceedings then took on an even more surprising turn when Amendola realised that it would be impossible for a young vice-secretary to open a conference of this scale and importance because the task should have naturally fallen to the actual secretary of the Bologna federation, Celso Ghini. Ghini had been chosen to replace Enrico Bonazzi in 1955 when the latter was called to Rome, and it was clear that Ghini's appointment was a compromise since the new secretary was not associated with either the reformist or the conservative wing of the Party.²⁴

Amendola's solution to this political impasse was to include Ghini in a delegation of PCI officials bound for the Peoples' Republic of China so that Fanti would be able to

²³ The Rome headquarters of the PCI directorate.

²⁴ Bonazzi was predictably a fierce opponent of Fanti's initiative and tried to block the proposals in the secretariat.

open the conference as acting secretary and convenor.²⁵

The significance of the regional conference was not lost on the government authorities, and the prefect described it as, '...a political event of such primary importance...that the participation of the leader of the party, Palmiro Togliatti, is expected.'²⁶ The prefect also speculated on the organisational role played by Guido F /anti whose choice as opening speaker, '...provides proof of a process of rejuvenation and renewal in the provincial organisation which has been under way for some months.'²⁷

However, enthusiasm for the 'via italiana' was not so evident among rank-and-file Communists, and the prefect claimed to have evidence that the, '...reluctance on the part of the Bolognese workers to accept the basic theses of the 5th Congress of the PCI, which constituted the basic formula of the 'via italiana al socialismo' - that is the policy of widening the alliance with the middle class and the abandonment of revolution as a means of conquering power - is more profound than it might seem.'²⁸

If the revolutionary workers were dismayed at the reformist tone of the discussion document, they would have been heartened to see the figures of Arturo Colombi, Mauro Scoccimarro, Enrico Bonazzi and Luciano Romagnoli on the platform. And while these implacable defenders of Marxism-Leninism may not have been able to prevent the conference from taking place, they were certainly determined to make their influence felt on the proceedings, although significantly none of them took part

²⁵ The prefecture seemed convinced that Ghini was actually being groomed by Amendola for the job of regional secretary of the PCI, but it seems unlikely that if Ghini really did have Amendola's trust he would have been sent to China at such a crucial moment. M.I. (Gab) 51/12010/14, report of the prefect, 26th June, 1959.

²⁶ M.I. (Gab) 51/12010/14, report of the prefect, 28th May, 1959.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ M.I. (Gab) 51/12010/14, report of the prefect, 26th June, 1959.

in the debate.

Only Giorgio Amendola (other than Togliatti) spoke on behalf of the direzione and the prefect was in no doubt that the entire project was authored by Amendola himself:

'the choice of Bologna as the venue for the conference...seems to respond to the precise needs of an organised plan which aims to place under the control of his [Amendola's] current (made up of new recruits, in contrast to the leaders of the old guard) - all the apparatus of the Emilian federations so as to move to the gradual conquest of all the other regions with the support of the substantial means at the disposal of the party in the region and because of the prestige which 'Emilia rossa' enjoys among Italian Communists.'²⁹

Further evidence for the 'Amendolan revolution' inside the Bologna federation could be found in the,

'...removal of Enrico Bonazzi, relegated to a job of little importance in the national secretariat of the party, and in the departure of his most faithful collaborators: Lino Montanari, Giacomo Masi, Giuseppe Dalla, Arvedo Forni, Claudio Melloni...'³⁰

The calling of the regional conference could be considered the most decisive episode in the Amendolan manoeuvre which was also aimed at,

'...influencing in a determinate way the proceedings of the provincial conferences scheduled for next autumn and in this way consolidating the hegemony of the Amendolan current in Emilia.'³¹

The most important recruit to the Amendolan position, if not to the Amendolan camp,

²⁹ M.I. (Gab) 51/12010/14, report of the prefect, 30th June, 1959.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

was Giuseppe Dozza who, according to the information available to the prefecture, had developed a thesis for the alliance of the working class with the urban middle class and contadini which insisted on the necessity of abandoning the positions which the Party had previously followed.³² Dozza had also insisted that the Party should be more active in the defense of local government and called for the formation of a 'regional constituent assembly' which would operate as a centre for the coordination of democratic struggle.

Fanti confirmed the importance of Dozza's position for the process of renewal in the federation:

'...Dozza had the political wisdom to understand that he should come down on our side, even though we criticised the (previous) policy towards the local authorities...In spite of this he took up a position which supported us. And what was our criticism? That it was no longer enough to have a healthy and proper administration of local government, but that in the face of economic development and the new problems posed by the social and economic transformations which were taking place, it was necessary that local authorities...assumed a policy of economic development and did not just restrict themselves to the management of existing resources.'³³

This meant sacrificing the sacred principle of the balanced budget which had been the guiding light of the socialcommunist administration and a source of considerable personal pride for Dozza throughout the 1950s.

'We said no,' Fanti recalled, 'we need to move towards the realisation of a policy ...of economic development and to go into deficit in order to finance all the work that is necessary to provide the infrastructure and support for this economic development

³² Ibid.

³³ Interview with Guido Fanti, cit.

which was already growing by leaps and bounds.³⁴

Fanti described this as a clash between two different conceptions of administration, but it was also a clash between two different value systems, between a post-Bad Godesberg acceptance of the need for planning and markets, and a steadfast refusal on the part of the older cadres to cooperate in any way with capitalist forms of production whether they be small businesses or monopolies.

F/ However, Fanti admitted that Dozza was not an enthusiast for all the reforms the 'young Turks' were proposing, although the reformers had won the crucial support of Paolo Fortunati who was the PCI's most respected authority on local government finance and still a member of the giunta. In addition there were more recent members of the giunta such as Umbro Lorenzini who together with the Socialists constituted a sizeable group in support of Fanti's proposals.³⁵

But the reformers did not restrict their campaign to the Bologna federation, which had already fallen partially under their control. The real struggle for reform had to be fought-out among the great 'Resistance' provinces such as Reggio Emilia which remained under the control the 'attendisti'. In order to short-circuit the federations' leadership, 28,000 copies of the 'discussion theses' were printed and distributed in advance to local cadres. On the basis of this document, debates on the proposals were held in local section and cell meetings throughout the region.³⁶ The scene was being set for a renewal of the party machinery in the classic Leninist tradition; the victims of the new party apparatus would be forced to support their own ideological and organisational eclipse. As the delegates to the first regional conference of the PCI gathered in Bologna's town hall, the 445,000 Communists they represented were

³⁴ Ibid. See chapter five for a full analysis of the policy of deficit finance in Bologna in the 1960s.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ In addition, 15,000 copies were printed as a special supplement to La Lotta for the Bologna membership.

being prepared for a 'svolta' which was to have almost as great an impact on the Emilian Party as that of 1944.³⁷

3. The Conferenza regionale and the Communists' response to the 'economic miracle' and urban growth.

D'Attorre has referred to the 1959 regional conference of the PCI in Emilia-Romagna as, 'the point of departure, for the whole party,' which led to the, '...acceptance of the full Togliattian programme of 'structural reform' and the 'Italian road to socialism' which until then had barely penetrated the body of the party'.³⁸ The essential problem with this characterisation is that it suggests that the 1959 conference somehow represented a Garibaldian rallying-point on Togliatti's journey towards a socialist Italian nation.

However, the 'Conferenza regionale' was not a programme of action aimed at translating the vague principles of the 8th Congress of the PCI into a concrete set of policies. Had the initiative come from the Party Secretary, Togliatti would not have been such a sceptical sponsor of the conference. That it became something of a manifesto for Communist administrators and reformers in the 1960s was primarily due to the energy and convictions of Fanti's 'new wave' of younger activists and to Giorgio Amendola's zeal for 'rinnovamento.'

The two most important objectives of the architects of the 1959 conference were to stimulate a debate on the national and regional changes in the economy, and to consider what consequences these new conditions might have for the Communist Party and the working class of Emilia-Romagna. The second objective followed from the acceptance of the priorities established by the first, essentially it meant that cadres and activists who found it impossible to support the 'nuovi impegni' outlined in the

³⁷ The national membership at the time stood at 1,789,269.

³⁸ D'Attorre, P.P. I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, cit. p.18.

discussion document would be required to play a less directive role in the life of the Party and its mass movements.

Signs of resistance were quick to manifest themselves however, and Fanti acknowledged that some local leaders in the Bologna federation were opposed to the idea of 'developing specific plans' from the discussion document. In other words the 'old-guard' were giving notice that they intended to ignore the whole exercise.³⁹ Another criticism was that the provincial strategy recommended for Bologna could not be unproblematically applied to a province like Ferrara. Other federations were insufficiently prepared for this kind of grass-roots discussion (such as Reggio Emilia which was criticised for not explaining the resolutions of the 8th national congress to its members with 'sufficient energy').⁴⁰ In his measured, diplomatic style, all these 'difficulties' were presented as organisational rather than ideological, but Fanti was to return to the political dimension of the conference theses later in his speech.

The fundamental tasks which Fanti set for the Communist movement were consistent with the classical Marxian injunction; first analyse the problem and then work to overcome it. The conference was reminded of the need to develop a complete understanding of the current political situation, both on a national and on a regional level. The second objective was to transport the Emilian workers' movement from its position as the regional leader of civil society to a directive role in the national struggle for socialism.⁴¹

³⁹ Amendola even argued that the preparation for the Emilian conference had become, 'a measure of the concrete renewal of the whole party.' G. Amendola, *Il rinnovamento*, cit. p.176.

⁴⁰ In fact Amendola accused the hard-line federal secretary of the Reggiano party, Onder Boni, of openly trying to wreck the preparations for the conference in his federation. *Ibid.* p.177.

⁴¹ Guido Fanti, speech to the Regional Conference of the PCI, Bologna, June 1959, in *Conferenza regionale del PCI*, STEB, Bologna, 1959, p.10.

Fanti's brief history of the workers' and peasants' struggle in the Emilia of the 1940s and 1950s recanted the Colombian and Dozzian nostrums of solidarity and sacrifice which were to be joined together by the ever extending bonds of class alliance. The new members of the ceti medi had been drawn to the party because workers and the ceti medi both faced the menace of 'monopoly capital' which Fanti defined as the 'common enemy'.⁴² Leaving aside the fact that very few of these new members of the ceti medi had actually joined the party, it was not clear precisely what new categories of the middle-class, beyond the small farmers, artisans and lower professionals (who were already included) these potential adherents were to come from.⁴³

Fanti made it clear to his opponents in the Emilian party that accusations of 'regionalist provincialism' could not be sustained because the objective of the discussion document was to stimulate an awareness of Emilia's position in the national economy and polity. He criticised the 'attendisti' for their own deformed vision of the revolutionary process which contented itself with a passive faith in the collapse of western capitalism. But the severest criticism was levelled at the Party's 'double sided' agrarian reform policy which separated the campaign for the reform of farm contracts from that of farming as a whole. This, Fanti argued, had led to an abandonment of the struggle for farm land by the poorer peasantry and had given a false impression of socialist and democratic renewal.

However, the transformation in Emilian agriculture had made the problem of social and economic relations in the countryside less urgent than the task of successfully integrating migrant farmers and their families into the urban community.⁴⁴ This was a point which Togliatti emphasised in his concluding address to the 1959 Regional Conference. 'We must consider ourselves,' he argued, '...to be participants in the day-to-day drive towards social progress which emanates from every category of

⁴² Ibid. p.11.

⁴³ See Table 12.

⁴⁴ See Tables 8, 9 & 10.

employee, not just from the workers and braccianti, but also from the rural and urban ceto medio, from the sharecropper's son who no longer wants to live in an old farm house and moves to the city in search of a new job, from the peasant family who come down from the mountains in search of a new quality of life, from the young people who are entering professional training college and high school, from the women who are struggling for emancipation.⁴⁵

But whereas in the 1940s and early 1950s, social progress had been won through the mobilisation of the urban and rural labour movements in the defence of rights and salaries, the new challenges which faced the Emilian working class, Togliatti argued, required a different form of struggle.

'Economic strikes and all forms of workplace struggle will continue to be the stimulus that they have always been; but at the same time, in today's situation, we can and we must provide a contribution to the development of the country by presenting solutions which are not just...increases in our wages and improvements in the number of working days for landless labourers, but (solutions) which deal comprehensively with the problem of how to organise the economic life of the region and the economic life of Italy.'⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Palmiro Togliatti, 'Democrazia e socialismo' concluding speech to delegates at the 'Conferenza regionale del PCI', Bologna 29th June, 1959 contained in L. Arbizzani (Ed) Palmiro Togliatti. Politica nazionale e Emilia rossa, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1974, pp.522-523.

⁴⁶ Togliatti, 'Democrazia e socialismo' cit. p.522.

Table 8. Agricultural activity by type of employment in the Province of Bologna in 1948 and 1961 as a percentage of all agricultural labour.

District	Direct Cultivators		Share-croppers		Wage-labourers	
	1948	1961	1948	1961	1948	1961
Mountains	30.2	44.8	61.8	37.5	8.0	17.7
Hills	15.1	20.2	80.0	65.8	4.9	14.0
Plain	29.9	37.8	44.0	40.6	26.1	21.6
Entire province	25.6	35.0	61.0	47.0	13.4	18.0

Source: Barbiani/Conti (Vol.2, p.31)

In a thinly veiled attack on Professor Ardigò, Togliatti tilted at the 'Christian Democrat sociologists' who believed that the problems associated with the rural exodus could be resolved by 'tertiary occupations' which were described by the PCI secretary as nothing other than extensions of parasitic forms of economic life.⁴⁷ Problems of agricultural production were seen primarily as problems of capitalist ownership, but as Table 9 demonstrates, the large estates which existed in the immediate post-war period had given way to a mixture of direct cultivation, share-cropping (albeit steadily diminishing), and small and medium-sized proprietors employing a limited number of wage-labourers. Although capitalist farming continued to expand throughout the 1960s, at the start of the decade, commercial agriculture still

⁴⁷ However, the DC sociologists were right to emphasise the growing importance of the tertiary sector in the *capoluogo*. The 1961 industrial census revealed that 48.1% of all firms in the Comune di Bologna were commercial firms, while manufacturing enterprises accounted for 33.3% of the total. It was significant that these commercial firms employed only 24.3% of the active population and on average employed between 2 and 3 people. This was precisely the urban middle-class to whom Togliatti was appealing, but he seemed to be scorning their means of earning a living. Barbiani & Conti, Vol.I, cit. p.115.

accounted for less than 20% of the land under cultivation. While in the industrial sector the growth in the number of small and medium-sized firms and the emergence of a large productive middle class was much more significant in social and economic terms than monopoly capitalism.⁴⁸ But if Fanti's 'new wave' of Communist leaders were hoping for a ringing endorsement of the plans for local economic development outlined in the conference discussion theses, they were to be disappointed.

Togliatti insisted that, 'If one looks only at the local aspects (of the economy), the problem will not be resolved. One might obtain a few advantages here and there, but at a certain point there is a limit, the limit which is given by the fact that the market is dominated by the big monopolistic proprietors. And therefore it is in this direction that it is necessary to aim the blow, by demanding limits to the powers of the monopolies, the nationalisation of specific industrial monopolies, a control on monopolistic activities and other measures which you have indicated.'⁴⁹

Table 9. Changes in the agrarian structure of the Province of Bologna, 1961-1967.

Labour Form	Families			Hectares		
	1961	1967	% △	1961	1967	% △
Direct cultivators	22,023	21,321	-3	117,751	134,612	+14
Share-croppers	12,556	7,214	-42	157,511	88,450	-45

⁴⁸ The number of employees per industrial manufacturing firm had increased slightly in the decade 1951 to 1961, but overall the number of workers per firm had only increased by an average of 7.7 in 1951 to 9.3 in 1961 for the Comune di Bologna. While for the province as a whole the average number of workers had increased from 5 to 7.3 per firm. See Table 9 and chapter five, part one.

⁴⁹ Togliatti, 'Democrazia e socialismo' cit. p.523.

Farms using wage-labour	2,553	3,608	+4 1	60,443	97,978	+6
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Source: Rinascita No.47, 1969 in I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, p.225.

Table 10. Agrarian structure in the province of Bologna according to tenure, 1961-1971.

Tenure	Farms		Land under cultivation	
	Percentages		Percentages	
	1961	1970	1961	1970
Direct cultivator	50.1	61.2	28.7	41.6
Tenant Farmer	8.9	10.6	6.3	7.5
Capitalist ownership	6.4	9.3	16.7	29.3
Capitalist tenancy	0.4	0.3	1.3	1.2
Share-cropper	34.2	18.6	47.0	20.0
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: V. Galletti, Bologna non è un'isola rossa, p.89.

Table 11. Proportion of unemployed among the active population in the Province of Bologna, 1951-1961.

	1951	1961
Total active population	355,817	372,307
(of which women=)	102,821	105,212
Unemployed	58,282	46,811
(of which women=)	30,385	23,658
Unemployment rate	16.4%	12.6%
Female unemployment rate	29.6%	22.5%
Rate of agricultural unemployment	-	29.5%
as a % of women workers	-	71.8%

Source: Barbisani/Conti Vol.I, p.108.

Table 12. Composition of the Bologna Federation of the PCI by occupational category as a percentage of total membership, 1954-1977.

National figures are in brackets.

	1954	(1959)	(1962)	1964	1977
Workers	35.7	(38.5)	(39.5)	38.0	37.7
Braccianti	17.5	(16.6)	(12.7)	7.2	2.6
Mezzadri	15.8	(11.9)	(10.8)	8.3	1.3
Direct cultivators	3.0	(5.4)	(5.6)	2.2	2.2
Artisans, small traders & entrepreneurs	5.2	(5.7)	(5.2)	8.8	7.9
Professionals, white-collar employees & students	2.5	(2.7)	(3.2)	2.2	8.5
Housewives & pensioners	20.6	*(18.7)	*(22.2)	33.2	39.0

Source: Elaborated from Anderlini, *Terra Rossa*, p.83. and *L'organizzazione partitica del PCI e della DC*, p.314.

*Includes 'others'.

In his speech, Giorgio Amendola also focused on the alliance character of anti-monopolist politics, but unlike Togliatti who emphasised the common goals of both classes, Amendola argued that the alliance with the *ceti medi* could lead to 'a new majority' which if it was to be effective had to be permanent and not tactical. A new, more dynamic role must be given to the local authorities and there must be

organisational changes in the Party and a renewal of the leadership.⁵⁰

The restructuring of capital in the provinces of Emilia was producing new problems for the labour movement and Amendola's principal concern was the 'disaggregation' of the rural workforce. Large numbers of braccianti had lost their jobs and had no chance of finding farm work again, while among the mezzadri there was a 'process of differentiation' in course which was leading to greater income variation and declining class solidarity.⁵¹ He argued that the fall in certain categories of membership should sound alarm bells and encourage the Party to be more self-critical and to devote more attention to the problem.⁵²

Amendola stressed that it was no longer sufficient to fight defensive battles against arbitrary redundancies, prefectural interference and government attacks. If Communism was to survive as a major force in the region in the next decade, the struggle had to renew itself and to move on to a new plain. Those who had doubts and uncertainties were preventing the Party from forming new alliances and from widening its potential body of support in the fight against the political and economic monopolies.⁵³

Amendola drew an explicit connection between the 8th PCI Congress and the 1959 regional conference when he declared that the preparations for the conference had

⁵⁰ D'Attorre, 'I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna nel secondo dopoguerra: un'ipotesi di lettura' in I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, cit. p.19.

⁵¹ For unemployment figures in the province of Bologna between 1951 and 1961 see Table 11. As in the 1940s, it was women who suffered from a disproportionately high share of unemployment especially in agriculture.

⁵² Intervention of Giorgio Amendola in Conferenza regionale del PCI, cit. p.108. Table 8.1 shows the declining importance of rural occupations in the membership of the Bologna federation.

⁵³ *Ibid.* p.109.

been inspired by a desire to provide a better understanding and implementation of the principles outlined in 1956. But because the call for renewal had been ignored by many federations, it was necessary to stimulate a fresh commitment to the 'via italiana' and to remove all the obstacles in its way.⁵⁴

le It fell to Giuseppe Dozza to explain what the concrete reality of this 'nuova politica dell'alleanze' would be in the context of Bologna. 'It is possible,' he argued, 'that we might pursue our policy within the Chamber of Commerce despite the fact that this is run by elements of big capitalism...' Another problem was the perennial one of the behaviour of trade union representatives towards the owners of small and medium enterprises. Dozza pointed out that, 'while the interests of workers should not be compromised' in dealings with artisans, and small and medium-sized industrialists, it was important to remember that the 8th Congress had declared that the interests of non-monopolist producers must also be respected.⁵⁵

The fragmentation of manufacturing industry which Amendola confessed was having a disastrous impact on trade union organisation in Bologna and other parts of Emilia meant that the conflict between the interests of labour and the productive middle-class was likely to increase rather than diminish.⁵⁶

But the mediating influence of the PCI and CGIL did not appear to have an appreciable impact on the incidence of strikes which actually registered an increase in the years after 1959 after a long period of relative calm on the industrial relations front.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Ibid. p.112.

⁵⁵ Intervention of Giuseppe Dozza, in Conferenza regionale del PCI, cit. p.124.

⁵⁶ See Table 13 and chapter five, part one.

⁵⁷ See Table 14.

Table 13. Average number of employees per firm in manufacturing industry in the city and province of Bologna, 1951 and 1961.

	City		Province	
	% of employees per firm		% of employees per firm	
	1951	1961	1951	1961
Food	16.0	17.2	6.7	9.5
Textiles	4.9	9.8	1.5	4.7
Clothing & Footwear	3.1	5.1	2.1	3.5
Wood & Furniture	4.2	4.6	3.2	4.5
Metal mechanical	10.2	11.6	7.5	9.9
Non-metal minerals	19.0	17.6	18.2	19.3
Chemicals & rubber	13.2	12.9	14.4	12.9
Other manufacturing industries	16.5	15.8	15.1	15.8
Total	7.7	9.3	5.0	7.3

Source: Barbiani/Conti Vol.II, pp.26-27.

Table 14. Number of strike hours in the Province of Bologna 1950-1962.

Year	Agriculture	Industry
1950	246,960	1,520,000
1951	80,000	249,124
1952	432,000	288,308
1955	291,800	164,700
1956	1,563,500	478,900
1957	174,000	303,700
1960	2,327,741	918,293
1961	2,393,037	1,469,570
1962	1,066,384	2,862,507

Source: Barbiaini/Conti (Vol.1, p.108)

In a significant break with the traditional reluctance on the part of the dirigenti of the PCI to discuss the control mechanisms operating between the Party and its mass movements, Fanti declared that:

'No organisation, however important can or should be a transmission belt delegated to represent or implement the policies of the party, ' rather the policy of the party, 'exists and is applied through the direct activities of the mass of the party which is still too weak and fragmentary. And it is thanks to this party's mass politics that we are able to overcome the...mistaken internal work that puts a break on...the dialectic relationship between the party and the mass...'

There was more than a whiff of heresy in this statement, for Fanti appeared to be suggesting that Lenin and Gramsci were wrong to insist on the subordination of all mass movements to the 'vanguard party'. Instead he seemed to argue that individual

Communists should be allowed to decide for themselves the best position to adopt inside their organisation. But clearly such a freedom of manoeuvre called into question the entire basis of democratic centralism as the organising principle of the PCI as a whole. It was a measure of the scale of the process of renewal which the 1959 conference had initiated that such a prospect could be openly articulated by one of the Communist Party's most dynamic federal leaders.

4. Renaissance or Reformism?

It was Togliatti himself who referred to Italy's reddest region as 'il laboratorio emiliano'. Communist leaders took a certain pride in this description for it suggested that Emilia-Romagna was the test-bed for the socialist model on which the new Italian state would be founded. But at the same time Togliatti was keen to remind his audiences in Reggio, Ferrara and Bologna that Emilia was not Italy, it did not have to contend with the powerful industrial monopolies which centred on Turin and Milan, nor with the desolate poverty and feudal politics of the South.⁵⁸ Emilia was an emerging region which had managed to contain its migration within its own confines and to develop a small but efficient industrial base on self-generated capital. It bore many resemblances to its Tuscan and Ligurian neighbours politically as well as economically, but it also had its own socio-cultural identity which required a different form of alliance strategy to that practised in other parts of the 'red belt.'

It was a testimony to the energy and commitment of reformers like Fanti and Zangheri (who succeeded the former as mayor in 1970) that the 1959 regional conference ever happened. Amendola described the lag between 1956 and 1959 as, 'the price to be paid for caution' and the price was the slowness with which the process of 'renewal' took place. He described the experience as being like, 'punching

⁵⁸ Even if, as we have seen in the context of his speech to the 1st regional conference, Togliatti was prepared to gloss over the structural differences in the regional economies in the interest of the PCI's national reform strategy.

a mattress which absorbed these punches but did not react.⁵⁹ Amendola believed that Emilia's importance grew immeasurably as a point of reference for the regional policy which the PCI developed in the 1960s and 1970s and on the organisational form which the Party's regional administration should take. However, in his interview with Nicolai, Amendola had to admit that the renovators had not negated the 'attendisti', and although they might have silenced them, a significant number, he believed were still waiting for the 'ora X'.⁶⁰

Yet even the benign idealism of Dozza had become a cause for concern for the reformers when at the conference of the city Party in 1958, the proposal to create a city of one million inhabitants was condemned despite the fact that in the same year the regulatory plan which provided for a large expansion of Bologna's population had been approved by the government.⁶¹ The 'clean hands' and 'grande città' obsessions of the 1950s were over, but any chance of exporting the political methodology of the young Turks to Rome was never likely to succeed.

A senior Communist official when asked, admitted that the hierarchy of the PCI suspected that the Emilian reformers were not real Communists at all, and that exercises such as the 1959 regional conference were scorned because it was impossible to practice 'socialism' under the conditions of bourgeois capitalist society.

⁵⁹ Giorgio Amendola in Amendola, G. & Nicolai, R. Il rinnovamento del PCI, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1978, p.170.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p.174.

⁶¹ As we have seen, the commitment to a 'grande Bologna' was made by Dozza in the 1951 electoral programme of the PCI, and the mayor was to reiterate this theme at the 1961 budget speech. However, the new assessore of town planning, Giuseppe Campos Venuti, had no intention of reviving the fascist metropolitan vision of the 1920s which he regarded as 'academic' and inappropriate to the new demands for mass housing which urban migration would bring. See G. Campos Venuti, 'Piani di generazione e generazioni di piani' in Quaderni di Urbanistica Informazioni, No.2, 1986. The new planning agenda of the 1960s is the focus of part three of chapter five below.

After the success of the June conference, Fanti attempted to make the voice of the Emilian party heard within the leadership of the Party at the 9th PCI congress in 1960, but his appeals were largely ignored. The 'questione emiliana' was hardly discussed at the level of the direzione except when the controversy of the 1959 conference and its aftermath forced it onto the agenda.⁶² Fanti also confirmed this analysis when referring to the determining role played by Togliatti in the process of renewal:

'...Togliatti had always given great consideration to the problems of Emilia, unlike his successors, because...it remained the heart of the party for him...I also believed that he drew a certain distinction between the conditions which existed in Emilia and those which applied in Tuscany or in Umbria...and also he agreed with (the sentiments) we were expressing, that is he was very pragmatic in adapting himself to the prevailing conditions. But what was lacking was...the translation of what we were doing in Emilia to the national level, he did not do it, no one has done it...'⁶³

After Togliatti's death in 1964 and the succession of Luigi Longo to the leadership of the PCI, it was clear that the 'via del riformismo' had been definitively sealed off after Nenni's Socialists had made the DC's 'opening to the left' a reality by occupying the reformist terrain which many on the right of the Communist Party had aspired to, and now knew was unobtainable.

The Bolognese reformers had no option but to concentrate their efforts on a local and regional scale through the great 'renaissance' themes of the '59 tesi; land reform (which depended on the Communists' eventual participation in government) and more importantly, the question of the local authorities. As Dozza's conversion testified, the argument, the argument over the need for an active interventionary policy, had been won. Suddenly there seemed to be a real prospect for change in the political and economic texture of Bologna and the other provinces of the region.

⁶² Interview, Rome, 25th January, 1991.

⁶³ Interview with Guido Fanti, cit.

The disciples of the 'via italiana' set about the task of re-defining the methods and goals of 'il buon governo.' Within a matter of months the Communist led giunta had produced a response to three years of 'rinnovamento' which at the same time addressed the central concerns of Dossetti's Libro Bianco. The political and institutional map of Bologna was about to be re-drawn with major consequences for the practice of municipal socialism and urban planning on a local, national and even international level.

CHAPTER FIVE

Bologna Moderna. The Economic Miracle, Administrative Decentralisation and Radical Planning in Bologna, 1960-1976.

1. Introduction.

The political implications of the 1959 regional conference extended far beyond the new class alliances which the renovators had established as the precondition for the transition to socialism in the 1960s. The local federation's position on the management of its political alliances was also changing. The reformers insisted that the paternalist relationship with the PSI which Dozza had developed throughout his leadership of the comune had to be altered to one of partnership and mutuality. As Ginsborg argues, it was not on a national level, but on a local level in the Emilian capital that the political foundations of the centre-left were being established.¹ But the rapprochement with the other political forces present in the consiglio comunale was not to be limited to the PCI's traditional alliance partner. As the door seemed to be closing still tighter on Communist participation in national government which the collapse of the neo-fascist supported Tambroni government had done nothing to reverse, the Bologna leadership of the Communist Party embarked on a policy of reconciliation with its political opponents which was to initiate a new era of municipal reform unparalleled in any other Italian local administration.

When Giorgio Amendola returned to Bologna to speak at a national conference organised by the Istituto Gramsci in 1962, the theme of his address was also democracy and economic development. Amendola argued that political stagnation inevitably produced economic stagnation, and that the task of Communists was to wage a battle for the triumph of democracy as well as for the emergence of an economically productive region and nation.² It was increasingly clear that Amendola's

¹ Ginsborg, cit. pp.295-297.

² Ceccarelli & Galligani, cit. p.173.

reformist grouping within the PCI were asserting the primacy of politics over the capitalist mode of production, at least in conjunctural terms if not 'in the last instance'. Amendola insisted that rather than being the 'wreckers and saboteurs' of the economy, the Italian Communists were as committed to the success of the national economy as the government claimed to be. In the months leading up to the Christian Democrats' 'opening to the left' the moderate leaders of the PCI were determined to banish all talk of the internal crisis of capitalism, particularly in the aftermath of the 'extremist' clashes between the FIAT strikers and the police in Piazza Statuto in Turin. Militant 'street fighting' socialism was no longer seen as an option for even hard-line Communist leaders such as Pajetta, and the focus of Communist strategy once again centred on what was to become known as 'the long march through the institutions'.³

It is in this sense, Ceccarelli and Gallingani argue, that Bologna came to be increasingly seen as a model for the type of mixed economy which Amendola was insisting would be the 'reality' of the 'transition to socialism' for many years to come.⁴ Bologna was not only a scale model for the Amendolan (and to an extent Togliattian) vision of what the 'function of government' should be, but the Emilian capital also served as an exemplar to other Communist and non-Communist comuni which remained immune to the reform virus that had swept through Bologna's administration after the 1960 administrative elections.

But while the idea of using local institutions as a means of achieving a form of socialism won support from the non-Stalinist left (Ingrao) as well as from the reformist right (Amendola, Napolitano), it should not be assumed that Togliatti and Longo, who succeeded him in 1964, saw the Bologna reforms as anything other than an interesting regional experiment. The leadership did not insist that these reforms were instituted by other Communist local authorities in Tuscany, the Marches or Umbria, nor did its local government commission, which was under the control of the

³ See Ginsborg. cit. pp.251-252.

⁴ Ibid.

staunchly pro-Soviet Armando Cossuta, require that the more recalcitrant comuni in Emilia-Romagna imitate their Bolognese comrades.⁵ If we are to agree with Vincenzo Galletti that Bologna is not and never has been a red island, the blame for the non-emergence of an archipelago of reformist administrations in the 'red belt' must surely be ascribed to 'Botteghe Oscure' as much as to the flotilla of state and monopoly capitalist warships which surrounded Dozza's fiefdom.⁶ In the following section we examine how the 'economic miracle' in Bologna contributed to the development of a political and economic strategy which could best be described as 'Leninist Keynesianism'; a curious admixture of technocratic centralised planning and Schumpeterian economic development which characterised the 'modello Bolognese.'

Part I. The Economic Boom and Industrial Development Policy.

1. The Economic Miracle and the Emilian Model.

The 1960s witnessed an enormous increase in the economic output of the Emilian economy, but unlike the rest of Italy which experienced a severe contraction in output in 1963-64, the downturn did not affect the Bolognese economy until 1966. The structural features which were observable in the 1940s and 1950s were strengthened by the effects of the boom, and to a large extent the comparative advantage of the lower-wage costs of Emilian industry insulated the regional economy from the immediate effects of the slump. Certain sectors such as the garment and textile sector and the light engineering industry continued to expand in the first half of the 1960s while northern companies were beginning to make massive redundancies.⁷

⁵ Ceccarelli & Galligani p.173. On the Perugia federation during this period see Shore cit. Amyot provides an interesting discussion of the rise of Ingraoism and the importance of local government for his vision of democratic socialism in, The Italian Communist Party, cit. chapter ten.

⁶ See Vincenzo Galletti, Bologna non è un isola rossa, cit.

⁷ Fabio Gobbo and Claudio Pasini, 'Una industrializzazione compiuta', in Gobbo, F. (Ed) Bologna 1937-1987. Cinquant'anni di vita economica, Cassa di Risparmio in Bologna,

In the second half of the 1960s manufacturing industry emerged as the true motor of the Emilian economy, moving from 36.9% of the gross regional product in 1963 to 40.3% in 1971, while agriculture's share of GRP declined from 19.8% to 18.1% over the same period. However, as we have seen, the really significant change between primary and secondary activity was to be found in the massive decline in share-cropping and the growth in small property holding and capitalist farming.⁸ This was to produce what Barbiani and Conti have called a native reserve army of labour for the small manufacturing industries. These worker-peasants often maintained a small-holding, or continued to provide casual labour for their old employers while commuting to the city or the nearby town where they found often equally casual employment in small workshops or factories.⁹ This type of mixed employment based on a semi-displaced rural proletariat was typical of Emilia-Romagna. As Daneo reveals, between 1961 and 1970 the active working population employed in agriculture fell by 39.4% (from 591,000 to 358,000), and no less than two-thirds of the remaining workforce also had jobs outside agriculture. But despite the fact that 44,217 workers had disappeared between the 1961 and 1971 census, the average rate of agricultural productivity actually increased by 8%, a growth rate which was higher than that of industry.¹⁰

The 1960s also saw the first real emergence of the Bolognese industrial district with a significant increase in the number of industrial firms clustered around the capoluogo in the neighbouring towns of the comprensorio.¹¹ Bologna's manufacturers were successfully adapting themselves to the demand for greater product variety and for

Bologna, 1987, p.182.

⁸ See chapter four above.

⁹ Barbiani & Conti, cit. p.225.

¹⁰ C. Daneo, 'Capitalismo e riformismo nelle campagne emiliane', Inchiesta, No.5, 1972, p.27 in *ibid.* pp.225-226.

¹¹ Although the number of enterprises increased in the 1960s, an overwhelming majority of manufacturing companies continued to employ less than ten workers, see Table 15.

small-batch specialised machinery, especially in the machine tools sector, and it was the re-investment of surplus agrarian capital which helped to promote the growth in manufacturing industries in the late 1950s and early 1960s.¹²

Berselli refers to a locally based Keynesian 'virtuous circle' of investment which was supported by a pool of highly skilled labour and a working-class entrepreneurial culture which 'rejected the alienating forms of traditional mass manufacture in favour of a small family centred operation'.¹³ Although this rather laudatory account of the small firm economy in Bologna fails to address the problem of low wages and part-time and temporary employment, there can be no doubt that such firms were vital to the 'economic miracle' in the province and region. In the following section we examine how the new municipal administration contributed to the emergence of the Bologna model and how economic policy dove-tailed with the policy of the permanent alliance between labour and the 'non-monopolistic productive classes.'

¹² Aldo Berselli, 'I protagonisti dello sviluppo industriale' in Gobbo, F. (Ed) Bologna 1937-1987. Cinquant'anni di vita economica, cit. p.153 and see Table 16.

¹³ Ibid.

Table 15. Firms and employees in the Bolognese industrial district according to size of workforce in the 1961 census.

	Percentage of all firms employing 10 or less or more than employees		Total percentage of the workforce occupied in firms employing 10 or less or more than 10 employees	
	10 or less	10+	10 or less	10+
Argelato	99.5	0.5	96.3	3.7
Baricella	98.6	1.4	76.9	23.1
Bentivoglio	98.0	1.4	76.9	18.1
Castel d'Argile	97.2	2.8	58.7	41.3
Crevalcore	96.4	3.6	61.5	38.5
Galliera	95.7	4.3	55.0	45.0
Malabergo	97.8	2.2	76.0	24.0
Medicina	98.2	1.8	69.1	30.9
Molinella	96.9	3.1	48.3	51.7
Pieve di Cento	94.4	5.6	46.2	53.8
Sala Bolognese	98.3	1.7	79.8	20.2
San Giorgio di Piano	95.8	4.2	63.0	37.0
San Giovanni in Persiceto	96.3	3.7	69.2	30.8
San Pietro in Casale	97.8	2.2	72.9	27.1
Sant'Agata Bolognese	98.3	1.7	88.5	11.5
Total	97.2	2.8	65.5	34.5

(Source: Provincia di Bologna, *I comprensori nella provincia di Bologna*, Bologna, 1968.)

Table 16. Number of employees and firms active in the pianura district of Bologna in 1966 according to the period of establishment and type of enterprise.

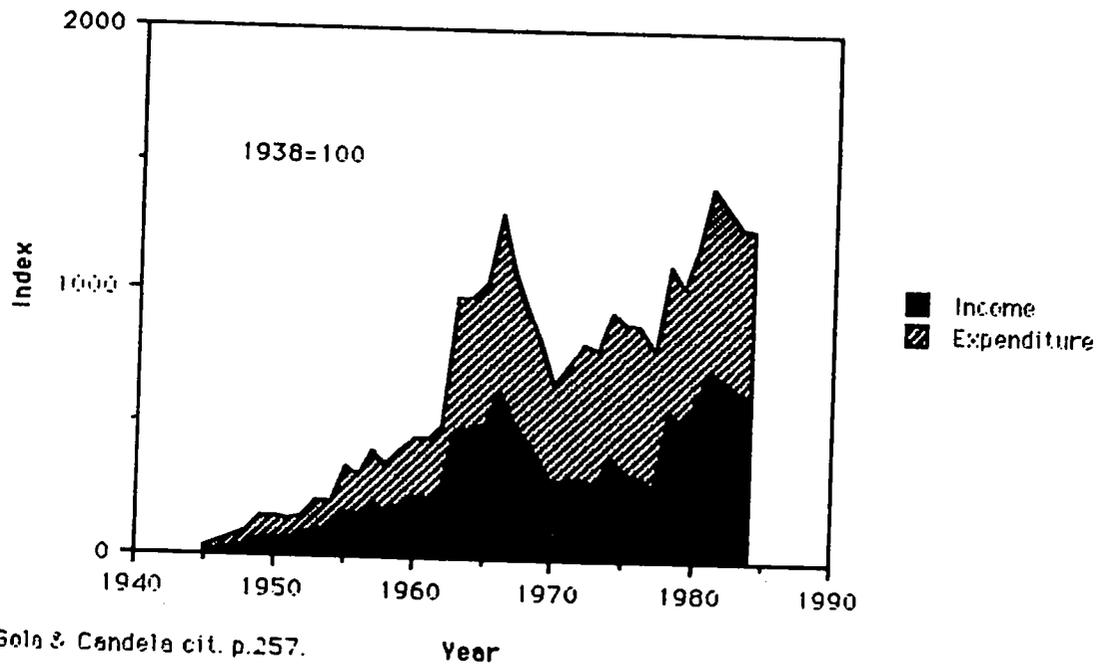
	Before 1951		After 1951		Total	
	F	E	F	E	F	E
Agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing	2	28	22	689	24	717
Manufacturing industry	25	1,834	70	3,645	95	5,489
Construction	23	1,127	17	288	40	1,415
Commerce	5	123	5	177	10	300
Totals	55	3,112	114	4,799	169	7,911
Relative figures (in %)	32.5	39.3	67.5	60.7	100	100

Key: F=No. of Firms

E=No. of Employees

(Source: Provincia di Bologna, I comprensori nella provincia di Bologna, Bologna, 1968.)

Fig.4. Income and expenditure of the Comune di Bologna at 1980 constant prices, 1945-1984.



Source: Gola & Candela cit. p.257.

2. Economic Development and the New Politics of Local Government Finance.

From 1960 onwards the Dozza administration not only saw its role as the guarantor of good government and the agent of limited redistribution through local taxation and service provision, but increasingly the comune came to play an active part in the process of accumulation itself. The Dossettian criticism of 'red conservatism' could no longer be applied to a city government which was keen to establish the conditions for a Keynesian local economic strategy in which local government would undertake the responsibilities for industrial and commercial development which the central state, in the case of Emilia, had actively relinquished.¹⁴ In order to secure the means for this interventionary policy, the giunta had to maximise its revenue and credit capacity and this required a major re-organisation of the comune's finance policy if the improvements in the local economic infrastructure were to take place.¹⁵

Carlo Trigilia claims that the decision to abandon the balanced budget as a leitmotif of the red communes at the beginning of the 1960s was highly significant because it was

¹⁴ Barbiani and Conti note that, 'Bologna and its entire region remained an object of discrimination on the part of the government', which, for example, refused to allow the constitution of the Emilian Institute for Economic and Social Research (IERES), while Emilia continued to be denied the state investment which could have exploited its unique position as a centre of communication and exchange between the industrial triangle and the Mezzogiorno. Barbiani & Conti, cit. p.193.

It was ironic that the investment boycott of the region created the ideal conditions for the emergence of a strong small firm sector in the absence of the major monopolies who naturally preferred the subsidies and inducements which were to be found in Lombardy and Piedmont. Indeed it could be said that the red communes had the Christian Democrats rather than Togliatti's 'anti-monopolist strategy' to thank for the development of the 'modello Emiliano.'

¹⁵ In practice this meant that the comune increasingly resorted to borrowing in order to finance its expenditure programmes as Figure 4 clearly shows.

not only a response by the leftist administrations to the fiscal discrimination of the central state against these authorities, but it also represented an attempt to defend and re-articulate the local political identity of the Communist sub-culture.¹⁶ While Gianluigi Degli Esposti decried the killing of the sacred-calf of the balanced budget as the last and most important victory of the 'nouvelle vague'. However, even when Giuseppe Dozza announced the end of the balanced budget he made no apology for the conservative fiscal policy which the comune had followed since the war, and unlike Paolo Fortunati who appeared to have made a Pauline conversion to the cause of deficit financing at the 1959 regional conference, Dozza portrayed the decision as an essentially defensive tactic. In fact Dozza argued that the deficit budget had only been made necessary because of the expansion of the city, whereas if the state had met its financial obligations to the larger city comuni he believed that such a policy could have been avoided.¹⁷

It was only when Dozza's health began to deteriorate in 1962 that Fanti's 'placeman', Umbro Lorenzini, was able to take control of the levers of municipal power. This operation required the removal of the 'old guard' assessore of finance, Cenerini who had been one of the staunchest opponents of the Fanti/Amendola reforms. With Lorenzini's appointment as assessore al bilancio in 1963, all opposition had been removed to the 'novelty or the heresy' of the deficit budget, and although Dozza was to continue as mayor for a further three years, the reconstruction phase of Bologna's post-war history which the 'sindaco della resistenza' had led with such skill, charisma and fortitude, was all but over.

However, the transition from a balanced budget to a carefully planned deficit budget could not be implemented over-night. It was important to be able accurately to forecast the population growth which the city could expect over the next ten years and the strain on the existing infrastructure which the continued expansion of the local

¹⁶ Carlo Trigilia Grandi partiti e piccole imprese, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1986, p.181.

¹⁷ G. Dozza, 'Relazione al bilancio preventivo, 1964, Bologna. Documenti del Comune, in Piro, cit. p.141.

economy would create. It was for this reason that in 1963 the giunta published a document entitled, 'Evaluations and directions for a development plan for the city and district of Bologna'. The publication was a belated response to the Libro Bianco and contained a detailed survey of the 'needs' of the city and its hinterland in terms of services, housing and infrastructure. The document coincided with the publication of an article by Guido Fanti which urged the PCI to found 'a real alliance of labour' which he defined as a 'permanent alliance between the working class and the ceti medi' much as Amendola had done at the 1959 regional conference. 'Valutazioni ed orientamenti' also reflected the political objectives of the reformers because the document was the first attempt to realise the theses of the 1959 conference by concretely describing how the 'alliance of labour' would work.

Fanti and Lorenzini believed that urbanisation and economic development presented a unique opportunity for the Communist administration to win over the emergent entrepreneurial class to the anti-monopolist strategy of the left. If the Party did not act quickly, it was thought that the collectivist culture of the former peasants and skilled workers who were establishing themselves as independent manufacturers and traders would be replaced by petty-bourgeois consciousness. The Communists had to persuade the small business community that the Provincial Association of Artisans (APB) and the comune were their true allies rather than the large-firm dominated Chamber of Commerce, and in this respect the PCI's strategy was largely successful.¹⁸

¹⁸ Stephan Hellman shows how the PCI came to dominate the Artigianato Provinciale Bolognese (APB) which by the end of the 1960s represented 60% of all artisans firms in the province. The PCI lists obtained an impressive 79% of votes in elections to the provincial mutual fund board, although of the 22,000 firms belonging to the APB only 5,100 (18%) of artisans were full members of the PCI. (Vincenzo Galletti, 'Società civile e presenza del partito', Critica Marxista 7 (Jan-Feb) 1969, p.127). Hellman believes that, 'This evidence demonstrates the PCI's profound influence among artisans. At the same time, the evidence also suggests that Bolognese artisans are probably a cautious and far from dedicated left-wing mass of small producers. The figures imply that quite a few

This emphasis on urban economic development was not only the outcome of the strategic permanent alliance with the productive middle class, it was also the product of the increasingly important cooperative sector. Togliatti wanted to see, 'a great new development into new social groups of what for decades has been the greatest weapon of the Emilian working class; cooperation, as a new means of access to a position of well-being and peaceful development of the masses.' Yet the cooperative sector could not insulate itself from the effects of the economic downturn which afflicted monopoly and non-monopoly businesses alike from 1963 onwards.¹⁹ The net decline in the number of non-construction cooperative enterprises between 1961 and 1966 demonstrated that in the retail sector in particular there was no alternative to amalgamation, and the growth and success of the Coop Emilia-Veneto and the food distribution cooperative CONAD, confirmed the hypothesis that if cooperation was to survive on a regional scale it had increasingly to assume the characteristics of big capital.²⁰

of these artisans only affiliate or vote the way do, because of the material benefits that the party and its mass organisations provide.' Hellman, 'The PCI's Alliance Strategy and the Case of the Middle Classes', cit. p.407.

¹⁹ Piro, cit. p.141. See Table 20.

²⁰ CONAD is a particularly important example of the successful incorporation of small shopkeepers within the cooperative movement. Zan believes that the establishment of cooperatives such as CONAD was a direct consequence of the 1962 Congress of the League of Cooperatives where for the first time, the cooperative movement was criticised for being 'workerist' and the participation of the ceti medi in cooperative enterprises was actively encouraged. Stefano Zan, La cooperazione in Italia. Strutture, strategie, e sviluppo della Lega nazionale cooperative e mutue, De Donato, Bari, 1982, p.158.

Table 17. Composition of cooperatives affiliated to Federcoop in the Province of Bologna, 1952-1966.

Sector	1952	1961	1966
CONSUMPTION/ DISTRIBUTION			
Cooperatives	84 (61)	108 (67)	95 (60)
Associates	89,606	92,606	
AGRICULTURE			
Cooperatives	96	122	104
Associates	35,559	34,471	
PRODUCTION			
Cooperatives	140	90	83
Associates	24,731	12,778	
HOUSING			
Cooperatives	64	101	143
Associates	6,500	7,158	
TOTAL			
Cooperatives	384	421	425
Associates	155,884	147,018	

Source: Barbiani & Conti, cit.

But if it was to succeed, Amendola and Fanti's permanent alliance of labour and producers could no longer rely exclusively on its traditional support in the Federcoop and the APB, the PCI had to appeal to a wider and more politically hostile constituency whose approval would be conditional on the sincere commitment of the

Communist administration to make Bologna safe and attractive to business. As Gundle argues,

'Beyond the issue of ideological sympathy, business people, artisans, and commercial and industrial managers identified with the PCI because the party translated their demands into basic economic policies and promoted and defended their interests. What the party was able to provide through its control of local government was centralised planning, directed public spending, coordinated urban development, and infrastructural provision, capital investment in support of small enterprises, export promotion and the setting of agreed commercial priorities and targets.'²¹

An important example of the type of intervention that Gundle describes was the comune's contribution of a considerable share of the equity for the new Business Park (the Ente Fiera) which was planned for the San Donato district of the city to the north-east of the railway station.²² The Fiera provided a large and well-equipped conference hall (the Palazzo dei Congressi), a new modern art gallery, a business exhibition centre (the Palazzo degli Affari) as well as private ventures such as the Crest Hotel and the new regional headquarters of the state telephone company (SIP).²³ Kenzo Tange's twin sky-scrapers which dominated the padana skyline were not occupied by great transnational corporations as one might have expected in Milan

²¹ Stephen Gundle, 'Urban Dreams and Metropolitan Nightmares: Models and Crises of Communist Local Government in Italy' in Bogdan Szajkowski (Ed), Marxist Local Governments in Western Europe and Japan, Frances Pinter, London, 1986, p.78.

²² The operating company which managed the Business Park was founded in February 1964 and initially 100 million lire of capital was provided by the Comune di Bologna, the Provincia di Bologna and the Camera di Commercio who contributed a third each. However, within the space of two years it was realised that these funds were inadequate and the operating capital of the company was raised to 400 million lire in 1966.

²³ Guglielmo Gola & Guido Candela, 'Su alcune vicende della finanza pubblica locale' in Gobbo (Ed), Bologna 1937-1987, cit. pp.248-250.

or Turin, but provided the headquarters for the League of Cooperatives and the Regional Artisans' Confederation. These new 'Due Torri' symbolised the transformation in the fortunes of the two great collateral organisations of the PCI, and by his appointment of a Christian Democrat as president of the Fiera holding company,²⁴ Guido Fanti confirmed the 'politics of consensus' which had inaugurated the 'rinnovamento' in the Bologna federation. The Fiera di Bologna quickly established itself as one of the most successful business parks in Italy and offered eloquent proof of Bologna's transition from a provincial capoluogo to a major regional and national commercial centre.

If projects such as the Fiera underscored the reality of the 'miracolo economico' in Bologna, the foundations for the entrepreneurial growth which had made such a major investment necessary were to be found in the 'formazione professionale' that had helped to produce a large pool of skilled workers and managers. The long tradition of high quality technical education and training for which Bologna was famous assisted the development of small, highly specialised engineering firms which were the backbone of the 'modello Bolognese'. For example, the Aldini Variani Technical Institute, which was financed by the comune, continued to produce qualified technicians and engineers who went on to become successful entrepreneurs and designers in their own right.²⁵ The comune also assisted the relocation of artisans' firms which had grown too big for their old city centre workshops to new custom built industrial estates such as the 'Zona della Roveri' which was located on the eastern spur of the Via Emilia where new companies were establishing themselves in greater and greater numbers.

This industrial concentration had also been encouraged by the opening of the eastern orbital motorway (the Tangenziale), which was undoubtedly the Dozza administration's greatest contribution to the 'viabilità' of the city. The provision of a

²⁴ Fernando Felicori, the DC group leader in the consiglio comunale.

²⁵ Gobbo & Pasini, 'Una industrializzazione compiuta' in Gobbo (Ed), Bologna 1937-1987, cit. p.186.

new rapid transport link spawned dozens of new distribution, transport and manufacturing companies along the axis which joined Poretta Terme, San Giovanni in Persiceto and Bazzano with the Autostrada del Sole.²⁶ But as with the public housing projects of the 1950s, the 'grande Bologna' vision of the 1950s carried over into the economic policy of the 1960s, and for all the planning aspirations of local Communist leaders, industrial development conformed to the laissez-faire pattern which characterised the rest of urban northern Italy in this period.

Although the 'meccano della Via Emilia' confirmed that the comuni rossi were no disincentive to economic activity, the over concentration of industrial enterprises along the Modena-Bologna-Imola corridor created a disequilibrium which the inter-communal plan (PIC) lacked the powers to correct.²⁷ The Dozza/Fanti administration had enthusiastically grasped the Keynesian doctrine of promoting economic growth through direct and indirect public investment, but although this marked an advance on the non-interventionary stasis of the first three Dozza administrations, the fiscal strategy of the city council could only be limited to 'pump priming' and basic infrastructural initiatives. The Communist administrators had to wait until the creation of the regional assembly in 1970 and the regional planning law of 1976 before a serious attempt could be made at coordinating economic growth in Emilia-Romagna.²⁸

Limited though its application may have been, this local Keynesianism had its political equivalent in the collective desire to stimulate the demand for democratic participation in the life of the city. Amendola's conviction that economic growth followed

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ The Piano Intercomunale (PIC) functioned more as a research and information service than a planning authority, and in fact the law prohibited comuni from pooling economic resources unless it was to establish aziende municipalizzate (such as refuse, water, transport etc.) or special ente autonome (such as the Ente Fiera) which had an independent legal status.

²⁸ See below, chapter ^{seven}, part one.

democratic development may have been a vain aspiration on a national level, but Bologna's Communist reformers were determined to make the 1959 commitment to democratic renewal a reality. As with the constitution of the economic 'modello Bolognese', the reform of local government was a slow and difficult process which was inevitably conditioned by the realignment of political forces at a national level. In the following section we analyse the development of municipal decentralisation in Bologna in terms of the new demands which urbanisation placed on the city authorities and the no less pressing requirements of the 'politics of consensus' which the Communists hoped to build into the structure of the new democratic institutions.

Part II. 'La riforma senza riforma': The Theory and Practice of Decentralisation in Bologna, 1960-1976.

1. The Idea of Neighbourhood and the legacy of '56.

Sabino Cassese described the cultural patchwork of decentralist motifs which emerged from the 1950s in Bologna in his assessment of the first decade of administrative reform,

'On one side there is the ideal, of Catholic origin, of many 'street corner societies',²⁹ on the other the reactionary tendency of those who would like to see the social and public structures 'glued' to the individual in such a way as to make collective controls and conditioning as penetrating and effective as possible. On the other hand, once again, the desire belonging to all Italian provincial culture, but in particular to that of the pre-fascist era of (urban) 'dimensions on a human scale,' and the nostalgia for the 'gentle neighbourhood of the past'. Finally there were the vague appeals to a distribution of the administrative functions between the citizens, a representation far from the ideal of self-administration or of the 'self-government' where the

²⁹ Of course this sociological urban type is not Catholic in origin but American. See, above all, W.F. Whyte, Street Corner Society, Chicago University Press, 1943.

'Communist' rules the city from the doorstep of his house.'³⁰

Cassese identified three separate models of decentralisation in the programmes of the major political parties in the first phase of decentralisation in Bologna. The first saw the organ of the comune as the instrument of the decentralisation of municipal functions. This was a conception of administrative decentralisation in its purest (or most restricted) form where the administration itself decides the extent and the location of municipal devolution. The second type envisaged the creation of organisations representing the local collectivity which would be integrated at the level of the comune with municipal representatives elected in the ordinary way. This corresponded to what in English local government is considered a 'co-optive' system where non-elected community representatives are allocated seats on council sub-committees in order to discuss the problems specific to their constituencies.³¹

The third model Cassese identified was that of the 'little comune' which had the same organisational structure as the comune and the same functions but with an arena of activity which was not limited exclusively to the traditional fields of council activity. Because of its smaller scale and greater representiveness, the 'micro-comune' was favoured by the Catholics as 'an autonomous expression of collective life.' The quartiere in the first case is a function of the communal apparatus, while in the second and third it is an instrument for widening participation at the base.

There was also a more generalised objective in the decentralisation proposals of the

³⁰ S. Cassese, preface to Zacchini, B. (Ed) Dieci anni di decentramento a Bologna, Luigi Parma Editore, Bologna, 1976, p.vi. This volume contains the key speeches from all the important debates on decentralization which the consiglio comunale held between 1960 and 1976. Although these debates can be found in the 'Atti del Consiglio Comunale' I have preferred to cite the page references to speeches where they appear in this volume. For a national perspective on local government before the institution of the regions in 1970 see Cassese (Ed), Il sistema amministrativo italiano, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1983.

left which had its origins in the early life of the Dozza administration and which saw Bologna as a means of expressing an alternative vision of Italian state and society.³² The decentralist initiatives in Bologna therefore also formed part of the wider challenge by the PCI and PSI to the perceived centralist 'dirigiste' practices of the governing majority.³³

As we saw in chapter three, it was the group of academics around Giuseppe Dossetti who first formulated the idea of an organic decentralisation of the city administration where the 'street corner society' of the new peripheral estates would be given a community focus in the local civic centres and services provided by the comune. But this conception of the emerging metropolitan society was seen by many of the left in Bologna as a 'Trojan horse' which would be used to break open the administrative monolithism of the socialcommunists and to establish a populist Catholic rival to the red sub-culture of the working-class districts.³⁴ But in spite of the mutual suspicious between Communists and Catholics, both groups were attempting to grapple with the fundamental problems which urbanisation and changing forms of economic and familial life were bringing to the administration of contemporary society.

In 1960 the 'Due Torri' list once again raised the subject of democratic renewal and in its electoral programme insisted that democratic life and evolution did not simply require that citizens conferred their mandate every four years on the city councillors, but rather that the electorate should be able to continually participate in decisions

³² See especially, G. Dozza, Il reato di essere sindaco, speech to a public meeting in the 'Sala Bossi' of the Palazzo d'Accursio, 22nd March 1951, in Tega, W. (Ed) Giuseppe Dozza: Il buon governo e la rinascita della città, 1945-1966, Capelli Editore, 1987, pp.197-223.

³³ Although when Nenni joined Aldo Moro's cabinet in December 1963 his followers became less critical of centralised controls on local authorities.

³⁴ Barbiani & Conti Luttes politiques, cit. p.374.

which affected their lives.³⁵ The most significant aspect of the Communists' commitment to the establishment of neighbourhood democracy was the creation of a number of deputy mayors to act as community representatives and advisors to the mayor. Dozza insisted that these 'aggiunti del sindaco' should not be seen as political or bureaucratic instruments but as a real, constant and fruitful link between the residents of the city and its council. This was a conception of neighbourhood democracy which the Communists were to return to constantly in the years ahead and it was also to form the basis of the PCI's emerging 'politics of consensus.'

For its part, the DC re-affirmed its commitment to the decentralisation process and to the aims and values of the Libro Bianco, particularly welcoming the giunta's establishment of an all party decentralisation commission.³⁶ While the PSDI, although expressing its general support, raised misgivings over the contents of the proposals and considered the studies and surveys on the structure of the city - on the basis of which the quartieri were designed - to be insufficient and limited in their town planning and social aspects. They also accused the Communists of seeking to make electoral capital from a policy which ought to have been revealed well before the expiry of the council's mandate.³⁷ The giunta responded to this last accusation by claiming that the problem had 'matured' for the majority as well as for the minority and that it was important to put the decentralisation proposals to the electorate in order to gauge each party's position and the popular support which existed for the initiative. The PCI/PSI giunta was overwhelmingly reconfirmed in the elections of that year and the new administration began the process of administrative renewal for which the regional conference of 1959 had prepared the ground.³⁸ The

³⁵ Programma della lista 'Due Torri' per l'elezione del consiglio comunale, Bologna, 6-7th November, 1960.

³⁶ Democrazia Cristiana, Per una città più moderna e democratica, programme for the administrative elections, 6-7th November, 1960.

³⁷ Cassese, preface to Dieci anni di decentramento, cit. p.11.

³⁸ The Communist 'Due Torri' list improved its vote from 121,404 in 1956 to 138,256

Due Torri's manifesto commitments were quickly translated into plans for the territorial re-organisation of the city, although the contours of the new sub-municipal zones could already be seen in the PRG of 1955 which was approved in 1958.³⁹

Table 18. Results of the November, 1960 Administrative elections in Bologna.

Party	% Vote	Seats
Due Torri	45.6	28
PSI	8.6	5
PSDI	8.3	5
PRI	1.1	-
DC	26.8	17
PLI	4.9	3
MSI/DN	4.3	2
Total	100.0	60

Source: Ulram, P. *Zwischen Bürokratie und Bürger*, Vienna, 1978, p.75.

(Figures have been rounded)

Giuseppe Dozza announced the administrative division of the city into a series of quartieri on the 21st September, 1960, and although this declaration was mainly symbolic, it initiated the process of decentralisation which was to gather pace in the years ahead.⁴⁰ The significance of this measure was not lost on the prefectural

in 1960, a slight percentage increase on 1956 from 45.2% to 45.6%. See Table 18.

³⁹ See chapter two, section four. To avoid confusion this regulatory plan will be referred to subsequently by its year of adoption, i.e. the 1958 PRG.

⁴⁰ See Figure 5.

authorities who immediately censured the provision in spite of its cross-party support.⁴¹ The scale of the project which the giunta was recommending to the consiglio comunale could be detected in the recognised need for,

'a decentralisation of services and municipal offices, with particular regard to...activities of a social or welfare character,' and for 'the institution of centres of civic life' in each neighbourhood to be entrusted to a 'deputy mayor' and assisted by 'councils for the participation of citizens in the civic administration.'⁴²

The problem of the size of the quartieri was the subject of much discussion, and the DC saw the principal objective of the reform proposals to be the resolution of the problems associated with constant inward migration and urbanisation. Only by establishing an institutional and participative focus for the burgeoning peripheral communities could 'a measure of homogeneity in social relations and in associational life' be preserved.⁴³

Councillor Ardigò, Italy's most distinguished Catholic sociologist, went on to argue, 'this does not correspond in any way to the definition of the size of the quartiere which is being given this evening...An average dimension of 10,000 families could have a significance from the point of view of an administrative character in order to operate at a not too excessive cost a decentralisation of municipal functions, (but) it

⁴¹ The GPA ruled the 21st September decision to be 'ultra vires' even though the motion did not describe what form the decentralisation was to take. The consiglio comunale responded by declaring that article 155 of the 1934 local government act did not allow the GPA to interfere in decisions of this kind, and since no detailed proposals to decentre services had yet been made, the GPA could not rule them out of order and in fact the GPA accepted the decision in 1962; Ceccarelli & Galligani cit. p.162. For a description of the function of the GPA see chapter two, part one, above.

⁴² Bruna Zacchini, Introduction to Dieci anni di decentramento, p.11.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

does not make sense on the level of individualising the organic forms of life of spontaneous relations.⁴⁴

He also criticised the methodological criteria for the establishment of the quartieri claiming,

'the aims of municipal devolution pose problems of a different kind to the aims of a welfare centre (casa del cittadino) or the aims of an area where (the intention is) to create, develop and stimulate direct democracy.'⁴⁵

Ardigò's preoccupations were consistent with the views of many contemporary American sociologists who believed that the social integrity of communities diminished in direct proportion to the rate of urbanisation and re-location. However, the Communists were concerned about the effects of migration for different reasons, principally because they realised that the rural bedrock of PCI support among the braccianti and mezzadri was disintegrating, as peasant families drifted into the larger towns and cities where they would often find non-unionised casual work in the burgeoning 'informal economy.' Thus the redefinition of the city was strongly influenced by the main political parties' different responses to the problems of urbanisation and 'modernisation' in Bologna and its periphery and hinterland.

As we observed in chapters four and five, the debate on the 'grande Bologna' had been raging from the time of the reconstruction, and the decision of the 21st September merely gave concrete form to the policies outlined in the programmes for the administrative elections of May, 1956. The proposal was supported by the DC and the PSDI, while the PLI expressed its opposition to the first part of the motion, but agreed to the formation of a joint commission. A bridge to the 'città invisibile' of the quartieri had been built amid unprecedented consensus and cordiality from the interested parties. But it was nevertheless clear that each political grouping was intent

⁴⁴ Ibid. p.12.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p.12.

on trying to propagate its own particular vision of the imagined future neighbourhoods even if in the early 1960s these visions were vague and indistinct.

In the debate Councillor Felicori, the DC group leader expressed, 'the adhesion of our group to the concept... - in terms of the democratic development of the city - ...of the subdivision of the city into quartieri.' He continued, 'the reservations expressed and our (original) abstention, as professor Ardighò has mentioned, regard the technical contents of the resolution without any implication or extension of a political or programmatic kind.' This allowed the DC to shift its position and vote in favour of the general motion while contesting the detail of the reforms.

The subdivision of the city into neighbourhoods and the nomination of a council commission on decentralisation was thus approved with 37 votes in favour (Due Torri [PCI], PSI & DC), with 2 votes against (PLI) and 2 abstentions (PSDI).⁴⁶ The key divisions in the debate centred on two themes, one the geographic or territorial dimension of the division of the city, and the other the socio-political aspects which concerned the motives and the possible effects of this type of intervention on the communities themselves. The PCI/PSI majority were vague about the social impact of the reforms as Degli Esposti for the PSDI reminded the council. Mayor Dozza had talked of the need to 'move forward a little with an empirical system, with an experimental system,' a 'wait-and-see' politics which the Social Democrats found too heuristic, preferring to submit the details of the proposal to a permanent commission.⁴⁷

But this was hardly in the spirit of the majority's initiative, since it was precisely the

⁴⁶ The motion read, 'The consiglio comunale convinced of the necessity of the subdivision of the city into quartieri instructs a joint council commission, chaired by the mayor to evaluate the proposals of the giunta for the optimum formulation of the proposed resolution.' In diece anni di decentramento, p.15.

⁴⁷ Intervention of D. Degli Esposti in the debate of the 27th July, 1960 in Dieci anni di decentramento, cit. p.26.

heavily bureaucratic, centralised, and narrow decision making machinery which the giunta were seeking to overcome. Dozza in his speech declared that the aim of the reform was,

‘...to provide a development for this initiative which would not be just...bureaucratic, which would not only have an organisational character, but which would have...a more profound democratic character...’and which would provide, ‘...a means for the people to hear their own voices, demands, and proposals ~~is~~silenced to...’⁴⁸

This idea was close to the Christian Democrats’ vision of refounding urban society through the creation of an organic and dynamic community, although in the Socialist/Communist version the stress was on active participation and the political re-animation of the inhabitants of the quartieri, a prospect which the opposition regarded as offering too many possibilities for direct political interference and manipulation by the majority.

However, the Communist conception of neighbourhood democracy was not aimed at re-inventing the political system or at disrupting the activities of the ‘partitocrazia’ on a local or institutional level. In fact, Fanti’s successor as federal secretary of the Bolognese PCI, Vincenzo Galletti, insisted that the organs of neighbourhood democracy could only be legitimated through the organisations of the political parties. His reasoning was that without an exact replication of the political forces present in the consiglio comunale, individuals or small groups of activists might be able to wield a disproportionate influence on the political life of their locality. Decentralisation therefore aimed to stimulate political participation at a local level, but only through the mediation of the existing party machines.

Despite Galletti’s commitment to maintaining the political status quo, the minority group argued that there was a danger that the new provisions might undermine ‘the real democratic life of the localities.’ Felicori accused assessore Zangheri of openly

⁴⁸ Intervention of G. Dozza in the debate of 30th June, 1960, *ibid.* p.18.

admitting the role the deputy mayors would play in widening the Communist majority in the city. This Felicori asserted did not change the Christian Democrats' primary adhesion to the principle of the creation of the quartieri but it signalled their reservations about the subtext of the reforms which the majority group had done nothing to dispel.⁴⁹

This hostile minority voice did not shake the giunta's defence of the provision which was based partly on urbanistic criteria and partly on the revival of the post-war theme of participatory democracy. The one proposed the unblocking of the city centre, the other the unblocking of the sclerotic arteries of the organs of democracy. As Pietro Crocioni declared,

'We want to avoid people having to come into the centre of the city for business and only returning to the suburbs in the evening to sleep, because this form of associative life practically transforms the periphery into a kind of dormitory where one only sleeps at night while every other hour of the day is spent somewhere else.'⁵⁰

But of course there was nothing peculiar to Bologna about this 'pendolarismo', and if anything, the commuting distance between the centre and periphery or between Bologna and the other towns of the province was shorter than in many other large Italian cities. Clearly a quartiere could not provide employment for all of its inhabitants, and no administration could guarantee people the luxury of being able to walk to work in the morning. However, the concept of the city neighbourhood which the assessore wished to project did make sense in terms of an imagined community which still contained the essential elements of the 'gentle neighbourhood of the past.' This idea of neighbourhood was as important to the Socialists and Communists as it was to the Catholics because the modern (male) commuter had to have something to come home for; his wife, his family, his neighbours, his church and perhaps even his

⁴⁹ F. Felicori's intervention in the debate of 30th June, 1960, *ibid.* pp.23-24.

⁵⁰ P. Crocioni, intervention in the consiglio comunale, 30th June, 1960, *ibid.* pp.20-21.

local 'civic centre' which offered respite, education and a fixed point of social contact in an otherwise remote and uncharted world.

The 'civic centres' (*case del cittadino*) were thus a central feature of the Dossettian vision of a parochially based neighbourhood community as well as being for the Communists a municipalised form of the 'case del popolo' which had been instrumental in the political and cultural education of large sections of the rural and urban working-class. In both categorisations, the 'case del cittadino' were regarded as a key institution for the re-animation of the social life of the satellite districts. As Dozza asserted,

'The case del cittadino (will be places in which) the democratic life of the quartiere will flow. We do not think we are wrong to affirm that with this provision the city will have achieved a qualitative leap forward. Democratic life can spread more widely from the centre to the periphery and the comune can present itself as a more modern instrument, an instrument capable of co-ordinating a central motor for its various activities...with provision for everyone, and where its energy is put at the disposal of all the people.'⁵¹

Yet the democratic model which the giunta had outlined in the consultative document had a greater scope than the territorial boundaries of the city of Bologna. As Crocioni emphasised, the experiment had implications for the reform of the entire Italian state apparatus,

'The state has been created in order to respond to the needs of a limited number of families who were the ones to have emerged victorious from the internal political struggle of the decisive years of the Risorgimento. The outcome that this institutional solution gave to the historical process of unification has been that, at the moment in which the great mass of the people entered into the life of the state, the traditional

⁵¹ G. Dozza, cit. 30th June, 1960.

state, the centralised monarchical state went into crisis...

...something very similar has happened in the general organisation of the state and has also substantially affected the comune...' because although, 'we are infinitely closer to the needs of the population...we have not yet succeeded, all of us who are here, in acquiring a precise knowledge of every aspect of the city.'⁵²

But such a perception of the multi-dimensional reality of the urban mass could only be developed through the experience of collectively undertaken common tasks:

'...the phases which we have called...the reconstruction and the renewal', and through which, 'we have arrived at a sense of the city, at a perception of the sense of its life, we have come to be, if you will permit us the expression, the governing class in the ambit of the city, and the more we are the governing class, the more we feel the need to respond to needs which are not just those advanced by one section of the population.'⁵³

This disarmingly frank assertion of Socialist/Communist hegemony, while appearing to add weight to the DC hypothesis that the decentralisation scheme might be an elaborate ploy to impose socialcommunist domination on the new migrant districts, more probably represented a genuine example of the evolutionary alliance strategy which the left saw as offering a solution to its exclusion from the 'constitutional arc'. Having been comprehensively excluded from a role in the national leadership of the country, the Communists were determined through their alliance with the Socialists and in their dialogue with progressive Catholics to demonstrate that if political pluralism was a dead letter in the ministries of Rome, in the Comune di Bologna it was about to assume an innovative and dynamic form.

⁵² Crocioni, cit. 30th June.

⁵³ Ibid.

3. Alliance Strategy and the First Phase of Decentralisation, 1960-1967.

An encouraging sign for this strategy of *rapprochement* with the centre came when professor Ardigò for the Christian Democrats replying to a motion approving the regulations for the neighbourhood centres and the participatory organisations declared,

'We hope that the development of political forces is such that the experience of the quartieri has been initiated within a changed climate of political alliance, and...we hope that the possibility of innovation will not be subverted but guaranteed in this experiment, which obviously goes beyond the problems of political alliance, but which evidently has a precise significance in the extent to which one connects (decentralisation) to the problems of political alliance and to the formation of a policy of organic synthesis which sees its roots in the consiglio comunale, in the comune, in the region, in the state and which does not envisage problems of counter-position and opposition.'⁵⁴

The inter-party consensus on the need to provide a democratic voice to the ever expanding periphery had already found its concrete expression with the institution of the quartieri the previous April. After the supervisory approval for the council's decision on the subdivision of the city into fifteen quartieri, the consiglio comunale fixed 'the boundaries of each of the quartieri', which provided for the following (district) denominations: Borgo Panigale, Santa Viola, Saffi, Lama, Bolognina, Corticella, San Donato, San Vitale, Mazzini, Murri, San Ruffillo, Colli, A.Costa-Saragozza, Barca, and Centro.⁵⁵

On the 29th March, 1963 the consiglio comunale defined the democratic structure of

⁵⁴ Achille Ardigò, speech to the consiglio comunale, 29th March, 1963 in Dieci anni di decentramento, cit. p.36.

⁵⁵ See Figure 5.

the neighbourhood councils together with the powers and duties of the deputy mayors which were to be instituted in each quartiere. The composition of each neighbourhood council was fixed at twenty councillors, 'nominated through secondary elections by the consiglio comunale, preferably from people resident in the quartiere, on the independent recommendation of single council groups in proportion to the representation of the various groups in the council chamber.' The mayor retained the right to appoint the deputy mayors on the recommendation of the consiglio comunale who in turn delegated this function to the CCD.⁵⁶ This year also saw the first concrete manifestation of the decentralisation process with the installation of the neighbourhood births, deaths and marriages registries and the first area based field social workers.⁵⁷

The 'elections' for the neighbourhood councils and the nominations of the deputy mayors for all the civic neighbourhoods with the exception of the centre, were held on the 29th April, 1964. However, it would be more accurate to describe the selection of candidates as 'nominations' since the neighbourhood councillors were actually 'elected' by their party representatives in the consiglio comunale in proportion to the seats won by each party.⁵⁸ In the same sitting the consiglio comunale approved the directive which allowed for the creation of neighbourhood offices with provision for an office for the registration of births, deaths and marriages, social services,

⁵⁶ This was for constitutional reasons, the law on the regulation of provincie and comuni of 1915 allowed the sindaco to appoint 'aides' (aggiunti) where the size of the comune was such that some form of executive delegation beyond the giunta was necessary (in practice for cities with populations of 100,000 or more). Until the 1976 reform (see below) all municipal participatory bodies other than the council executive and council committees (commissions) were legally considered as 'emanations from the sindaco.'

⁵⁷ Giuseppe Longo, 'Decentrare per costruire le decisioni', Parametro, No.61, Year III, November, 1977, pp.8-15.

⁵⁸ Vincenzo Galletti, 'Nuovo rapporto tra stato e cittadino nell'esperienza dei quartieri a Bologna', in Terracini, U. (et al) La riforma dello stato, Editori Riuniti/Istituto Gramsci, Rome, 1968, p.215.

information, the municipal police and the secretariat of the neighbourhood council and the deputy mayor. The swearing in of Italy's first neighbourhood councillors and deputy mayors took place on the 5th June, 1964.

At the sitting of the consiglio comunale on the 16th July, 1965 the council reconfirmed its commitment to the decentralisation process, having renominated the CCD on the 7th June.

On the basis of the provision contained in article 5 of the regulations for the democratic organisation of the quartiere concerning the possibility of '...nominating persons recommended by other political forces present in the democratic life of the community but not present in the consiglio comunale' the Italian Republican Party was assigned a seat on the neighbourhood councils even though the PRI's list in the elections did not reach the quota necessary to obtain representation on the consiglio comunale.⁵⁹

This was a clear sign of the PCI's intention to use the mechanism of decentralisation as a means of building political consensus at a neighbourhood and city-wide level. The consigli di quartiere offered the possibility of a different quality of political relationship with the parties of opposition than that provided through the consiglio comunale precisely because the executive role of the quartiere was circumscribed by existing legislation. The neighbourhoods offered the possibility of dialogue without risk, and many of the ideas which the giunta would hesitate about presenting directly to the consiglio comunale could be introduced at the level of the quartieri where the degree of cooperation was greater and the atmosphere was more conducive to innovation. In this way the quartieri spread the impact of the Communist dominance of the local polity by decentring the focus of political attention if not the actual site of political power.

The strategy of consensus was also revealed in the political composition of the eight

⁵⁹ Zacchini, B. Introduction to Dieci anni di decentramento, cit. p.3.

deputy mayors which included three representatives from the PCI, three from the PSI, one from the PSIUP and two from the DC. The Socialist assessore for decentralisation, Pietro Crocioni, emphasised that the institutional formulation of decentralisation was such as to,

'guarantee...the deputy mayor the possibility of widening his executive function in the field of administration without as a result assuming the responsibility of the majority (on the consiglio comunale) and without losing the qualities of the minority forces, (while) at the same time, insuring the executive organs of the comune, the mayor and the giunta, against every possible risk connected with the attribution of the office of deputy mayor to men with whom there exists no common party responsibility nor even the same political orientation.'⁶⁰

This was a subtle gesture on the part of the ruling Communist group, for in the assertion of the relative autonomy of the deputy mayors there was the caveat that this 'autonomy' must not be abused. Opposition politicians would be tolerated as figure-heads of their local community but only to the extent that they observed the rules of the game. The DC was in no position to challenge this orthodoxy since Ardigò had gone to great lengths in the *Libro Bianco* and in his several speeches in the council chamber to assert the need to preserve the 'organic integrity' of the neighbourhoods against any 'politizzazione' by the parties, his own, by implication, included.

After the creation of the fifteen 'peripheral' neighbourhoods, the comune turned its attention in the latter half of the 1960s to the problem of the ancient city centre. Over the previous ten years the centro storico had suffered from a prolonged drift of its traditional population 'fuori le mura^e', displaced by a combination of rapidly rising property prices and badly maintained and provided housing. The community was an ageing and increasingly disaggregated one with no focus for its discontents or means

⁶⁰ Pietro Crocioni, assessore for decentralisation and civic centres, in Dieci anni di decentramento, *ibid.* p.3.

of expressing its collective identity. Later initiatives such as the 'piano centro storico'⁶¹ attempted to tackle the urban dimension of this problem, but without the means of local political expression it was felt that any centrally imposed solution would be inadequate.

The CCD therefore requested the Decentralisation Office of the council to conduct a research project on the distribution of the population, the institutions and the sociological structure of the centro storico. The enquiry's report recommended the subdivision of the urban centre into four quartieri; Galvani, Irnerio, Malpighi and Marconi, a measure which the consiglio comunale unanimously approved at its sitting on the 5th December, 1966.⁶² With the increase in the number of quartieri to eighteen, the 'villagisation' of the urban fabric which Dossetti and his supporters had campaigned so vigorously for appeared to have established itself as the criterion for progress towards urban integration.

The neighbourhood councils were also being gradually invested with more discretionary powers such as control of municipal infant and nursery school rolls and local public libraries. The planning commissions of the consigli di quartiere were also to be consulted on building licences in their localities and on the proposals for the new town plan which was eventually approved in 1969.⁶³

By the spring of 1967, every district of the city was represented through its own consiglio di quartiere. As the most recent central quartieri were instituted, the established neighbourhoods were consolidating their presence and their role in the life of the city through an increasing participation in the most important decisions of municipal policy: the budget debate (1966), the piano collinare (concerning the development and environment of the hillside districts of Bologna) (1967), variations to

⁶¹ See Comune di Bologna, PEEP Centro Storico - Relazione illustrativa generale dell'assessore all'edilizia pubblica, 9th October, 1972, and part three below.

⁶² See Figure 6.

⁶³ Longo, G. 'Decentrare per costruire le decisioni', cit.

Figure 6. The quartieri in December, 1966 showing the new centro storico neighbourhoods.



the general town plan (PRG) (1968-9), (and more generally) urban development, traffic, and education and social welfare policy.

The following section examines the development of decentralisation in the context of the new regulations for the neighbourhood councils which were to herald the 'second phase' of decentralisation.

4. Demos in Suburbia: The Second Phase of Decentralisation, 1968-1973.

In the course of a wide-ranging debate held between December 1968 and March 1969, the consiglio comunale produced a balance-sheet on the working experience undertaken in the first five years of life of the democratic neighbourhood organisations and defined the directions for the realisation of the 'secondo tempo' (the second phase) of decentralisation, or in other words of a 'more incisive passage to power and functions in the quartieri.'⁶⁴

The final document indicated the need to move towards, 'a greater, effective decentralisation of services' which would conform to the intention of article 12 of the establishment regulations, '...as far as concerns educational activity, social welfare activity, sports and recreational grounds and gardens, the municipal police service, the aim is to create a greater widening of popular participation in the most direct way for the solution of the problems of the quartiere, in strict collaboration with those of the comune.'

In line with this general perspective on participation, a regulation was proposed for the consigli di quartiere which provided for the creation of consultative commissions to which the neighbourhood councillors had to have recourse, not only for the

⁶⁴ Comune di Bologna, Secondo tempo del decentramento ed attuazione. Atti del dibattito consiliare, dicembre 1968 - marzo 1969. 'The theme of the college of deputy mayors is "Second phase yes, but for change!" - Remo Pizzi, Deputy Mayor for the quartiere of Bologna, p.67.

collection of data or useful material for the exercise of their functions, but in order to achieve a widening of the participative base. On these commissions it was also intended to include non-members of the neighbourhood council. This regulation served to assimilate the experience already in progress in the quartieri in relation to the neighbourhood commissions and had the intention of providing uniform criteria and methods for the 'new articulations' of neighbourhood activity.⁶⁵

In consideration of the growing tasks of the quartieri and of the need, highlighted by the deputy mayors, for periodic meetings to collectively examine the problems of the quartieri in relation to the general problems of the city, the consiglio comunale in its sitting of 10th March, 1969 agreed upon the creation of the 'college of deputy mayors'. The function of this new body was to 'guarantee, according to the criteria on the responsibilities of the deputy mayors, 'the best exercise of the development of the democratic life of the neighbourhood organs.'⁶⁶

The decisions of the consiglio comunale were gradually implemented with the decentralisation, after a year of experiment, of nuclei of municipal police 'fuori le mure' (outside the walls of the ancient city) (1970), with the allocation to the quartieri of new responsibilities and functions in the fields of welfare and schooling: admissions to the municipal primary after-school clubs, to crèches, to summer camps and to climactic therapy institutions, the renting of municipal buildings for educational use, the organisation of courses for gymnastic therapy, use of sports facilities; in the sector of town planning: decisions on the siting of secondary urban construction works, examination of building licence applications; and with the decentralisation of cultural initiatives in collaboration with the Teatro Comunale and other cultural institutions.

⁶⁵ Introductory speech to the consiglio comunale on the theme of the development of the politics of decentralisation by assessore Federico Castellucci, in 'Sviluppo della politica del decentramento democratico', Bologna. Documenti del Comune, No.3, 1970, pp.24-25.

⁶⁶ ACC, 10th March, 1969.

The realisation of the 'second phase' of decentralisation nevertheless met with difficulties and obstacles both in regard to the old structure of the communal apparatus and in the opposition of the supervisory authorities. The regulations for the meeting of the consigli di quartiere, and in particular the article relating to neighbourhood commissions, did not obtain the approval of the GPA. As a result, the commissions were not able to organise themselves as consultative organs of the consigli di quartiere. Moreover the consigli di quartiere, according to the interpretation of the supervisory authorities, could not be considered as anything other than 'colleges for consultation and information' and any decision making capacity was by implication specifically proscribed.

The consiglio comunale was called to discuss this problem in February 1970 and reaffirmed the choices and the directions which had emerged in the previous debates, approving unanimously a motion which proposed various recommendations to the neighbourhood organisations on the criteria for the constitution of permanent or temporary consultative commissions, 'on the express condition that these deal with supplementary interventions, assistance and articulations which are performed..in cooperation with the consigli di quartiere which obviously remain the only collegial organs of decentralisation.'⁶⁷

The themes of decentralisation which were developed in the debate of February re-emerged during the administrative and regional elections of the 7th June 1970, reflecting a wide political consensus on the need to transform the quartieri into real autonomous decision-making centres with adequate administrative support and finance.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Comune di Bologna / Assessorato al Decentramento e ai Centri Civici, Problemi del decentramento democratico, Bologna 9th - 14th February, 1970, p.75.

⁶⁸ See Vivere a Bologna, Programme for the Communists and the independents of the list 'Due Torri' for the administrative elections of the 7th June, 1970; Per la Bologna degli anni 80, Programme of the Christian Democratic Party (ditto); Per il Comune di Bologna, Programme of the PSI (ditto); Programma del PSIUP, (ditto).

The new giunta in its programmatic declaration emphasised that, 'decentralisation and participation must be unrenounceable moments in the process of the construction of a real democracy, through which the citizens are placed in a condition to exercise their power not exclusively through the vote but in the daily process of collective life, arriving at a management of the local authority (which is) as direct and least delegated as possible.'⁶⁹

With the establishment of the regions in 1970 a new chapter in the history of local government decentralisation in Italy had opened. For the first time the quartieri were officially recognised as a unit of local government in the statute of the Emilia-Romagna region.⁷⁰ While the democratic organs of decentralisation were seen as an 'operative realisation of the constitutional principles on autonomy and decentralisation', and an opportunity for the widening of spaces for popular participation in the political choice and management of important services.⁷¹

An example of the less belligerent attitude which the regional organs of control (Coreco) displayed in their dealings with local authorities can be seen in the positive solution which was found for the long-standing problem of the reimbursement of expenses for the deputy mayors whose payment had been previously forbidden by the GPA. In 1972, the comuni were also able to assign modest funds to the quartieri for cultural activities and miscellaneous initiatives (1972), but most important of all the new regional reforms made it possible to provide the quartieri with wider powers and functions through a new regulation which was more consonant with the needs for the development of democratic participation.

The giunta and the decentralisation commission had two main objectives which they wished to see achieved by the end of the second phase of decentralisation. The first was the need to move ahead with the delegation of the social management of services

⁶⁹ Dieci anni di decentramento, cit. p.6.

⁷⁰ Statuto della Regione Emilia-Romagna, Arts. 5, 38 & 54.

⁷¹ Dieci anni di decentramento, cit. p.6.

to the quartieri, while the second concerned the widening of democracy through the instruments of participation in the form of citizens' assemblies and the working commissions 'open to the public and to the various organisations and expressions of civil society.'

In the neighbourhoods themselves the debate on the recommendations of the consiglio comunale was accompanied by the concrete implementation of new forms of participation, with much stronger links with workers' organisations and the recreational and sporting organisations and a deeper examination of the problems of schooling and social management.⁷²

The consiglio comunale approved a document on the 28th April, 1971 which affirmed, '...the necessity of proceeding to the definition of the precise contents of the powers of the quartieri, and at the same time making the functions of the decentralised offices more adequate so that the institutional structure of the quartieri itself will come to assume a more specific and qualified characterisation aimed above all at guaranteeing the instruments and the means for social management.' To this end the council commission on decentralisation was charged with elaborating new proposals for the specification of the functions of the decentred organs and for the revision of the already existing regulations.⁷³

The phase following the debate of April, 1971 was one of intense political activity and policy implementation - (including) the planned programme for capital investments (piano programma) 1972-75, the plans for the restoration of the historic centre, for the improvement and the restructuring of the network of distribution, for traffic and transport, the town planning programme, the territorial definition of the local health

⁷² Giuseppe Longo, 'L'esperienza del decentramento amministrativo-organizzativo e della partecipazione nei consigli', in C. Doglio, L. Fasoli, P. Guidicini (Eds), Misure umane. Un dibattito internazionale sul borgo, città, quartiere, comprensorio, Franco Angeli, Milan, 1978.

⁷³ I quartieri e lo sviluppo della politica di decentramento, ACC, 28th April 1971.

and social services authorities and the drawing-up of a statute for the new authorities, the institution of neighbourhood clinics and a network of crèches, and the restructuring of the technical and maintenance services of the council.

All these initiatives were characterised by a more extensive and informed intervention by the quartieri in the fundamental decisions of the city and in the management of municipal services. The higher social and political profile of the quartieri was also due to the proliferation of neighbourhood commissions and citizens' assemblies.⁷⁴

Between October 1970 and March 1975, the quartieri held 1,666 meetings and organised a total of 10,446 neighbourhood commission sessions, public meetings, assemblies and other local initiatives. Subjects ranged from the PRG to the annual budget estimates, from the examination of the local economic situation to the plan for economic services in the localities, and from the management of social services to nurseries, infant schools and 'full-day' schools.

Education registered by far the highest number of participatory initiatives with as many as 3,753 encounters on the theme of the school and schooling. The interest shown by the Bolognese in their children's education was also revealed in one of the highest voting rates for educational authority representatives in Italy.⁷⁵ Other policy issues provoked strong interest, particularly town planning, traffic and commerce (2,852 initiatives) and social and health policy (2,182). The latter grew in importance in the first half of the 1970s with an increase in the number of public assemblies organised by the neighbourhood council increasing from 14 in 1972 to 75 in 1974. The decentralisation office affirmed that the stimulation to neighbourhood democracy which the 'second phase' regulations had provided was evident in the 111 sittings which council commission on decentralisation had held over the five years and in the

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Comune di Bologna / Assessorato al decentramento e di partecipazione democratica e ai centri civici, Cinque anni di decentramento in cifre, internal council mimeograph, May 1975.

165 meetings organised by the college of deputy mayors (collegio degli aggiunti del sindaco).⁷⁶

One of the most important actions of the council commission on decentralisation was a new set of proposals for the regulation of the neighbourhood organs and the design of a programme for the development of decentralisation policy over a period of several years. The programme indicated what the comune considered to be the fundamental directives and instruments necessary for the realisation of 'phase two' of the decentralisation process and these proposals received the overwhelming support of the city council with the exception of the Liberal Party which chose to abstain on certain parts of the document.⁷⁷

In October 1973 the city council approved a motion proposed at the end of a conference on the 'quartieri and cultural and recreational associations' which called for a greater decentralisation of cultural services in line with the decision of the 2nd July, 1971,⁷⁸ the institution of civic centres, greater experimentation with the management of cultural and recreational services and a closer involvement of cultural and recreational organisations in the development of local cultural policy via 'open commissions' linked to the consigli di quartiere.⁷⁹

Earlier in February of that year, the council commission on decentralisation had

⁷⁶ Ibid. On the neighbourhood councils and the 'new left' in Bologna during this period, see below, chapter eight, part one.

⁷⁷ Comune di Bologna, Per un'ulteriore forma di decentramento e di partecipazione democratica (Proposte per la definizione dei compiti e delle funzioni dei quartieri 1), 1972.

⁷⁸ Ordine del giorno del consiglio comunale per il decentramento delle attività culturali, ACC 2nd July, 1971.

⁷⁹ L'ordine del giorno conclusivo del convegno su 'Quartieri e associazionismo culturale e ricreativo', ACC 6th October, 1973.

presented its proposals for the new structure of the quartieri which were to form the basis of the reforms agreed in March 1974.⁸⁰ The programmatic document indicated the two fundamental directives which the development of the politics of decentralisation should follow:

'cooperation of the quartieri in the determination of municipal politics and, via the comune, territorial, provincial and regional policy...the attribution of precise powers to the quartieri as part of the realisation in their territory of these policies through the means of the obligatory expression of general opinions on the material which has been specifically defined...comprising all the fundamental sectors of intervention of the local authority...'⁸¹

The neighbourhood councils were expected to provide optional general opinions (on city-wide policy such as planning, traffic, the environment etc.), compulsory specific opinions (on for example the siting of a school or a civic centre). Neighbourhood authorities were also required to hold informational hearings, to exercise the functions and powers delegated to them by the comune, the province, the region and administrative consortia (the water company, ACOSER, the hygiene and sanitation department, AMIU, and the transport authority ATC); to promote citizen participation and the participation of social formations operating in their neighbourhoods.⁸²

This was to say the least a daunting prospect for a neighbourhood council with only twenty councillors, a very small budget and few personnel. Little attention had actually been given to the practical obstacles to a comprehensive decentralisation of responsibilities. Many of these criticisms emerged through the process of consultation

⁸⁰ Impegno programmatico per un ulteriore sviluppo della politica di decentramento, ordine del giorno, 4th, 8th and 13th March, 1974 in 'Per un ulteriore sviluppo del decentramento e della partecipazione democratica, (Dibattito consiliare)', Bologna, Documenti del Comune, No.3, March 1974, pp.81-85.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

which the decentralisation commission promoted through the neighbourhoods themselves and in the many public meetings organised around the theme of 'per un ulteriore sviluppo del decentramento e della partecipazione democratica' (for a further development of decentralisation and democratic participation) held between 1973 and 1974. The data collected in this way was collated by the CCD and incorporated into a series of reform proposals which were put before the city council in the spring of 1974.

The March 1974 regulations created a new relationship between the consigli di quartiere and the municipal administration which was to provide the neighbourhood councils with much greater powers of initiative in their dealings with the central municipal authorities. The quartieri were also able to question the giunta more closely on a wider range of policies and they were able to participate in joint activities with the commissions of the consiglio comunale. The consigli di quartiere were also given greater control over their own affairs with the election of the neighbourhood presidents by the council itself, the creation of a secretariat office composed of the president and the group leaders (on the neighbourhood council) which had the function of assisting the president in the setting of the agenda for the council meetings and maintaining contacts between neighbourhood councillors and the working commissions (commissioni di lavoro) of the quartiere.

It was clear from the debates and resolutions on the theme of 'un ulteriore sviluppo' that neither the consiglio comunale nor the consigli di quartiere were naive enough to believe that the 'delegation of power' could be anything other than a symbolic sign of the good intentions of the comune, since the legal restrictions on a proper functioning of neighbourhood administrative autonomy still applied. The comune and the quartieri of Bologna had to wait until 1976 for Rome to finally approve the municipal reforms which the Bolognese had begun sixteen years previously.⁸³ However by

⁸³ Law No.278/1976 which gave formal powers to the quartieri and required every city with more than 100,000 inhabitants to create consigli di quartiere which were to be elected by direct suffrage at the same time as municipal and regional elections.

'institutionalising' and regulating the neighbourhood councils, much of the spontaneity and initiative, argued politicians from across the political spectrum, was in danger of being lost.⁸⁴ This deficit between the participatory impulse of many reformist politicians and bureaucrats and the means to implement democratic control over municipal policy-making at a neighbourhood level was no more clearly illustrated than in the attempt to introduce democratic planning in the Comune di Bologna. The following section considers the problems which the 'new wave' of radical planners experienced in the 1960s and 1970s in designing schemes for public housing and new residential districts and the new political climate which gave rise to the PEEP projects.

Part III. Communism, Construction & Conservation. Urban Planning and the Development of the PEEP Projects in Bologna 1964-1978.

1. Planning Bologna in the 1960s.

If Amendola had insisted on the symbiotic link between democracy and economic development, the new assessore for town planning, Giuseppe Campos Venuti, was equally convinced that what had blighted Italy's cities in the second half of the 1950s was not the economic miracle but its monopolistic component which had made a mockery of any notion of 'democratic planning'.⁸⁵ The entire emphasis of Christian Democrat policy in the 1950s had been on rapid industrialisation and urbanisation, but with very little concern for the long-term impact that massive rural-urban migration would have on the social fabric of northern Italy. The PCI had consistently called for

⁸⁴ See the several interventions of city councillors contained in 'Funzioni deliberative delegate ai quartieri. Nuova normativa per le commissioni dipartimentali' in Bologna. Documenti del Comune, No.3-4, March-April, 1983.

⁸⁵ Giuseppe Campos Venuti, 'Relazione sul Piano Inter-comunale' in Casabella-Continuità, No.269, 1962 cited in Ceccarelli & Galligani cit. p.176.

a national planning body which could manage the process of transformation in a rational and effective manner, and although Fanfani experimented with economic planning, it suited neither Confindustria nor the Dorotei to institute controls on an economy which was one of the least regulated and most successful in Western Europe.⁸⁶ The democratic planning of the local and national economy and the urban infrastructure were therefore important elements in the Communist Party's alternative strategy, and it was logical that after the 1959 regional conference where economic planning was one of the most important themes in the discussion theses that Red Bologna should fulfil the role of 'laboratorio' for the socially conscious planning which the PCI was seeking to promote.

The Communist Party was in a far better position to initiate such a programme at the start of the 1960s because it was able to benefit from the expertise of a number of young, professionally qualified activists who were excited by the prospect of

⁸⁶ Ginsborg describes how Fanfani's ascendancy over the government and the DC in the late 1950s represented an early attempt at an 'opening to the left' and to the creation of a Fanfani led DC-PSI alliance which, 'would be a firm basis for social planning, for moderate reform and for further public intervention in the economy' and which would guarantee the permanent exclusion of the PCI from government. However, Fanfani was to be eclipsed by a coalition of opponents within his own faction (Iniziativa Democratica) and the centre-right Dorotei grouping led by Mariano Rumor. With the triumph of the centre-right at the Seventh Party Congress of the DC in October 1959, as Ginsborg writes, '...any possibility of a new politics was postponed, at the very moment when economic conditions were most favourable.' [Ginsborg, cit.pp.255-256] Although some leading industrialists such as Vittorio Valletta were in favour of limited economic planning (on their terms) under the centre-left, the president of Confindustria, Furio Cicogna and the thousands of small capitalists he represented were decidedly against any state intervention in the economy and as Ginsborg points out, 'The entrepreneurial class, knowing that their profits in the 'miracle' depended on low wages and lack of workers' organization, were not slow to get the message.' Ginsborg, cit. p.265.

combining a professional career with their political vocation.⁸⁷ The new generation of planners and architects like Campos Venuti therefore saw their work as part of a wider political struggle against the sort of speculative building which had defaced virtually every Italian city, but they were confident enough to attack the ‘big is beautiful’ obsessions of previous administrators.⁸⁸ Campos Venuti and his colleagues were also much more prepared to challenge the economic and political constraints which local authorities faced in the provision of affordable, spacious and comfortable housing for ordinary working-class families. Planning from above, they argued, had produced ghetto communities into which new migrants were coralled with little thought for the amenities and services necessary for a functioning, integrated neighbourhood.

However Ceccarelli and Gallingani argue that it would be wrong to assume that the enthusiasm for decentralisation extended to the town planning process itself. Far from integrating urban planning with the decentralisation of municipal services as Dossetti had recommended in the Libro Bianco, in its first phase of municipal reform, the giunta deliberately separated the decentralisation commission from the technical planning office. According to Ceccarelli and Gallingani, the reason for this was that certain members of the giunta (such as Pietro Crocioni) had reservations about the transfer of ‘higher municipal functions’ to the decentralised organs or lay commissions. As we saw in the previous section, it was only in the ‘second phase’ of decentralisation that the administration acceded to popular pressure and agreed to a limited transfer of town planning powers to the neighbourhood councils. However,

⁸⁷ An early sign of Fanti’s intention to overhaul the ancien regime of functionaries in Palazzo d’Accursio was the appointment of Giuseppe Campos Venuti as head of the city’s planning department. This was an example of technocratic ‘head-hunting’ by the Communist reformers who persuaded the young architect to move from Rome where he had recently graduated. Interview with Renato Zangheri, cit.

⁸⁸ Campos Venuti explicitly recognised urban planning as a key component of the ‘via italiana al socialismo’ in his article, ‘Urbanistica, battaglia politica e lotte sociali in Emilia-Romagna’, Critica Marxista, No.6, 1969, pp.74-87.

we must be careful not to assume as Ceccarelli and Gallingani seem to imply that such a separation of functions is proof of institutional resistance to popular participation.⁸⁹ In the case of Bologna, the town-planning agenda of the 1960s was certainly 'institutionally driven' in that the radical visions for the transformation/preservation of the city which became known as 'radical conservation' were the product of years of intense work by Campos Venuti and his successor Pier Luigi Cervellati, both of whom were working from an explicitly 'political' set of planning values. That this town-planning culture became a canopy under which a myriad of different user-groups, tenants' associations, neighbourhood councils, and popular planning commissions sheltered is a testament to the success of the planning department's early response to many of the key demands which were made by urban movements in the late 1960s.⁹⁰

Although the radical planning agenda reached its apogee in the late 1960s, the transformation in the political culture of town planning dated from the mid-1950s where at the 5th Congress of the National Institute of Town Planners (INU)⁹¹,

⁸⁹ The preparatory document for the second regional conference of the Emilia-Romagna federations of the PCI in 1962 called for local groups to take part in the development of urban and district plans which would have an 'anti-monopolist character' and which would aim at improving the city-country relationship by extending the experience of collaboration between the locally elected authorities and organisations present within civil society itself. Clearly within the PCI the political will existed for an extension of popular participation to the planning process, but the proposal only acquired a concrete form in the second phase of decentralisation which began in 1968. Therefore, while Ceccarelli and Gallingani are right to suggest that there was little practical evidence of 'democratic planning' throughout most of the 1960s, this was not because town planning had been declared off-limits to decentralisation, but because the entire reform process proceeded at a very slow pace. Barbiani & Conti, cit. p.192.

⁹⁰ For a fuller discussion of social movements and urban planning see the final section of part two in chapter six.

⁹¹ The conference was held in Genoa in 1954 and was attended by Giuseppe Dozza.

delegates criticised the laissez-faire approach to urban development which had left nearly every major Italian city without a PRG as required by the town-planning law of 1942. As we saw in chapter two, there were very good reasons why in the mid-1950s many authorities were not in a position to present such a plan to the Ministry of Public Works, and Bologna was no exception. The war had caused so much damage to the urban infrastructure of Italy's northern cities that re-development had been based on the ad hoc criteria of the 'piano regolatore' which allowed local authorities to clear derelict zones and assign new commercial, industrial or residential status to these afflicted areas.

At that time, the massive influx of population was not considered a problem by planners, and the need to make provision for the new urban migrants was only acknowledged by a few forward looking architects' departments. Only in 1958 was the general town plan for Bologna finally approved by the Ministry of Public Works, and it quickly became obvious to the planners who were required to implement it that while the plan may have been able to meet the needs of the Bologna of the 1950s, it was woefully inadequate for the problems which the comune was to face in the following decade. Like many of the other plans of the time, the Bologna PRG of 1958 was characterised by a scarcity of public services and a very high density of population.⁹² Only with the introduction of Law 167 on the planning of public housing schemes (piani per l'edilizia economica)⁹³ in 1962 and the decree on planning standards which was included in the so-called 'Bridge Law' (legge ponte) of 1968 were legal limits set on the density, height, and proximity of habitations and a minimal provision of public space and services established.

⁹² For the background to the plan, see above, chapter four, section four.

⁹³ A bill which was introduced in 1962 by the Christian Democrat minister Sullo would have provided a genuinely radical town planning law. The bill's main provisions were the integration of town planning with public housing provision and the delegation of strategic planning controls to the regions. However, in the 1963 electoral campaign, Sullo's own party denounced the bill and the chance to halt the despoliation of Italy's cities was lost.

Campos Venuti's principal task was to revise the 1958 PRG in order to create new residential zones which could accommodate the city's rapidly expanding new migrant population. Between 1951 and 1961 the annual completion rates for residential buildings had averaged 17,000 rooms, while as we have seen, in that same period the population had increased from nearly 340,000 to 445,000. However, only approximately 20% of the accommodation constructed in the 1950s was built by the public housing agencies, and although there was an over-supply of expensive apartments for professional and middle-class tenants and buyers, working-class families faced overcrowding and long waits for nominations to the IACP housing schemes.

In May 1964, Campos Venuti recommended a new plan to the city council which proposed the construction of some 159,462 rooms over a ten year period (approximately equivalent to 16,000 rooms a year) which would cover a site of 892 hectares including 312 hectares devoted to construction and 269 hectares of open space. The contracts were to be equally divided between the private sector and public housing agencies and building cooperatives. This plan was aimed at meeting the housing needs of the less well-off sections of Bologna's population without repeating the disastrous mistakes of the 1950s where slack planning regulations allowed the construction of high density apartment blocks 'a machia d'olio.'⁹⁴

Law 167 was used with great skill and imagination by the comune's architects, for instead of attracting speculative development in the new urban periphery as many other town plans had, Campos Venuti and his staff used the law to infill undeveloped land between the centre and the metropolitan periphery. In this way Bologna's planners succeeded in closing off large parts of the inner periphery to speculative developers.⁹⁵ By 1970, 80,000 inhabitants had been provided with accommodation under the scheme. In addition to the initial 4 billion lire which was provided for the finance of urban development, public authorities and cooperative construction

⁹⁴ See chapter four.

⁹⁵ Angotti, cit. p.68,

companies invested an additional 40 billion lire and Berlanda argues that some 56 billion lire had been saved in property speculation by dedicating these residential districts to low rental public housing.⁹⁶

Bologna's planning strategy in these years was moving in the opposite direction to public investment in the rest of the country. Della Seta showed that in 1952, construction for residential schemes accounted for 25% of all state investment, while in 1974, according to Angotti, it had fallen to 3% of total investment, although 25% of all housing loans were financed by the government.⁹⁷ However, Pier Luigi Cervellati who succeeded Campos Venuti as assessore for town planning, saw the problem of Italy's cities as one of housing over-production. By 1973 the surplus of rooms to population in Italy was running at 9 million, and although 'second homes' accounted for a large proportion of this total, the 'free' private sector housing stock was the subject of such intense speculation that even the cost of renting became prohibitive for most working class families.

While public housing projects were suffering from chronic underfunding, the private sector was engaged in a massive expansion of residential housing which had doubled and tripled the circumference of cities such as Rome, Milan and Naples in the space of twenty years. Bologna's local administrators were determined to resist this tendency, particularly since many of the rapidly constructed quartieri which were built in the 1950s had suffered from this 'build first, plan later' mentality.

The Bologna 'PEEP-plan' was therefore aimed at avoiding the hectic suburban

⁹⁶ Berlanda, 'La variante del PR a Bologna', Il Comune Democratico, 1970, No.2. pp.25-36.

⁹⁷ The Comune di Bologna's 'piano PEEP' noted that state housing provision had diminished from 26.6% of all housing construction in 1951 to 18.8% in 1961. Claudio Bertolazzi, Un piano per Bologna, Appollo, Bologna, 1989, pp.25-26. Luxury residential housing districts could not be included in compulsory purchase schemes by local authorities.

developments of the 1940s and 1950s by including minimum levels of service provision and open space in the planning specifications. As with many other PEEP plans at the time, the Bologna scheme was a response to Law 167 which required councils with populations of over 50,000 inhabitants to draw up plans for the construction of mass, low-rental housing. The comune adopted its 'piano PEEP' in 1963 and it received final approval in 1965. Because only about 3% of the housing stock in Bologna could be defined as 'deluxe' under the terms of the T.U. of 1938, the council used the provisions of the legislation to tackle the problem of public housing as a global problem and it refused to merely limit itself to the provision of units of accomodation.⁹⁸

The technical appendix to the plan specified that the provisions of Law 167 would be used to freeze land prices at 1961 levels in order to prevent speculation in the areas set aside by the plan. The second objective of the plan was to use the construction of public housing as an instrument for controlling urban development in general.⁹⁹ The PEEP-plan incorporated three sites (Beverara, Barca, and Fossolo) which had been set aside for residential development by the PRG of 1958 and covered a total of 755 hectares, although only 238 hectares were to be used for residential construction, while 222 hectares were dedicated to services and 295 hectares were given over to open space, parks and gardens. In all, the new housing areas were to be provided with 4 civic centres, 4 commercial centres, 3 religious centres, 8 infant schools, 4 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, and 4 sports centres.¹⁰⁰ In line with the comune's educational policy, with the construction of these new schools, the city was to enjoy one of the highest quotients of educational provision in the country.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Bertolazzi, C. cit. p.25.

⁹⁹ Ibid. p.26.

¹⁰⁰ Campos Venuti, 'Il Peep a Bologna' cit.

¹⁰¹ See Table 19.

Table 19. Recommended government standards for educational provision and educational provision according to the Bologna Regulatory Plan of 1969.

Type of School	Age	M ² /Pupil		Maximum on School Roll		School pop. as % of total population		M ² /Inhabitant	
		M	B	M	B	M	B	M	B
Nurseries	0-3	10	40	80	75	1.0	2.5	0.1	0.5
Infant schools	3-6	18	40	100	100	2.0	3.4	0.36	1.10
Junior schools	6-11	15	40	600	600	8.0	6.0	1.20	1.50
Middle schools	11-14	16	40	720	600	5.0	3.2	0.80	1.20
High schools	14-19	25	80	1,500	1,000	3.5	4.8	0.5	4.00

M = Ministry of Education

B = Comune di Bologna

Source: Berlanda - 'La Variante del PR a Bologna'

The projected living space which the plan provided for was designed to accommodate a population of 609,000 which was 140,000 more than the actual population at the time the plan was produced. Here again, the assumption was that for better or worse, Bologna was likely to continue to grow, and rather than allow the market to decide where Bologna's future inhabitants would live, the city's administrators believed that Bologna's metropolitan transformation should be as coordinated and controlled as possible. Ceccarelli and Galligani summarise this concept as 'planning a metropolitan area without the metropolis' but it was a tension which Campos Venuti and his successors were never able successfully to resolve as Bologna increasingly assumed

the characteristics of a regional capital.¹⁰²

If we can talk of a planning 'mentality' in Bologna city council, one of its most self-limiting aspects in relation to the decentralisation process was the planning team's inability or refusal to see the new housing projects as organically separate communities, and therefore worthy of independent political and administrative definition. Because the quartieri were over-laid onto existing 'historic communities' the new neighbourhoods which were proposed in the 1963 PEEP plan and the PRG of 1969 (such as Via Fossolo which had a population at least as big as some of the smaller quartieri) appeared as satellite districts on the planners' chart.¹⁰³ This meant that even though Campos Venuti and his team subscribed to the rationalist 'misura umana' school of town planning in a formal sense, the political consequences of giving definition to the new urban centres would have meant falling back on the organic and essentially anti-modernist prescriptions of the Dossettians, and therefore the new projects fell between the conflicting images of quartiere and new residential zone.¹⁰⁴

Paradoxically it was not in the 'green field' estates that the concept of community planning finally emerged as a defining characteristic of the 'modello Bolognese' but in the historic centre where, as we have seen, the creation of the neighbourhood councils encouraged the local inhabitants and local politicians to develop an imaginative strategy which could arrest the architectural and socio-economic decline of the oldest part of the centre.

¹⁰² Ceccarelli & Galligani cit. p.177.

¹⁰³ Ibid. p.178.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

2. The PEEP-Centro Storico: A Lesson in Radical Conservation.

'Bologna is the first industrial city in the Western world to have a central city renewal program that aims to preserve the historic and social character of the urban environment by not displacing low income people from their homes. This renewal program is probably the only one of its kind in a capitalist country. Its success is due to a basic political commitment by a Communist administration to reinforce the social foundations of the central core by improving the physical environment, increasing the level of services available to residents, and promoting democratic participation in decision making.'¹⁰⁵

When in 1975, the Swiss journalist Sil Schmid, asked the PCI assessore for town planning, Pier Luigi Cervellati what he felt his achievements in the area of town planning had been, Cervellati replied candidly, 'None'.¹⁰⁶ The reason Cervellati gave for his negative evaluation of Communist planning in Bologna might not have been expected from one of the architects of administrative 'rinovamento' since he claimed that, 'without public ownership of land there can be no socialist land policy.'¹⁰⁷ Yet do Cervellati's comments make nonsense of Angotti's eulogy for the 'piano centro storico'? In an important sense the limited aims of the PCS could be said to constitute a major innovation in urban preservation and in the support of

¹⁰⁵ Angotti, cit. p.73.

¹⁰⁶ This position is also inconsistent with an earlier assessment of the importance of the PCS where Cervellati declared that, '..the historic centre might be considered as the critical moment and the possible point of rupture with the capitalist logic of the city.' P.L. Cervellati & R. Scannavini (Eds), Bologna: Politica e metodologia del restauro nei centri storici, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1973, pp.9-10

¹⁰⁷ Red Bologna, cit. p.45.

historic communities as well as the urban fabric itself.¹⁰⁸ Cervellati was merely insisting that the housing interventions of the comune had not and could not produce a miracle cure for the problems associated with rapid urbanisation and the depopulation of the centro storico.

The 1971 variant to the 1969 PRG laid the foundations for the PEEP-Centro Storico by establishing a moratorium on all new construction in the historic centre, the suppression of speculation in the periphery, the restriction of tertiary activities in the centre and the decentring of commercial and administrative functions. While support for the centro storico was to come from improving services and recreational space, the finance of housing rehabilitation, the improvement of transport links between the centre and other parts of the region together with better conditions for pedestrians in the city centre. But perhaps the most ambitious objective of the plan was the maintenance of a stable and socially mixed population.

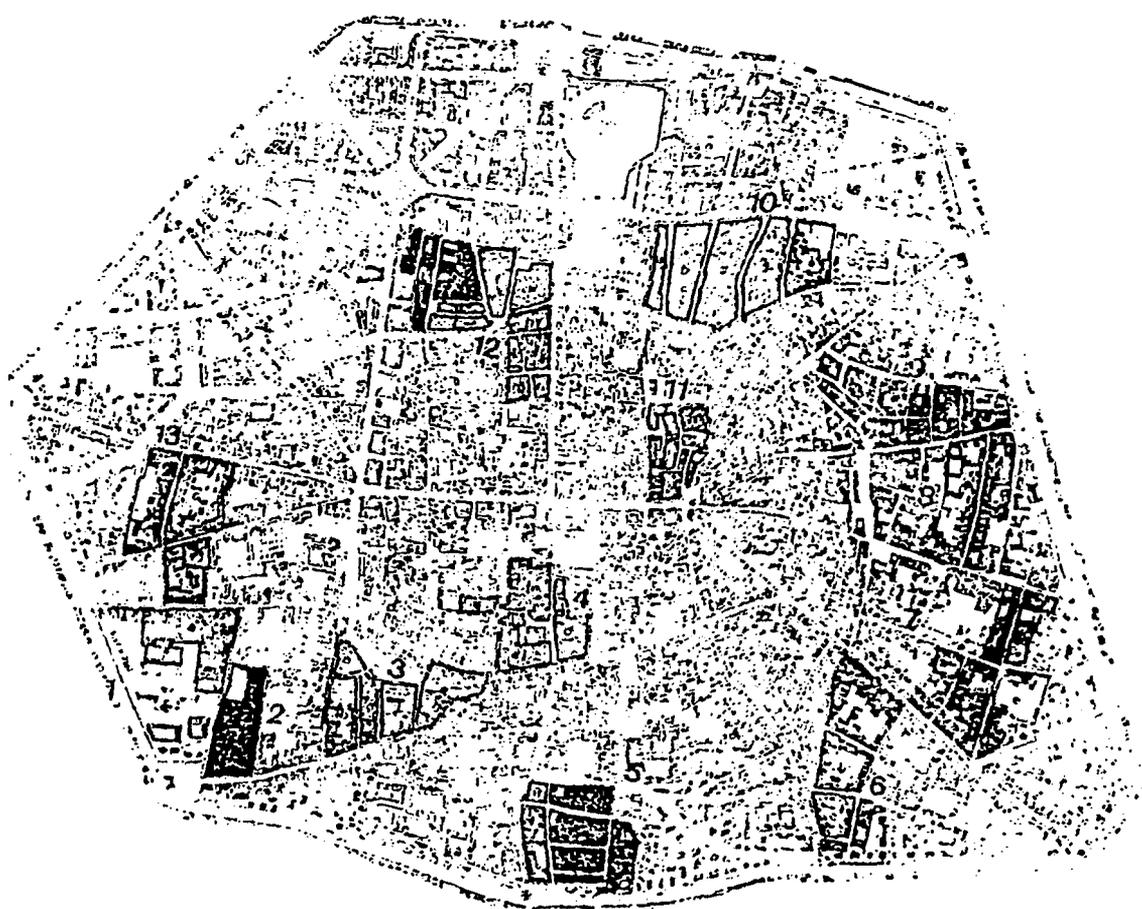
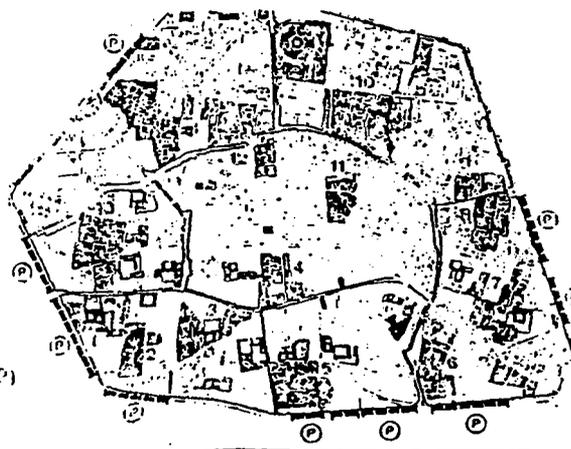
The historic centre component of the second phase PEEP scheme was intended to provide 6,000 out of a total of 16,000 new housing units, but because nearly all of the centro storico dwellings contained existing tenants, the PCS was not intended to provide a significant net increase in housing. The plan was made possible because of a new housing law passed in 1971 (Law 865) which the Socialists had made a

¹⁰⁸ This is borne out by an article in Corriere della Sera in which Leonardo Benevolo argues that the planning and restoration methods adopted by the Comune di Bologna served as an international model for future historic centre projects. The Bologna experience was considered so important that a Council of Europe town planning conference was held in the city in 1974 in order to discuss how the ancient city centres of Europe could be similarly defended against commercial and environmental threats. Benevolo described the Bolognese conservation strategy as, 'the principal architectonic invention that Italy has contributed to world culture in the last ten years.' 'Restauro urbano: né finto antico né troppo nuovo', Corriere della Sera, 13th December, 1978 in Comune di Bologna - Assessorato alla Programmazione e Assetto Urbano, Risanamento conservativo del centro storico di Bologna, Graficoop, Bologna, 1979, pp.142-142.

Diagram 1. The Historic Centre - showing the first and second phases of the Piano PEEP.

- 13 comparti urbanistici
- servizi sociali di quartiere
- verde pubblico di quartiere
- parcheggi - dormitorio sotterranei
- aree omogenee

- 2 Individuazione dei 13 comparti urbanistici di ricambio
- comparti urbanistici di prima fase (piano PEEP)
 - comparti urbanistici di seconda fase



condition for their continuing support of the DC coalition government.¹⁰⁹ The new legislation was a more powerful weapon in the armoury of local authorities than Law 167 had been because it allowed councils to expropriate land for public housing at agricultural land prices rather than at the market rates of the previous year.¹¹⁰

Where the PCS differed from almost every other housing project in Europe at that time was in its commitment to maintain existing tenants in their homes by restoring and converting their run-down properties in order to provide modern facilities at pre-existing rent levels. The comune was able to use the incentive of subsidised credit for building contractors together with the ultimate threat of expropriation at below market value in order to 'induce' landlords to cooperate in the restoration scheme.

A total of five districts were selected for public housing from the thirteen areas assigned for restoration under the PRG of 1969. These five were chosen because they were almost exclusively working class neighbourhoods where the apartments were in urgent need of repair, restoration and modernisation.¹¹¹ The choice of PEEP zones was made after a careful survey of all the properties in the centro storico in which buildings were divided into one of five categories. This was felt necessary because as Cervellati observed, the development of the city centre was the result of successive aggregations of morphological clusters each of which possessed a separate identity and architectural significance.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ The act also allowed a comune to declare part of its territory as a centro storico. The legislation was permissive rather than proscriptive and it contained no formal definition of a historic centre, although a comune had to make a provision in its regulatory plan or building plan if it wanted to architecturally intervene in the centro storico. P.L. Cervellati & R. Scannavini (Eds), Bologna: Politica e metodologia del restauro nei centri storici, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1973, pp.47-48.

¹¹⁰ Red Bologna cit. p.53.

¹¹¹ See Diagram 1.

¹¹² Cervellati & Scannavini, Politica e metodologia del restauro, cit. p.111.

Depending on the age and state of repair of each property, the comune drew up a schedule for the contractors which specified how the work should be carried out. The schedule was similar to the 'listed building' regulations which apply to historic buildings and monuments in Britain in that, for example, a 1A classified building permitted restoration of the fabric and interior of the building only according to the strict guidelines issued by the comune's architects department. A category 2 building did not have to be preserved as carefully as a category 1 building, but where conservation was possible (category 2A) the contractor was obliged to maintain the original features. The third category was assigned to severely dilapidated properties which required complete or partial demolition, but unless reconstruction was a practical impossibility the new building had to be a faithful copy of the original. In this way the planning department was able to establish its criteria for building restoration which could be summarised as; maintenance, consolidation, restoration, substitution and adaptation.¹¹³

Although the PCS did not receive full official approval until July, 1975, by then many of its main features had been initiated.

From March, 1973, 1.2 billion lire of national and municipal funds had been spent on the purchase of land and on the restoration and reconstruction of historic buildings. By 1973, residential units for approximately 360 people had been completed. Not only did the PCS preserve the character and community of the historic centre, it was also a cheaper form of housing provision than building new dwellings, the comune estimated that for each square metre of residential property provided in the city centre, the council paid 200,000 lire, whereas in the periphery the cost was 218,000 per square metre.¹¹⁴

The PCS was not able to fulfil the rather ambitious provision for an additional 6,000 accommodation units which the 1969 PRG had planned, but this was not a great cause for concern for its designers. The emphasis of the PCS by the mid-1970s had almost

¹¹³ Risanamento conservativo, cit.p.24

¹¹⁴ Angotti, cit. p.75.

entirely focused on the quality of municipal intervention and what planning professionals called 'standards urbanistici'. Cervellati and his colleagues did not believe that the PCS could or should be a solution for the city's housing problem, instead they saw the plan for the historic centre as a means of defending the city's cultural and egalitarian values and especially the traditional constituency of the left which was being slowly displaced by managers and professionals.¹¹⁵

The 'tertiarisation' of the inner-city presented opportunities as well as problems for the city's administrators, and it is ironic that because of the scale and degree of localisation of the PEEP-Centro Storico projects, the planners began to talk in increasingly Dossettian terms of a new system of 'cuori' in the city. The centro storico was viewed as the ideal location for the re-birth of an integrated (or organic) community wherein the relationship between living space and work might be preserved.

This explained the emphasis in the PCS on maintaining traditional craft skills in the city centre by refurbishing old artisanal workshops and the support for the expansion of the University of Bologna within the centro storico after the ambitious plan to relocate the university campus in Ozzano had been quietly dropped.¹¹⁶ Cervellati had shown

¹¹⁵ If we take as our example the Solferino redevelopment zone (compartamento 5) of the PCS; the data from the census of 1961 and 1971 reveals that the percentage of entrepreneurs and senior manager family heads increased from 1.8% to 16.2% and that of white-collar employees from 20.7% to 21.2% while the proportion of self-employed workers fell from 36% to 31.3%, and dependent workers who made up 41.5% of all families in 1961 also declined to 31.3% of the total neighbourhood population. However, although the employed working-class were diminishing in number, the increase in the proportion of retired residents in the centro storico from 5.1% to 10.8% (many of whom were life-long Communist Party members) meant that the 'embourgeoisement' of the historic centre was less dramatic than it might at first appear.

¹¹⁶ On the development of the University of Bologna after the war see chapter six, part one, below.

that it was possible to contain the 'tertiarisation' of the city centre by continuing to provide modern and well served business facilities in decentred sites such as the Fiera while making the centro storico less attractive to large retail chains and corporate offices by imposing strict controls on building heights and land use. It was a strategy which carried with it the risk of driving commercial investment away from Bologna entirely, but the city's administrators were astute enough to offer incentives and planning concessions to small and medium-sized traders who were entirely behind the opposition to the establishment of the large retail chains.

'Bologna moderna' had developed through the rediscovery of the central importance which 'Bologna antica' still had for many of its inhabitants, and Guido Fanti was no longer afraid to talk in increasingly Dossettian terms of the need to create a metropolitan environment in which advanced economic activity could coexist with something resembling the 'gentle neighbourhood of the past'.

Having examined the social, political and economic policies which had earned Bologna an international reputation for its civic administration, we conclude this chapter with a consideration of the distinctive contribution that Giuseppe Dozza's leadership gave to the city and the reasons why the process of 'rinnovamento' which began in 1959 signalled the mayor's eclipse and the beginning of a new structure of feeling in the society and polity of the Emilian capital.

Part IV. From Consolidation to Renewal: An Appraisal of 'l'epoca Dozziana.'

Giuseppe Dozza officially resigned as mayor of Bologna on the 30th March 1966, a post he had held without interruption for 21 years. The announcement did not come as a surprise to the city council, particularly since his successor, Guido Fanti, had been carrying out the duties of mayor since Dozza's health first became a problem in 1962. The 'mayor of the Resistance' had piloted the comune through the difficulties of the reconstruction and through the most bitter years of the Cold War, he had seen off the Dossettian challenge in 1956 and had won support from sections of the middle-

class who would have been staunch anti-Communists in any other Italian city.¹¹⁷ He was perceptive enough to realise that the movement for organisational and political renewal which had culminated in the 1959 regional conference was irresistible and that although he might have disagreed with the methods proposed for the achievement of a permanent worker/ceti medi alliance, his own early commitment to the protection of the interests of the petty producers proved that he was no late convert to Togliatti's anti-monopolist strategy.

However, with the emergence of a new and younger administrative class following the 1960 elections, it was clear that Dozza's inability or reluctance to grasp the significance of the structural economic and demographic factors which confronted the modern, post-boom Bologna was a liability for the Party and the city administration. It was not that Dozza was politically committed to a neutral role for local government as many of the 'old guard' were and remained, but rather that years of conflict with the prefect and the GPA had persuaded him that voting for a deficit budget would force the comune into a subaltern relationship with the state authorities. Under Dozza's leadership, the comune had sought to avoid the interference of the prefect's office by balancing income and expenditure so that the council would not be forced to rely on the state for discretionary loans. This conviction stemmed from the concerted attempt by Scelba's ministry to criminalise the red comuni (described in Dozza's speech Il reato di essere sindaco), but it also derived from what the Bologna daily Il Resto del Carlino described as an overwhelming concern to placate the urban bourgeoisie. Thus 'il buon governo' meant that efficiency, moral probity, and transparency became ends in themselves rather than an administrative culture in which interventionary and redistributive policies could evolve.

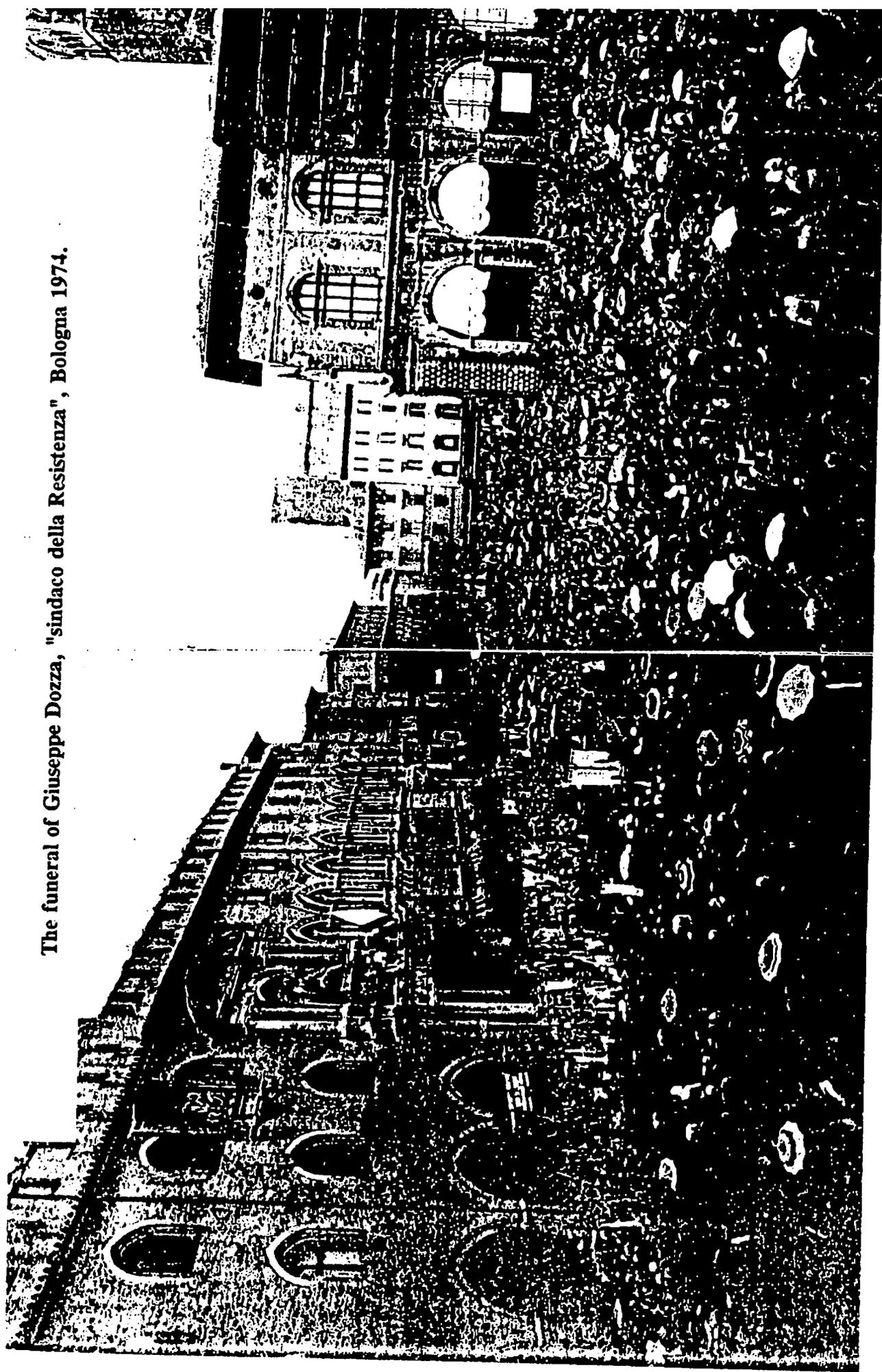
¹¹⁷ A moving personal account of Giuseppe Dozza's life is provided by Mario Giovannini, Dozza's aide and confidant. His book is also interesting in that it refutes the myth of Dozza's 'death-bed conversion' to Catholicism during the visit of Bishop Lercaro, but it does confirm the great admiration the two men had for one another. Giovannini, M. Tramonto rosso su San Luca. La resistenza, il pubblico e il privato con Giuseppe Dozza, Franco Angeli, Milan, 1984.

Although much of Dozza's 'buon governo' was symbolic, such as the installation of glass partitions in the town hall offices so that the public could witness the 'trasparenza' of the municipal machine, other initiatives such as the municipal taxation councils (CTMs) were an important first step towards the comprehensive decentralisation of the 1960s. As the city developed, the needs of a large urban population provided increasing opportunities for social and cultural intervention by the comune. The new 'Ospedale Maggiore', the 'Palazzo dello Sport' and peripheral sports grounds and cinemas, the new livestock and wholesale markets, the construction of a small power station and the creation of municipal water, sewage and waste disposal services were achieved with little or no assistance from central government. Bologna's system of infant and primary education was second to none in Italy and the provision of free pre-school education allowed many thousands of women to take a full and active part in the labour market for the first time. Bologna was not slow to introduce new forms of trams and buses in the constant search for a fast and regular mass transport system which allowed the population of the suburban quartieri and the surrounding towns affordable access to the city centre.¹¹⁸

Although his number of personal preference votes continued to decline after 1956, the charismatic attraction of the Mayor of the Resistance was certainly an important contributing factor in the mounting electoral success of the PCI. Dozza was a politician in the Weberian mould who demonstrated the mobilising powers of charisma and the qualities of a genuine populist who celebrated his humble origins and left the post of mayor no richer than when he assumed the leadership of the city on the eve of Liberation in April 1945. When he welcomed Cardinal Lercaro at Bologna railway station after the Second Vatican Council in 1966, Dozza established a dialogue and a mutual respect for the Church which Fanti and Zangheri were to build on with some success. Dozza never forgot that, in Zangheri's words, the PCI was 'the biggest Catholic party in Bologna.'

¹¹⁸ These were advances which even the staunchly anti-Communist Il Resto del Carlino had to credit to Dozza's civic vision. See Luigi Arbizzani, Giuseppe Dozza, in Storia illustrata di Bologna. 4/V., cit.

The funeral of Giuseppe Dozza, "sindaco della Resistenza", Bologna 1974.



As an administrator both the left and the right wings of the Party accused Dozza of over-caution and a reluctance to take risks. In its obituary of Dozza, Il Manifesto claimed the development of a 'model administration' was aimed at maintaining the Communist dominated comune and the mass movements as 'separate instances'.¹¹⁹ And although some of the smaller rural comuni acted as spearheads for the peasant struggles in the 1940s and 1950s, the city government was careful not to give the prefect a pretext for dissolving the council even if Dozza was personally charged with defamation of the state for his outspoken criticism of the central authorities. Caught between the 'attendisti' who still harboured thoughts of the 'Ora X' and the Amendolan 'miglioristi' who had all but displaced the left by the early 1960s, Dozza had no constituency inside the federation he could call his own. Much as Zanardi had been a maverick Socialist mayor who felt more comfortable with his institutional role than the factional conflict which is endemic to the Italian party system, Dozza preferred his occupation as 'il sindaco del popolo' to that of 'dirigente comunista.'

The political world of post-boom Italy may not have been harsher than that of the 1940s and 1950s but it was certainly more complex. It was a world where politicians and administrators were possessed of university degrees and whose English was good enough to read the Herald Tribune, a world in which men of Dozza's generation had to either adapt or retire. Bologna like the rest of the country was experiencing the growing pains of modernity with a mixture of excitement and regret. The partisans, the old battle songs of the risaja, the memories of the 'anni duri' would even assume an increasing symbolic significance in the years to come, but the protagonists of those struggles could only be spectators in the next. The social conflict which was to erupt in Bologna a year after Dozza's resignation was that unthinkable spectacle of Pasolini's blue uniformed proletariat facing the slings and surrealist slogans of the 'figli di papa.'

In the following chapter we examine the phenomenon of '68 in two of its most

¹¹⁹ See L. Arbizzani & S. Soglia (Eds), Giuseppe Dozza a un anno della morte, Bologna. Documenti del Comune, 1975, No.9, Sept. 1975, pp.174-176.

significant aspects; the students' revolt in the university and the high schools, and the resurgence in worker militancy during and after the Hot Autumn of 1969. The chapter focuses in particular on the PCI's attitude and relationship to the new social movements, and assesses the consequences of industrial restructuring for the 'Emilian Model' and for the alliance strategy of the PCI. The chapter concludes by returning briefly to consider how effective the comune's decentralisation reforms were in responding to the collective demands generated by the social movements of these years.

CHAPTER SIX

An Emilian Autumn: New social movements in Bologna 1967-1973.

1. Introduction

Although the 'May movement' which erupted in Paris in 1968 became an emblem for the wave of youth and student protests which swept Europe in the late 1960s, in Italy the cycle of occupations, demonstrations and violent clashes with the police which connected Trento in the north to Palermo in the south had almost come to end by the spring of 1968. The disturbances in the Italian faculties did not have one focal point, instead conflicts broke out at university or faculty level seemingly at random and often for quite different reasons. Tarrow's analysis of the Corriere della Sera reveals that in 1966 there were eight incidents, in 1967 there were fourteen, while by 1968 the number had risen to fifty-one.¹ Yet by the end of 1968, protests in Italian universities and high schools had fallen off sharply, as Tarrow states, '...after flaring up in late 1967 and early 1968, the excitement, the exhilaration, and the solidarity of the university student movement were quickly extinguished.'²

It was at the University of Pisa during a protest occupation that the first serious attempt to provide a theoretical and revolutionary analysis of the crisis of the universities was developed. The 'Pisan Theses' identified the disfunctioning of the universities with the general crisis of late-capitalism, and much of their theoretical

¹ As Tarrow admits these figures are certainly an underestimate, the journal Tempi Moderni showed that 102 incidents had occurred in 33 universities between November and June during the 1967-68 academic year. However, Tarrow's figures are smaller because he combines incidents relating to the same issue. Sidney Tarrow, Democracy and Disorder. Protest and Politics in Italy, 1965-1975, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989, p.144.

² Ibid. p.161.

inspiration came from the small but influential 'operaista' journal Quaderni Rossi.³ From then on the protests assumed an increasingly wide focus ranging from the conditions of Italian workers to the war in Vietnam and the political uses of the mass media. The movement had become conscious of itself and of its fundamental opposition to the 'games' of the parliamentary parties and their youth and student organisations. As Lumley argues, attempts by the main parties to assimilate the movement by founding pseudo-parliamentary forums or by establishing new front organisations were doomed to failure and, 'by the end of 1968 all the organisations had formally dissolved themselves.'⁴

If the student movement was becoming increasingly conscious of what Marcuse called the 'new proletarian' function of graduates in capitalist society, there were several features of the Italian experience which made the 1967/68 conjuncture a particularly fertile one for the development of 'cultures of revolt.' Marco Boato considers that there were important political, social, cultural and religious reasons why '68 became the compression chamber for all these oppositional forces in Italian society.

Because it affected the entire country, the most significant feature of 'sessantotto' was the generally acknowledged crisis in the Italian state (as opposed to the perpetual coalition and Christian Democrat infighting which all previous ^{postwar} war-time governments had experienced). With the break-up of the 'centro-sinistra' and the abandonment of the tattered 'book of dreams', as Boato describes the Socialists' programme for the introduction of planning and welfare reforms, a political vacuum was created in the direzione of the country which the DC found it impossible to fill. This rudderless state was increasingly unable to meet the demands of either capital or labour and it fell easy prey to the subversion of its own security forces who were able to carry out atrocities such as the 1969 Piazza Fontana bombing with impunity.

On the economic front, faced with declining rates of profit, industrialists continued to

³ Ibid. p.65. — *Taviani, a. l. etc.*

⁴ Ibid. *quasi tutti etc.*

raise productivity targets and to resist wage-demands. But for the first time since 1962, thousands of employees seemed willing to contest the harsh conditions under which they were required to work and the isolated strikes and demonstrations which gathered momentum in the northern cities in 1967 and 1968 were finally to explode in the 'Hot Autumn' of the following year.⁵ Italian society was also undergoing a cultural transition where the old ideology of provincial-peasant-Catholic-traditionalist Italy was giving way to an increasingly urbanised, white-collar and lay culture. Even the Church had experienced its own 'revolution' during the Second Vatican Council in 1966 in which Bologna's Cardinal Lercaro and his spiritual adviser Don Giuseppe Dossetti played leading parts. Vatican II was welcomed by many young Catholics as an endorsement of a modern, tolerant and socially conscious faith, and several radical Catholics who had been inspired by John XXIII were to become leading protagonists in the student movement in the following years.

But for the vast majority of the new generation of Italians who were not born into staunchly leftist or Catholic families, consumerism offered the only alternative to the old-value systems of the past.⁶ Yet if the social disaggregation and transformation which Boato describes had helped to produce an alienated generation of middle-class students in the great university cities of Milan, Turin and Rome; in Emilia-Romagna, as we have seen, the transition to a modern, urban society had been less complete and more measured than in the northern regions, and this was to have important implications for the form which the protests took both inside and outside the University of Bologna. Similarly, the political and economic distinctiveness of Emilia-Romagna meant that the 'autunno caldo' differed in its scope, duration and

⁵ As Tarrow points out, it is important not to over-estimate the 'spontaneous' nature of these strikes in the months leading up to the period of industrial conflict which was initiated by the 1969 contract negotiations. Indeed Pizzorno shows that, '...the early impetus for the Hot Autumn was provided by skilled workers who had been politicized by the unions in past periods of industrial conflict,' Tarrow, Democracy and Disorder, cit. p.91.

⁶ Marco Boato, Il '68 é morto: viva il '68!, Bertani Editore, Verona, 1979, pp.18-19.

intensity to the rest of northern Italy.

In the following sections we examine the post-war development of the University of Bologna, the local and national genesis of the student movement, its internal organisation and the Communists' attitude and response to the movement. In part two we consider the significance of the 'autunno caldo' for PCI hegemony within the workers' movement and we discuss the significance of industrial restructuring in Bologna for the functioning of the 'Emilian model.' The chapter concludes by reviewing the comune's housing and decentralisation initiatives in the light of the new collective and political demands developed from the new social movements.

Part I. The Student Revolt in Bologna, 1967-1970.

1. The City and the University: from the Liberation to the Economic Miracle and the expansion of the 1960s.

Immediately after the Liberation, the Communists were able to install their own candidate, Edoardo Volterra, as rector of the newly re-opened University of Bologna. But although Volterra played a crucial part in restoring the university to its didactic function, his political background ensured that he would be voted out by his opponents on the Senate when the appointment came up for renewal.⁷ Unsurprisingly in a university where only one professor had resigned in protest at Mussolini's seizure of power, many academics owed their positions to the former regime, and but for the very few who had been shot or dismissed because of murderous complicity with the

⁷ Volterra had been a member of the Partito d'Azione during the Resistance, and although he did not formally become a member of the PCI, the prefecture obviously considered him a 'fellow traveller'. The prefect believed that it was for this reason that he was not re-elected after his three year term. M.I. (Gab) 2/60/P/14/I, report of the prefect, 27th January, 1948.

Nazifascists, the University teaching body remained virtually unchanged after the war.⁸ The students of the university in the 1940s and 1950s came predominantly from wealthy Bolognese families and many shared the rightist sympathies of their professors. In one memorable incident soon after the war, students clashed with workers in Piazza Maggiore over the threatened Yugoslavian 'annexation' of Trieste, and although this form of open conflict was rare, the hostility between the townspeople and the 'goliardi' remained for many years after.⁹

Volterra's replacement, Felice Battaglia, was a liberal and well respected administrator who made an early commitment to improving relations between the university and the city on the basis of a mutual respect for their 'autonomy'. In a famous speech to the consiglio comunale in 1952, Battaglia called for cooperation between the civil authorities and the university in seeking to restore the Ateneo to its medieval status as a European centre of learning and academic excellence, a sentiment which was warmly endorsed by Giuseppe Dozza.¹⁰ However, with the departure of

⁸ The fascist rector, Goffredo Coppola was in fact shot by partisans on the 29th April, 1945. M.A. Galligani, 'Gli insediamenti universitari di Bologna dalla ricostruzione al progetto di decentramento a Ozzano Emilia (1945-1970)', Storia Urbana, 44, July-September, 1988, pp.139-183.

⁹ M.I. (Gab) 183/18065, report of the Commander-in-Chief of the Carabinieri, 12th July, 1945. The report records that students chanting, 'On with the war!' and 'Down with Tito!' clashed with local workers who, on the instigation of the federal Labour Chamber, arrived in Piazza Maggiore in the back of lorries which they had comandered from their employers. A meeting of 3,000 students held in the aula magna of the university was called to protest at the 'roughing up' the goliardi had received from the workers. Rector Volterra and mayor Dozza who both spoke at the meeting promised a 'clarification' of the situation and called for a 'ravvicinamento' between students and workers, although significantly no representatives of the camera del lavoro came to advocate reconciliation.

¹⁰ Galligani, 'Gli insediamenti universitari di Bologna..' cit. An interesting account of the history of the University of Bologna seen from an 'urbanistica' perspective is

Volterra, the PCI had not lost its influence in the university even though, as we saw in chapter two, few intellectuals, academics and students were drawn to the Party in the years immediately following the war. The Communists' most important representative was Paolo Fortunati, who as we have already noted, was a member of the giunta and an effective spokesman for the administration in the university Senate.

The Christian Democrats were also well represented in the city council and the university Senate by professors Ardigò and Andreatta, and in the Libro Bianco its two authors declared that the relationship between the city administration and the University of Bologna was fundamentally important to the city's history and future development. But although the Dozza administration was given credit for the 'liberal and comprehensive' way it had dealt with the Ateneo it was criticised for not having an organic policy on the university.¹¹

This charge, unlike many in the Libro Bianco was hardly fair however, since the university sector came under the control of the ministry of education and the comune could hardly be accused of failing in its responsibilities in this area of policy. Indeed the giunta would have welcomed some control over the expansion of the university so that its own projections for population growth, housing and services could make provision for the new demands which the student population was placing on the city. After a decade of relative stagnation in the 1950s, the university began to expand between 1959 and 1964 at an average rate of nearly 1,000 a year, reflecting the national economic trend and the general migration into the city which was reaching its peak in this period.¹²

New buildings were constructed to accommodate the recently created Mathematics department and to provide a much needed extension to the Faculty of Letters and

provided by Francesco Ceccarelli & Pier Luigi Cervellati, Da un palazzo a una città. La vera storia della moderna Università di Bologna, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1987.

¹¹ Ibid. p.161.

¹² Ibid. p.164.

Philosophy and the Faculty of Economics and Commerce. Bologna's importance as an international centre of learning was finally realised by the construction of the Italian centre for the Johns Hopkins University in via Belmeloro between 1959 and 1961, and many of the students who had come from the anti-Vietnam and civil rights campaigns in the United States supported their Italian colleagues in a rare act of cultural and political solidarity during the agitations at the University of Bologna.¹³

By the 1960s the urban congestion of the centro storico meant that space for expansion was severely limited and a scheme was adopted which would re-locate the scientific faculties to a green-field 'university park' in Ozzano Emilia 10 kilometres to the south-east of Bologna. The design for the campus was to be based loosely on the pavilion style adopted in the construction of the new University of York. However, by 1968 the planning authorities had 'suspended judgement' on the proposed university centre and in spite of the constantly increasing student numbers, the University of Bologna continued with its traditional practice of taking-over large palazzi in the area of San Donato and via Zamboni and converting them to didactic use as best it could.¹⁴ Ironically, had the science faculties been decentred as the Ozzano project recommended, the Institute of Physics would not have become such an important site for the political coordination of the Bolognese movement which we now

¹³ A poster at the time read, 'Vietnam. Guerra sbagliata? Oggi Martedì 5 Marzo' (1968) and in English and Italian it invited all students from the University of Bologna to, 'attend a discussion with american students of Johns Hopkins at 9pm', the poster was signed 'Comitato del Tet. Università di Johns Hopkins.' The text is reproduced in Marco Capponi (Ed), Studenti a Bologna 1967-1968, Istituto Gramsci Emilia-Romagna, Bologna, 1989, p.62. As we shall see in the final section of this chapter, Johns Hopkins radicals were also to play a part in the 'Movement of '77', but on this occasion they were demonised by local Communist leaders as CIA agents-provocateurs. Indeed some over-excited comrades suggested that Johns Hopkins had been established by the CIA to spy on and destabilise the PCI's 'show-case' city. See Salvatore Sechi, 'Il PCI: l'albero, la foresta e la nuova peste', Il Mulino, No.250, 1977, pp.274-302 and part three below.

¹⁴ Galligani, 'Gli insediamenti universitari a Bologna...' cit. p.182.

go on to examine in more detail.

2. The 'Movimento Studentesco' in Bologna, 1967-1970.

"Vogliamo parlare!": Between Movement and Institution.

'One should not present a piece of history in our country...as a location of existential or ideological memory of restricted privileged groups, of friends and acquaintances.'¹⁵ Capponi argued that this is what '68 was in danger of becoming with the spate of accounts of the 'lotta' by now famous and respectable intellectuals and politicians who felt safe enough with the idea of '68 as a personal, cultural and intellectual liberation to ignore the anti-materialist dimension of the protests of those years. According to Capponi it was not surprising that in this context the Bolognese student movement had been completely overlooked, even in the chronological reconstruction of the occupations, despite the fact that at that time the Bologna protests attracted national press attention.¹⁶

As Capponi suggests, this may have been because in Bologna the relationship between the student movement and the tradition of the workers' movement and its organisations was certainly more complex than elsewhere. In spite of the different paths which the protagonists of '68 took in succeeding years, Capponi argues that the leaders of the various groups at least retained a mass conception of the nature of political struggle. Another reason why Bologna differed from Trento or the Cattolica in Milan was that the leading groups in the student movement were not predominantly composed of bourgeois or petty-bourgeois exponents who had a Catholic and anti-

¹⁵ Marco Capponi, 'Dopo il "ventennale",' in Capponi (Ed), Studenti a Bologna 1967-1968, Istituto Gramsci Emilia-Romagna, Bologna, 1989, p.7.

¹⁶ L'Unità, 16th April, 1968 and Rinascita, No.46 22nd November, 1968 on the occupation of the Institute of Physics. There was also a long interview printed in Il Giorno of 10th March, 1968 with the occupying students of the Faculty of Medicine entitled, 'Un giornalista interroga l'assemblea degli occupanti.'

Communist family background. A significant part of the movement was made up of students who came from families with an experience of the workers' movement and many of their parents would have been participants in the great social movements of the 1940s and 1950s.¹⁷ This made for perhaps a more genuine encounter and solidarity between workers and students in the city, but as we shall discover later the political and economic conditions did not exist for the type of worker-student collaboration which characterised the 'Hot Autumn' in Turin or Milan where paradoxically the class and cultural differences between the two movements were much greater.

An attempt at dialogue.

The official representative body of the Bologna students was the ORUB (Organismo rappresentativo universitario bolognese) and in 1967 its representatives proposed the establishment of what was to be one of the first experiments in university democracy in Italy. Every faculty was to elect a number of 'consultative committees' composed of professors and students which would have the task of discussing university activities.¹⁸ Felice Battaglia who was still the rector of the university saw the initiative as a major turning-point, not only for Bologna but for the university system as a whole,

'What was the mother of Italian universities and which today accomodates 23,000 students is now the guinea-pig for the future.'¹⁹

It was the students' first taste of victory after months of sit-ins, strikes and demonstrations in support of a liberalisation of university life and teaching methods. At the time of the Pisan occupation, a number of Bologna students had taken part in

¹⁷ Capponi, cit. p.7.

¹⁸ Corrado Stajano, '1967 La crisi della rappresentanza' in Capponi (Ed) Studenti a Bologna, cit. p.10.

¹⁹ Ibid.

what the Senate saw as a scandalous act when the aula magna of the university was occupied in order to prevent the opening ceremony for the new academic year. The students declared that they wanted to, 'prevent this absurd ritual involving professors draped in ermine who are completely divorced from reality, and to make public opinion aware of our problems.' They described the academic senate as, 'Barons of power,' who, 'often hand-on their university chairs like an hereditary title. They are a caste that is frightened to lose privileges won over centuries of craveness. When they sit in an assembly it's sad to see even liberal men completely forget their own ideas and become an active part of a bureaucratic and backward organism.'²⁰

As an experienced university director and an accomplished diplomat, inspite of these insults and disruptions, Battaglia did not threaten sanctions or the police as other university rectors had done. Instead he addressed the students in a paternalist, almost indulgent manner. Using the language which readers of his journal Il Mulino would have been familiar with, Battaglia asserted that,

'The youth of today are knowledgable and mature. But during the strike they became cloudy and confused and they demanded absurd things.'

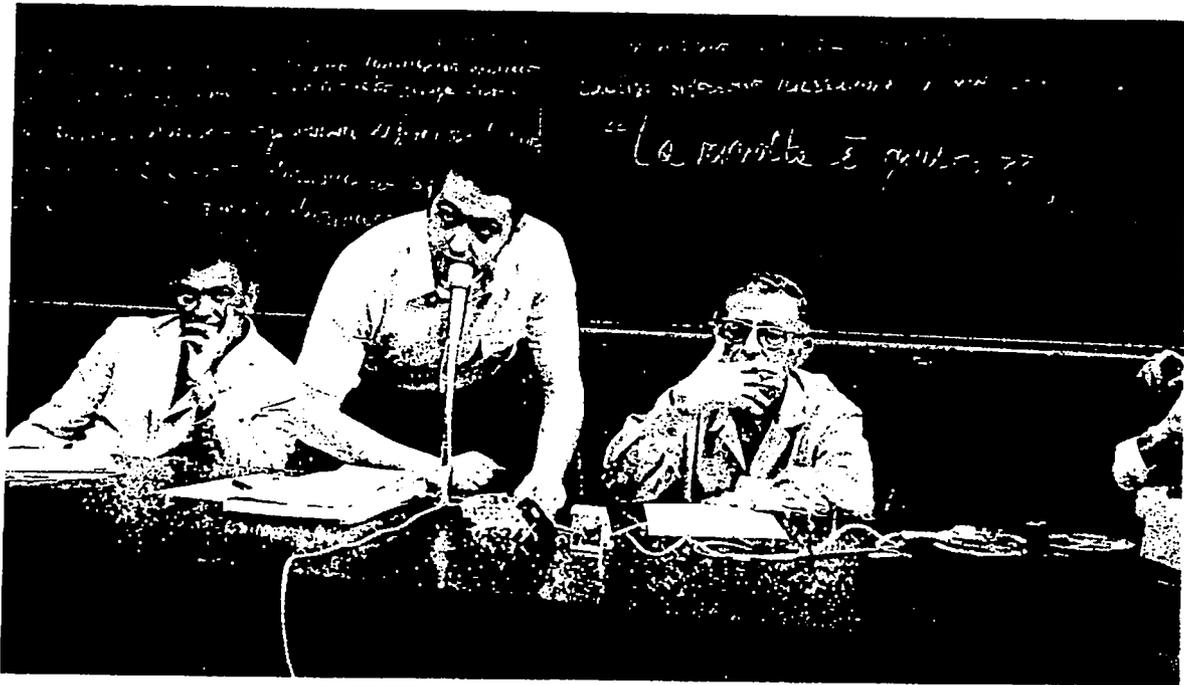
In turn, the protestors who had nothing but contempt for most of the conservative members of the Senate, had a good deal of respect for Battaglia and were prepared to listen to what he had to say. But in reply to the accusations of violence which had been levelled at them, the students replied that, 'Our violence is only born out of impotence and the fear that everything will carry on the way it is...we have been accused of aggressivity, but only through our provocations has something new developed.'²¹

Thus the consultative committees were seen as offering the possibility of a new climate of dialogue where the views of the student body would at last be taken

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

Jean-Paul Sartre at the occupation of the University of Bologna, 1968.



seriously. The committees were composed of 15 members each, and initially many students were enthusiastic about the prospects for the establishment of a real democratic structure in the university.²² But although the university representatives of all the main political parties described the committees as a positive experience, the movement was becoming increasingly suspicious of organised politics. As we saw in the case of the Pisan episode, the new generation of activists did not want anything to do with the student organisms of the political parties, and because of its party political domination ORUB was no longer seen as the representative body of the student body.²³ Battaglia's entire 'accommodationist' strategy looked like foundering, with the demise of ORUB as a corporate interlocutor, the university authorities were now faced with the prospect of several factions presenting different demands to the Senate and all claiming popular legitimacy.

Fisica Occupata! The struggle intensifies.

With the occupation of the 'Istituto di Fisica - A.Righi' on the 14th February', the student movement in Bologna entered a new and decisive phase. The decision to occupy was taken after the Senate had refused to recognise the movement politically and to grant it an autonomous status within the university.²⁴ The occupation of the Physics Faculty was to last seventy days and it became the focal point for the entire

²² The committees comprised 8 full professors, two junior professors, two associate lecturers, two students and one graduate technician. Almamater Medicina, 'Comitato Consultivo: che cosa é?', ciclostato, CLUEB, Bologna, 1967 in AIGER.

²³ A bulletin of the 'assemblea occupante di medicina' used the words of one of the right-wing members of the Senate to demonstrate its contempt for Battaglia's concept of 'co-gestione': 'It is an instrument of dialogue created by professors to persuade two students that they are wrong.' Medicina 8 giorno di occupazione, Marzo '68. Bollettino, 'O.R.U.B. Assemblea Occupante della facoltà di medicina - comitato consultivo', ciclostato, March, 1968, AIGER.

²⁴ 'L'Anti-Università', Qui Bologna, 2nd May, 1968, p.36.

'movimento studentesco' (M.S.) in Bologna.²⁵ Not only did the occupiers block the teaching programme, on the 22nd February they also managed to bring all research in the institution to a halt with the support of many of the institute's professors.²⁶ The resolve of the Physics students inspired similar forms of direct action in nearly all of the remaining faculties in the university and on the 7th March, a massive assembly of occupying students from six faculties met at the Istituto di Fisica and besieged the offices of rector Battaglia before heading for the city centre in one of many ritual 'encounters' with the cittadini.²⁷

Subsequent initiatives took many forms, in March a meeting on the problems of the university was held by the ARCI circle 'Cesarini' in the working-class quartiere of Bolognina and this provided an opportunity for students and local residents to discuss the reasons behind the protests. The day after a 'counter-course' was taught by the Black Power leader Dale Smith on 'The anti-imperialist struggle in American cities.'²⁸ Such 'counter-courses' were popular and attracted sympathetic junior

²⁵ By this time had it had become common to refer to the student movement as 'il M.S.' but it is important to distinguish this term for the movement as a whole from the specific group of Marxist-Leninists at the Statale University in Milan who were often in conflict with the student movement in other parts of Italy. Although they referred to themselves as 'Movimento Studentesco' they were effectively a tightly disciplined political party. All references to the M.S. in the remainder of the chapter refer to the student movement as a whole in Bologna and nationally. See Lumley, States of Emergency, cit. p.93.

²⁶ The academics of the Physics Institute were completely split over the occupation with some professors taking part in a 'counter-occupation' (which failed when they were thrown out by the occupiers) and sympathisers such as the vice-director Marcello Ceccarelli, who abandoned his chair and became one of the leading dissident voices in the movement. 'L'Anti-Università', Qui Bologna, cit.

²⁷ Capponi, cit. p.32.

²⁸ Ibid. p.32.

professors and even full professors as well as non-members of the university. Although they were on a much smaller scale, the 'contracorsi' resembled the 'free university' movement which was especially strong in Germany in this period, and they provided a prototype for a politicised form of open learning which was to develop from the 150 hours scheme.²⁹

The coordination of these activities and the political relations with the university authorities, as we noted previously were no longer being conducted through the machinery of the ORUB, as the faculty assemblies increasingly took on this representational function.³⁰ However these representational forms were not susceptible to the bureaucratic incorporation which had so endeared the ORUB to the Senate. The M.S. was very clear that the assemblies were not just an alternative forum for student participation, they were a living form of 'real' democracy which drew its inspiration from many sources including the Paris Comune of 1871 and the Cultural Revolution of Mao Tse-Tung.

'Each aspect of the Movement is to be found in the assemblies which are the only real challenge to the old élite representation, to bureaucratisation and to the intrusions of the parties. The assembly has thus developed...as an instrument for the immediate, even if violent, acquisition of political maturity by the student masses, a maturity which through the means of the occupations finds its realisation in a combative approach to political work and struggle.'³¹

A binary opposition within the assemblies soon became apparent and interestingly the conventional left/right dichotomy was replaced by a more complex opposition between the 'gauchisti' who included Communists, left-wing Catholics and independents, and

²⁹ See Capecechi, 150 ore, cit. on the use of the scheme in Emilia-Romagna.

³⁰ Even though its name was often attached to manifestos published by the M.S. by the spring of 1968 the ORUB had become no more than a 'rump parliament.'

³¹ Centro Franz Fanon, La miseria dell'università accademica. Per una storia recente del movimento bolognese, I documenti delle lotte studentesche, Bologna, 1968.

the so-called 'RR' or 'rivoluzione due volte' who saw the revolt of the universities merely as a precursor to a world-wide proletarian revolution. Both these factions were involved in organising the occupation of the Institute of Physics which was considered to be the 'diamond point' of the agitations. The leaders of the occupation reflected the political diversity of the movement; Capponi and Tommasi were leftist Catholics who were identified with 'gauchisti' such as Giorgini and Morigi, while the Communists La Forgia and Garibaldi took a more orthodox Party line.

Another feature of the student movement's creative opposition to the existing syllabus and teaching methodology was the 'working commissions' which were established in many faculties in order to examine a particular aspect of the function of the university.

The medical students were perhaps the most innovative in developing alternative approaches to their discipline, and a commission was formed by a number of occupying students in order to study the relationship between 'Medicine and Society'. The commission researched the extremely high rate of deaths from industrial accidents in Italy compared to the United States and other European countries and condemned Italian employers' contempt for health and safety at work. It also wrote special reports on 'occupational diseases' such as silicosis and the role which the doctor was expected to play in contemporary capitalist society which was described as being that of 'the mechanic of the human body'.³² However, the most significant initiative which the medical students undertook in the field of community medicine was the first and perhaps the most significant encounter between the student movement and the local workforce.

³² Capponi, cit. p.32. Lumley describes a similar critique of the medical profession in his study of the university occupations in Milan. See Lumley, States of Emergency, cit. p.111.

The <<Pancaldi>> Occupation and the Student Movement in Bologna.

On 6th June, 1968, 450 women workers from the Pancaldi textile factory went on strike to demand better pay and conditions. Having failed to induce the management to begin negotiations on their claim, the workers then occupied the factory on 19th June. The 'pancaldine' (as the women referred to themselves) promised to carry on an 'unlimited' strike until the 'accelerated rhythms' of the conveyor belt were slowed down and the appalling health and safety conditions in the factory were improved. The lack of a factory canteen also meant that the women did not have time to eat a proper meal in the 55 minutes which were available for lunch and they made the construction of a purpose built 'mensa' a condition for their return to work.³³

The Pancaldi workers were among the most exploited of Bologna's industrial workforce and their low pay and poor conditions had everything to do with the fact that they were women employed in an industry where trade union organisation was traditionally weak and ineffective. The very fact that the women had managed to organise a unified strike with very little outside help made the Pancaldi occupation even more significant than the 'contract strikes' which took place in the larger Bolognese factories such as Ducati, Weber, Sabiem, and AMF-SASIB in the following year, and as we shall see, the Pancaldi workers acted as an inspiration for the strikes that were to follow.

Once news of the occupation spread, the plethora of banners and posters which sprouted from the windows and balconies of the factory offered an eloquent testimony to the solidarity which existed between the strikers and the constellation of old and new social movements of the province. Together with the official trade union banner (CISL-CGIL-UIL *Le operaie della Pancaldi occupano la loro fabbrica*) there was another from the 'Coop di consumo di Castelmaggiore' which offered, 'solidarietà con le operaie della Pancaldi' a sentiment which was echoed by 'La Coop la libertà', 'Le maestranze AMF-SASIB' and 'Gli operai ditta Donini.' There were also more

³³ 'La Pancaldi occupata - La carica delle 400', Qui Bologna, 4th July, 1968.

poignant messages from the strikers themselves such as, 'Siamo giovani vogliamo più libertà' (We're young, we want more freedom) and 'Con 60,000 lire non si vive' (You can't live on 60,000 lire a month). Interestingly, the M.S. banner which declared 'Operai gli studenti sono con voi' used the masculine form of the noun for workers whereas the 'reformist' established social movements had at least recognised that this was an all female dispute.³⁴

But the M.S. did not simply limit itself to symbolic gestures. A group of medical students from the 'movimento giovanile comunista' decided to make a more practical contribution to the strike by carrying out a health survey on 107 workers at the factory. The results seemed to confirm the findings of the 'Medicine and Society' commission on work-related illnesses and the survey found that 61 women complained of digestive problems, 60 suffered from muscular pain because of uncomfortable working positions or tiredness, 57 claimed to have suffered from weight loss, 64 experienced violent headaches and 10 had experienced nervous attacks.³⁵

This spontaneous initiative on behalf of the medical students attracted more publicity for the Pancaldi workers and it helped to raise the profile of the dispute within the various trade union organisations. One month after the beginning of the occupation, FILTEA-CGIL, FILTA-CISL, UILA-UIL had agreed a common platform of demands to present to the company management which included an increase in the value of piece-rate work, an end to re-grading (which was seen as a means of discriminating against women who complained about working conditions), an additional meal allowance pending the construction of a factory canteen, the creation of a joint-technical committee on health and safety, and full accident and sickness insurance for all workers.³⁶

³⁴ Although since one of strikers' own banners referred to themselves as 'giovani' the gendering of the collective subject had perhaps less significance than it was to have in the 1970s.

³⁵ Qui Bologna, 4th July, 1968, cit.

³⁶ Qui Bologna, 25th July, 1968.

After a further period of occupation and negotiation, the dispute was eventually settled when the Pancaldi management promised to improve working conditions and to look into better shift arrangements. It was a victory for the new 'direct' forms of industrial action, but as we shall see in part two, as with other trade disputes during the 'autunno bolognese' the settlement of the dispute was achieved through conventional trade union channels and if anything it was the trade union organisations themselves rather than 'shop-floor democracy' that benefited from the strike.³⁷

The Pancaldi occupation had been the first major strike in Bologna to unite the new working subjects (unmarried young women) with the protagonists of the new social movements, and while there was nothing consciously feminist in the way that the dispute was conducted, the foregrounding of issues such as women's health, child care (which was to be taken up by women workers at 'Ducati-Electronica' in the early 1970s³⁸) and wage and employment discrimination (low-pay, part-time and temporary employment, and poor or non-existent pension and insurance provision) confirmed the

³⁷ This point is born out fully in Lumley's analysis of the participation of women workers in the 'Hot Autumn' in Milan, '..women workers tended not to be regular members of the unions, but were often the most angry and intransigent during mobilisations. With the return to 'normality', the women workers tended once more to delegate decision-making to the male organisers.' *States of Emergency*, cit. p.259.

³⁸ M. Jaeggi, R. Mueller, S. Schmid, *Bologna rossa. I comunisti al governo di una città*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1977, pp.65-68; 'Le operaie della Ducati', *Lotta Continua*, Year II, No.7, 11th March, 1970, p.15. The latter article describes how the assembly lines were staffed almost exclusively by women workers who often worked ten hour shifts. The company 'nursery' was no more than a disused building which was supervised by older women who had no child care training. Because of the unsafe surroundings and the lack of facilities, the Ducati women staged a successful stike in 1974 which resulted in the construction of a purpose-built nursery in Borgo Panigale which the comune provided with the company's financial support.

emergence of women as key protagonists in the 'contestazione' of this period.³⁹ It is important therefore to look at how, and more importantly if, this consciousness was manifested within the university itself.

Women's Liberation and '68 in Bologna

In chapter one we saw how the female protagonists of the social movements of the 1940s and 1950s were predominantly working-class women who took part in strikes and demonstrations for land, for decent pay and conditions, and for peace. These movements had a measure of autonomy, but they nevertheless remained 'collateral' organisations within the mondo comunista, and it was from this working-class tradition that notions of female emancipation were first articulated, as Victoria De Grazia writes,

'Insofar as it actively promoted the rapid and pervasive changes in custom and culture following in the wake of the economic miracle of the 1950s and 1960s, the Left it could be argued, fulfilled the historical role of bourgeois feminism by modernizing the status of women. In the process, the stage was set for the neofeminist associationalism of the early 1970s; its precedents were not so much early twentieth-century feminist as post-1968 American liberationist.'⁴⁰

But in Emilia at least there was an indigenous 'emancipatory' tradition which revealed itself in the Resistance heritage of partisan women martyrs such as Irma Bandiera. It

³⁹ Lumley writes, 'Women's wages were on average 12% lower than those of men, while 67% of women as opposed to 23% of male workers were in the lowest grades.' States of Emergency, cit. p.326. This observation is born out by the example of women assembly workers at Ducati who were on the lowest salary grade (4^a) unlike male colleagues performing identical tasks, 'Le operaie della Ducati', Lotta Continua, Year II, No.7, 11th March, 1970.

⁴⁰ Cited in Lumley, States of Emergency, cit. p.315.

was an ambiguous tradition because the spirit of sacrifice and courage which women partisans characterised were conventionally male traits, and this image sat uncomfortably with the conventional gender roles of wife and mother which organisations like UDI continued to promote.

As we saw in chapter one, UDI was assigned the task of repulsing the ideological offensive which the Church and the DC were launching on the 'free-love' and 'divorce supporting' parties of the Left. UDI therefore came to be seen as a secular rival to Azione Cattolica and increasingly concentrated its efforts on charitable and voluntary activities. Judith Adler Hellman provides an interesting example of how a woman active in UDI in Emilia-Romagna was expected to combine different roles so that, if anything the traditional role of the Italian housewife was reinforced rather than challenged by her association with the PCI:

'...a reggiana might attend a women's meeting at the party section on a Monday night, pass the better part of Wednesday involved as "a concerned neighbourhood figure" in a community effort to establish a day-care centre in a quartiere, and spend all day Friday with other women from the UDI circolo mincing up the ham, cheese, and pork, and rolling and twisting the dough, to form tortellini for sale to raise funds for the organisation.'

'Analysing the form of activism practised throughout Emilia-Romagna, a UDI woman from Bologna wrote that this pattern represented "simply another aspect of women's double role".'⁴¹

It was this double role of good comrade and dutiful mother and daughter which even the most 'politicised' women students found it difficult to shake off. This was not surprising given a family sub-culture in which, according to Kertzer, even a female PCI activist could lament the attitude of many Communist wives who declined a

⁴¹ Judith Adler Hellman, Journeys Among Women. Feminism in Five Italian Cities, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1987, pp.117-118.

tessera of their own because, 'my husband deals with that.'⁴²

Unlike the United States where women's liberation and Black Power were two strong (if often conflicting) aspects of the movement of '68, in Italy as Sidney Tarrow argues, women were often 'the secret agents of protest' and were, 'disparagingly referred to as angels of the mimeograph machine.'⁴³ The authors of Donna o cosa? wrote that,

'...the criticism of the capitalist system which was sustained by the student movement and the new left groups failed to really examine the position of women, and in this sense they rehearsed the roles and games which were characteristic of the social organisations which we were trying to fight...'⁴⁴

This is not surprising if we consider that despite the reforms of 1961 and 1965 women continued to be under-represented in the student body and even more so among the lecturing staff. Of the women who studied for degrees in Italian universities, the overwhelming majority were from middle-class and professional family backgrounds. It was from this social milieu that the first 'neofeminista' groups came, and although they took their inspiration from the women's movement in the United States and Britain, the two main centres of early Italian feminism, Milan and Rome, varied considerably in their conception of women's liberation and in their relationship to the student and workers' movement.⁴⁵ Such groups were small and socially restricted in

⁴² Quoted in Ginsborg, cit. p.367.

⁴³ Tarrow, Democracy and Disorder, cit. p.99, Lumley, States of Emergency, cit. p.313.

⁴⁴ Maria Linda Odorisio, Anna Rossi Doria, Lucetta Scaraffia, Monica Turi, Donna o cosa? Storia dei movimenti femminili in Italia dal 1860 ad oggi, Edizioni Milvia, Turin, 1986, p.184.

⁴⁵ Camilla Ravera, Breve storia del movimento femminile in Italia, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1979, p.251.

the 1960s and it was a number of years before a 'women's movement' could be said to have established itself in Italy. Although the M.S. had helped to develop the 'spirit of struggle', it was issues like the divorce referendum in the early 1970s and later the campaign to legalise abortion which brought the constellation of local women's groups together under a national movement.⁴⁶

For young women in Bologna and many other Italian cities, '68 and the 'Hot Autumn' was a time for questioning the role which women were expected to fill in a society undergoing great economic and cultural transformations where traditional values were coming under sustained attack by the M.S. and the new left. Increasingly the family was identified as a primary site of oppression, particularly since even the most hardened activists went home in the evening to a nourishing 'pastasciutto' which their mother had prepared for them and which they had to eat under the often disapproving gaze of the capo famiglia.⁴⁷

Thus the acquisition of what might be called 'feminist consciousness' came from the life experience of women who aspired to more than the holy status of wife and mother. A revealing 'autoritratto' of a high school teacher M. Teresa provides an example of the obstacles which young women from working-class families faced in fulfilling their ambition to go to university. She describes her shock at learning that her father did not want her to continue schooling beyond the 'terza media' because 'women are destined to marry and the school diploma will just lie in the drawer,' besides which, 'the expense of it all was not insignificant.' Her father refused to allow her to go to the 'liceo scientifico' which would take too long, but she was allowed to attend the 'magistrale' where the course was much shorter (and less valued) leading to a qualification, 'which would provide the chance of finding a job

⁴⁶ Ibid. pp.252-253.

⁴⁷ This conflict between the public and the private realm of the young student activist is brilliantly if rather eclectically explored in Jean-Luc Godard's film, La Chinoise. A confessedly partisan account of Godard's representation of the movement of '68 is to be found in David Cauter, Sixty-Eight. The year of the Barricades, cit. pp.228-231.

suitable for a woman.’ Unusually for someone from her background, M. Teresa was still not married after she obtained her ‘maturita’ and she did farm work and gave lessons in order not to be too much of a burden on the family when she came to enroll at the University of Bologna.⁴⁸

M. Teresa would like to have studied physics, but because attendance was compulsory her father vetoed the idea because, ‘it is not nice for girls to be away from home too much.’ Her father suggested ‘Lettere’ instead because it would, ‘allow her to look after the house and her family’ while she studied. The day after she graduated M. Teresa married and soon she had two children and was working as a teacher in one of the outlying towns of the province. Returning to the city she found a job in a secondary school where her relationship with the students became increasingly difficult. They demanded more variety in lessons and better teaching methods but even though she ‘felt increasingly guilty’ she was unable to give the time to studying alternative methods and discussing new ideas with her colleagues because of her family responsibilities and the large amount of marking and preparation she was already obliged to undertake.

M. Teresa’s story was typical of many women who went through the university system and although they found jobs which had the potential to be interesting and stimulating, the nature of the ‘double role’ which Hellman’s informant identified meant that the new opportunities and personal development which the university expansion of the late 1960s promised was often not fulfilled. Indeed the by now manifest contradictions of the ‘boom economico’ which had fuelled the protests among the university students were equally apparent to the new generation of high school students who as we learnt from M. Teresa’s testimony were becoming increasingly disgruntled and angry. As the ‘movimento studentesco’ in the university began to run out of steam at the end of 1968, it was the high school students who took up the call

⁴⁸ ‘La femminilizzazione della scuola. Storia di M. Teresa’ discussion paper, ‘Gruppo di delegate all’interno del congresso provinciale del CGIL-SCUOLA’, ciclostato, Bologna, circa 1972, AIGER.

for a radical transformation of the education system and the capitalist organisation of Italian society. In the following section we encounter some of the protagonists of the 'movimento della scuola' in Bologna and examine the motives for their protests.

The Movement in the Secondary Schools

In November, 1968, the Communist Party's theoretical journal, Rinascita, published an article entitled, 'I figli di Bologna. La più giovane leva della lotta di classe.' The article discussed the 'student tidal wave which has now overcome the secondary schools.' The article was important not only because of the historical insight it gave on the student movement in Bologna but also because it shed light on the PCI's relationship to the new social movements of the late 1960s. Indeed the leader of the ITIS technical school occupation, Mauro Moruzzi, went on to become a PCI assessore for health in the Imbeni administration of the 1980s and at the time when Rinascita interviewed him was already an active member of the FCGI.⁴⁹

Moruzzi criticised the journal's enquiry because it risked becoming in his words, 'a little sociological.' When asked why he had reservations about its sociological criteria he replied that, 'there's a risk...of looking for the reason for a mass movement in the personal reactions of single individuals. In fact the reasons lie in the usual social contradictions.'⁵⁰ Moruzzi emphasised the point by arguing that, 'Today these movements are exploding not so much because an organisation has developed but because the contradictions of the system have become more acute. For me the

⁴⁹ Rinascita, 22nd November, 1968, No.46, pp.13-15.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.* The student movement's critique of sociology as a bourgeois and reactionary science because of its perceived positivist, 'pseudo-scientific' bias was most famously formulated by Daniel Cohn-Bendit and the students of Nanterre in Paris in the same year. However, it is likely that Moruzzi was also articulating a traditional Communist hostility to a social science which in Bologna was most closely associated with the Catholic world. See chapters 2 and 3 above.

greatest contradiction which is pushing the students into conflict is authoritarianism, that is the profound contradiction of an 'imposed culture'.

But for all his contempt for sociological enquiry, Moruzzi displayed a keen sociological awareness of why the contemporary generation of high school students had begun to resist the authoritarian culture of the academy, 'Today the unemployed technician is a common feature of our schools⁵¹...and they have influenced the way we've been taught...even if (the teaching methodology) in the schools is still very closed.'⁵²

The following year, Rinascita asked a round table of activists for their assessment of the year's activity by the school students. Once again Moruzzi was interviewed and he admitted 'that in the third term the movement (at least in Bologna) had entered a crisis stage because, 'it did not know how to define its own strategical argument within the school.' But although the movement in the licei had begun to contract, in the technical schools and institutes which had a more direct contact with the working world a direct relationship was beginning to be established and the movement was also spreading to the middle schools.⁵³

Although the students of the scuole medie could not have been older than 16, they were as well versed in the proto-situationist language of the new revolutionary groups as any of the protagonists of the M.S. This could be seen on the cover of the Bologna middle-schools' bulletin Ideogramma which featured an auto-ironic endless telegramme styled in the manner of the Ministry of the Interior and Il Resto del

⁵¹ Because of the Education Ministry's preference for 'substitute teachers' who were cheaper than full time teachers, many university graduates who were unable to find employment in their vocational fields registered as supply teachers and were able to find occasional work in the local high schools and technical colleges.

⁵² Rinascita, 22nd November, 1968, cit.

⁵³ 'Tavola rotonda di "Rinascita". Bilancio di un anno di lotta nelle scuole' Rinascita, No.25, 20th June, 1969, p.4.

Carlino, the right-wing Bolognese daily. The article lampooned the images of the 'poor, self-sacrificing working class family' which was portrayed in the bourgeois press and the handful of 'hooligans' who were depriving all the other 'ragazzi per bene' of a decent education.⁵⁴

As the local media (Il Resto del Carlino and the RAI) began increasingly to describe the activists in the secondary schools and technical colleges as 'teppisti', some of the leaders of the school revolt (and in particular the editors of Ideogramma) took a much more hostile line to the educational and political establishment. The editorial talked of 'refusing petty bourgeois legality' and of 'making a conscious choice for illegalism' but it denied that the movement used violence as an end in itself. Like the M.S., the secondary school movement became much more closely identified with operaista politics and it identified the same sort of oppression and class selection in the classroom as in the factory. 'For this reason,' the editorial argued, 'our movement will begin to grow from the moment when we succeed in joining it with the struggle of the working class through the refusal of bourgeois legality.'⁵⁵

The Aldini-Valeriani technical institute even developed a comprehensive plan for the creation of 'Comitati di Base' which not only drew its inspiration from factory organisations in Italy but was also based on similar initiatives in French 'lycées'.⁵⁶ The revolutionary bulletin of the 'Righi' technical college, Rottura, argued that the movement could not continue with an all out plan of confrontation through strikes and sit-ins, rather what was needed was the creation of a different culture inside the school itself which would contest the subordinate role the school's graduates were expected to play in the division of labour.

Even the FGCI had been affected by this anarcho-syndicalist atmosphere which

⁵⁴ Ideogramma, ciclostato, February 1969 in AIGER.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Their French equivalents were called, 'Comités d'action lycéen'. On the revolt of the lycées in France see David Cauter, cit. pp.197-198.

prevailed in the secondary schools and Moruzzi proudly revealed to Rinascita that, 'a link between the students of the technical colleges has been made with the young apprentices and groups of workers with meetings being held even inside the city's larger factories.'⁵⁷

The movement in the high schools was also beginning to link its demands to those of the working class as a whole and demanded a minimum wage within the school. Taking their cue from the university students, the technical institute students jointly produced a newspaper with the workers of the local FIAT factory.⁵⁸ But when the Rinascita journalists put the Bologna experience into its national context, it became apparent that the Emilian capital was 'ahead of' other cities. In the rest of Italy, the school student movement had actually begun in the high schools rather than the technical colleges and this perhaps reflected the fact that in Bologna the licei were overwhelmingly populated with young middle class students many of whom took a 'qualunquista' or openly right-wing attitude to the disruptions.

However, the participation of high schools such as the 'Liceo Minghetti' and 'Fermi' proved that the 'second wave' of the student movement was inundating all sectors of the Bologna secondary system and it was a significantly more protracted and generalised struggle than that of the by-now diminishing university movement.⁵⁹ It has been important to analyse the ideological formation of these young militants because it was from the secondary school movement rather than the university that the

⁵⁷ 'Tavola rotonda di "Rinascita". Bilancio di un anno di lotta nelle scuole', Rinascita, No.25, 20th June, 1969, p.4.

⁵⁸ The factory produced tractors and agricultural vehicles, but even for Bologna it was quite a small employer.

⁵⁹ The journal of the 'Liceo Minghetti' was called Per l'azione di massa (ciclostato, Bologna, February, 1969 AIGER), and it also made the by now familiar call for antifascist class action uniting students and workers in a common struggle.

protagonists in the violent mass protests of March 1977 were to come.⁶⁰ We will examine the Movement of '77 in some detail in the concluding chapter, but in the following pages we now turn to consider the attitude of Bologna's ruling party towards the student movement on the local and national level.

3. The PCI's response to the 'movimento studentesco' and the spread of the movement beyond the university.

Introduction

The 12th Party Congress of the PCI was held in Bologna in January 1969.⁶¹ The delegates who assembled in the Palazzo dello Sport were conscious that the Party would need to work hard to overcome its perceived silent endorsement of the invasion of Czechoslovakia (which was described by Longo as 'an error') and to persuade the new generation who had taken part in the university protests of the previous year that the PCI was capable of supporting a social movement which was not under its direct control. Both inside and outside the Party there was a feeling that the PCI could not remain detached from what was perceived as a world-wide libertarian, anti-imperialist, and anti-authoritarian movement in which young people were playing a determining role.

⁶⁰ One of the most charismatic future 'leaders' of the movement of '77 in Bologna Franco Berardi (Bifo) had already risen to fame as a young coordinator of the 'studenti medi di Movimento Studentesco' and he formed the subject of an article entitled 'Con Biffo si passa. Necessario un 'visto' per accedere al Congresso degli studenti medi', Qui Bologna, 17th October, 1968. The article assured its readers that it was enough to say you were a friend of Biffo (sic) in order to be admitted to the meeting in the occupied Faculty of Medicine which local fascists had threatened to disrupt.

⁶¹ Significantly Bologna was to be the venue for the 19th and last PCI Congress which was also held in the Palazzo dello Sport, that great monument to the administration of Giuseppe Dozza.

Inspired by the student and worker protests of the last two years and the success of the anti-imperialist struggle in Vietnam, a group of leftist radicals who had established a small but influential following within the Party came to Bologna to present a programme which was openly critical of the official Party policy in a number of important areas. The PCI's 'Gang of Four' were Lucio Magri, Rossana Rossanda, Luigi Pintor and Aldo Natoli and collectively they were to become known as the 'Manifesto group.'⁶² Although the Manifesto leadership were expelled from the PCI later in the year, Bologna proved to be one of the most important centres for Communist dissent in the years that followed and the supporters of Manifesto were to play leading parts in the 'contestazione bolognese.'⁶³

As we have seen, the 'Prague Spring' and the war in Vietnam had absorbed the Communist rank-and-file, and 'lo spirito di lotta' even found its way onto the congress platform. However the mistake that Rossanda and Pintor made was to assume that this new atmosphere of 'openness' included the tolerance of hostile criticism of the Soviet Union and the Socialist countries. But if any criticism was to be made of the CPSU and its sister parties in Eastern Europe it could not take the openly hostile form that the Manifesto group had favoured and any talk of a breach (or 'strappo') was strictly ruled out by the Party leadership.

Berlinguer, who had already effectively succeeded Longo as party leader in 1969, was keen to stress his commitment to existing policy goals while at the same time responding to demands for a more interventionary role for the Party which did not rely exclusively on the 'parliamentary road.' In line with the traditional 'via italiana' strategy adopted at the 8th Party Congress, Berlinguer insisted on the primacy of political alliances although he was willing to give the new social movements access to the 'historic block' which he saw emerging in opposition to the crisis-ridden Italian

⁶² Amyot, cit. p.177. On the formation of the Manifesto group, see Bogdan Denitch, 'The Rebirth of Spontaneity: Il Manifesto and West European communism' Politics and Society, Vol.1, No.4, August 1971, pp.463-477.

⁶³ See part two below.

state.

'We must...succeed in connecting and uniting the more radical tendencies to the movement of the great masses, creating a fusion of revolutionaries, progressives, and democrats; we must develop and consolidate the alliance of the working class with the masses of peasant smallholders, with the urban middle strata, with the intellectuals.'⁶⁴

Berlinguer's position differed sharply from that of Giorgio Amendola who in June 1968 had called for a fight on two fronts, 'which meant counterposing the patrimony "accumulated by us over tens of years of hard struggles" to dangerous student extremism.'⁶⁵ The Communist members of Bologna University did not follow Amendola's advice, but they had to walk a tightrope between the demands of the Party and the hostility of the M.S. towards organised politics.

A motion put to the regional congress of the Emilia-Romagna PCI at the end of March, 1968 by the university section of the Party threw into relief the difficulties which Communist activists faced in reconciling their presence in the movement with the Party's desire to 'institutionalise' and contain the conflict. The refusal of the university authorities' offer of 'cogestione' had by now become, 'an acid test for the political struggle in the university of Bologna.' The university Communists' analysis of the student movement agreed that no single reform of the higher educational sector could solve the contradictions between the free pursuit of knowledge and the intellectual expropriation and the intellectual and professional 'formation' which

⁶⁴ Ibid. p.178.

⁶⁵ Giorgio Amendola, 'Necessità della lotta su due fronti', *Rinascita*, No.23, 7th June 1968; quoted in Lumley, cit. p.74. The architect of 'rinnovamento' in Emilia carried on one-man battle against the student movement, but his lieutenants did not share his attitude towards the M.S. and neither did *L'Unità* which 'carried out a struggle on one front only, and hardly a critical remark was made about student politics'; Amyot, cit. .175.

capital required in order to maintain its system of accumulation and control over its processes and organisations.⁶⁶ However this did not mean that the FGCI and PCI activists in the Bologna student movement had somehow 'gone native' by accepting all the theoretical repertoire of the M.S.

The Party was careful not to alienate the M.S. by appearing intent on taking a directional role over its activities (particularly after the effective demise of the ORUB), and the PCI's university representatives insisted that relations with the movement must not be conducted on an instrumental basis. In the conference document, the University Section repeatedly asserted that the movement must decide for itself the objectives of the struggle and its own internal organisation, but given the fact that the Communists were hardly a majority inside the movement this was not such a magnanimous gesture.

Where the University Communists did differ from their extraparliamentary comrades was in their interpretation of the status of the student subject. In the PCI categorisation, the 'studente di massa' was not the Marcusian 'new proletariat' of the Pisan Theses but was rather seen as, 'the supplier of the social leisure which has in fact been made possible by the working class.' It followed therefore that 'the battle of the student movement is an internal battle within the dominant class and the issues at stake are of a bourgeois-democratic nature...' Condemning the Marcusian monolithism of M.S. neo-Marxist theory, the Communists insisted that it should not be the aim of the movement to develop a strategy for its own evolution but instead, 'greater effort should be put into the training of intellectual political cadres capable of linking up with the working class outside the formal apparatus of the Party in a Leninist type relationship.'

The document argued that it was important that these intellectual cadres did not attempt to impose too mechanical a concept of revolutionary struggle on the working

⁶⁶ 'Mozione approvate al Congresso Regionale Comunista, Bologna, 30-31st March, 1968', ciclostato, AIGER.

class and that militants should be constantly adapting to the changing patterns of domination in contemporary capitalism. However, it is difficult to see how autonomy from the party apparatus could be reconciled with a Leninist concept of revolutionary politics and it seemed as if all that the young Communist students and intellectuals were advocating was a type of born-again Bolshevism or 'neo-Leninism.'

Despite what was seen as the bourgeois and potentially reactionary nature of the M.S., the PCI's University Section urged the conference to support the movement's demands for political autonomy and called for the official recognition of the faculty assemblies and the guarantee of rights to political expression and organisation within the Ateneo. The document argued that the Communist Party was faced with a choice between an instrumentalist/solidaristic approach which had no chance of succeeding, or it could use the energy and idealism of the movement to launch a great crusade for the political and social transformation of the country. If the Party chose the second option it would not only be in a position, 'to ensure the hegemony of Communist students within the movement, which it would be impossible to achieve under other circumstances,' but also it could ensure, 'the hegemony of the proletariat over the student movement.'⁶⁷

These contradictions between the advocacy of political autonomy and organisational freedom on the one hand, and the need for the student movement to be subordinated to the 'hegemony of the proletariat' on the other, can be seen in the national strategy of the PCI which regarded the student movement as an important feature of its great anti-monopolist crusade for the structural reform of Italian society.

The Student Movement seen from Rome

Several months after the Bologna regional conference, the PCI held a special conference at Ariccia on the theme of 'The Workers' Movement and the Student

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Movement.' Here delegates were told that the crisis of the universities was only one of the features of the general crisis of the Italian state and contemporary capitalism, and it was important not to over-estimate the student movement's scope or importance. Although the M.S. had provided an important focus for the collective discontent which existed in Italian society, the movement only had a political significance in so far as it identified itself with the demands of the organised working class. One of the main problems for the PCI was the student movement's vulnerability to 'instrumental' manipulation which threatened its internal democracy and political autonomy. This was simply a coded complaint against the increasing influence of extraparliamentary left-wing groups over the movement whose attitude towards the PCI ranged from indifference to outright contempt.⁶⁸

In contrast to the regional conference in Bologna, the conference was told that the construction of a movement with clear objectives for the transformation of Italian society can only come about if the PCI assumes its responsibilities of leadership over that movement. But the PCI hierarchy refused to be goaded into explaining what was precisely revolutionary in the Communists' programme of 'structural reforms'. For example Reichlin declared that, 'There is no point in explaining from an abstract or doctrinaire point of view what structural reforms are,' unless this is done in an attempt to analyse what is original in the student movement's political forms of expression.⁶⁹ Delegates were encouraged to see the student and workers movements as a feature of the development of a new historic block which would transport the working class onto a higher level of class relations, but it was still too premature to define the new class relationships which would emerge from this conjuncture.

⁶⁸ Gianfranco Camboni & Danilo Samsa, PCI e movimento degli studenti 1968-1973, De Donato, Bari, 1975, p.12. The conference was held between 29th November and 1st December.

⁶⁹ See A. Reichlin, Dieci anni di politica meridionale, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1974, p.160 cited in Camboni & Samsa *ibid.* p.15.

Achille Occhetto⁷⁰ was the first to address the conference and in his opening speech he made an explicit reference to the experience of the May revolt in France and asserted that, 'when ten million workers strike and paralyse the entire economy of a country it is time to develop new forms of participation in the factories and in every sector occupied by the masses in order to prevent repression and to raise the political and class conflict onto a higher level.'⁷¹ However, Occhetto's astonishing support for the spontaneous growth of 'self-management' inspired movements in France (which were incidentally strongly condemned by the fiercely orthodox PCF) and Italy was an overstatement of his Party's real position as Occhetto himself confessed in an interview with Walter Veltroni ten years after.

Because Ariccia was one of the very few conferences where leading Communists and exponents of the M.S. met and openly debated the nature of the struggle, Occhetto admitted that there was a temptation to try to overcome the scepticism of the non-Communist participants by being 'excessively open' towards the movement. The majority of delegates to the conference regarded Occhetto's position as something of a 'Trojan Horse' strategy which the PCI intended to use to assert its hegemony over the movement. Occhetto admitted that they were right to harbour this suspicion,

⁷⁰ After he was elected to the leadership of the FGCI in 1962, Amyot argues that, '...Occhetto and his group developed a line that was considerably to the left of the PCI's position and similar to Ingrao's on many points...' Occhetto also, 'took up Ingrao's ideas on direct democracy and the new model of development, with a particular emphasis on the role of worker's councils.' Yet in his speech to the XIth Congress of the PCI Occhetto condemned factionalism and, '...agreed with Lombardi that the left should unite on an advanced democratic programme, not a socialist one.' This was a measure of the extent of Occhetto's conversion to the official line of the Party and his scepticism about the dangerously Bordigan idea of worker democracy. Grant Amyot, The Italian Communist Party, cit. pp.166-167. A discussion of the Bologna PCI's attitude to workers' councils is provided in the second part of the chapter.

⁷¹ Camboni & Samsa, PCI e movimento degli studenti, cit.

'I can say that effectively it was a Trojan Horse, the aim was to make the experience of the movement develop in the wake of the Italian road to socialism and our strategy for structural reforms...We tried at the time to bring the movements into the area of the reform strategy.'⁷²

But there was also an explicit disavowal of the traditional Leninist party model insofar as the 'autonomy' of the movement was privileged over the regulating function of the democratic party. 'This went back,' argued Occhetto, 'to our vision of a non-centralised, non-bureaucratic socialist society, which does not replicate the power of the party...it is a conception of socialism founded on direct participation, characterised by new forms of democracy which are capable of entering into relationships with forms of delegated democracy.'⁷³

At ten years distance from 1968 Occhetto seemed to be arguing that the encouragement of 'direct democracy' was the PCI's greatest contribution to the mass movements of the 1960s. However, as we saw in chapter five, the municipal reform initiatives which the giunta comunale introduced in Bologna in the 1960s were thoroughly institutionalised moments of democratic innovation. There was no trace of the 'council communism' promoted by Marxist groups such as Manifesto and Lotta Continua in the first or second phases of decentralisation in Bologna, and decentralisation could hardly have formed part of an alliance strategy if there were.

Fundamentally, the 'New Left' which emerged out of the collective protests of '68 and the 'Hot Autumn' were not interested even in Ingrao's utopian vision of seizing the comuni as 'red bases' from which to conduct a 'bottom-up' struggle for radical socialism.

Instead, the intellectual and political effort of the extra-parliamentary groups was directed at realising the multifaceted idea of 'worker-democracy' which had been

⁷² Acille Occhetto, A dieci anni del '68. Intervista di Walter Veltroni, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1978, p.90.

⁷³ Ibid. p.91.

generated through workplace organisations such as the *Comitati di Base* (CUBs) and the 'delegates' councils' (*consigli dei delegati*). In part two we chart the development of the workers' movement in Bologna during the time of the 'maggio strisciante' (the stretched-out May) and examine some of the contradictions in the 'Emilian model' and the Communist Party's attitude to industrial unrest which the conflict exposed.

Part II. The Workers' Movement in Bologna 1968-1973.

1. From the Faculty to the Factory: Operaismo and the M.S.

The 'commissione "operai-studenti"' at the University of Bologna produced a bulletin in December 1968 which attacked the view of a certain part of the student movement that the workers' struggles were but one element in the general youth and anti-imperialist revolt. 'On the contrary,' the document argued, 'the student struggle must now insert itself in an organic and effective way within the general dynamic of the class struggle as part of this class struggle...'⁷⁴

In contrast to the neo-Leninist strategy of the Young Communists, the 'commissione "operai-studenti"' insisted that the 'movimento studentesco' should not send isolated groups of cadres to agitate within the workers' movement but instead it should 'present itself as a mass movement.' Relations between students and workers should be conducted through faculty discussion groups and factory cells in order to maintain the 'mass' nature of worker-student collaboration, while the discussion material would be furnished by revolutionary *operaista* journals such as *Quaderni Rossi*, *Classe Operaia*, and *Gatto Selvaggio* (Wildcat). Student militants would act as relays between

⁷⁴ 'Bollettino a cura della Commissione "Operai-Studenti dell'Università, ciclostato, Bologna, December, 1968.

the university assemblies and the shop-floor workers organisations providing a constant link between the two movements and helping to unify and articulate its activities.

In practice, apart from the medical students' initiative at the Pancaldi works, 'opportunist' attempts at joint worker-student industrial action ended in failure. A student picket of the Longo engineering factory in Bolognina was easily broken-up by the police and only a few dozen committed militants seemed prepared to take part in such action.⁷⁵ Activists who engaged in this type of revolutionary politics were mostly the famous 'cinesi' who, although they used the M.S. as a political vehicle, were actually part of a small but tightly organised Maoist splinter party known as the PCd'I (the original name of the Italian Communist Party).⁷⁶ Although the PCd'I was strongest in Tuscany, it did have a number of supporters in Bologna and their colourful demonstrations with red banners inscribed with mandarin slogans were a favourite subject for press photographers.

Although there was little outward sign of worker-student collaboration in Bologna, by the end of 1968, the "commissione 'operai-studenti'" claimed that several joint meetings had taken place in the factories of ICO, ACMA and GD. However, it was the Bolognina based engineering factory of SASIB that was to become the real centre for the anticapitalist movements in Bologna during the 'autunno caldo'. Because of its centrality to the workers' movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, SASIB provides a good example of the attempts which were made to institute new forms of 'workers' democracy' and the difficulties which trade unionists faced in combatting the decentralisation of production which proved to be the employers' most effective

⁷⁵ Capponi, cit. p.74.

⁷⁶ Very rapidly the PCd'I, which published the newspaper Nuova Unità, was eclipsed within factory organisations by new Marxist-Leninist and extra-parliamentary left organisations such as Potere Operaio (Emilia-Veneto), and Lotta Continua. As we shall see however, none were as important and influential as Manifesto-PDUP which appealed far more to Bologna's traditional manual working-class.

weapon against the protagonists of the Hot Autumn.

The 'Hot Autumn' at AMF-SASIB

As in the rest of Italy, at SASIB the period from 1962 to 1966 was characterised by a lack of industrial conflict.⁷⁷ But as the 'miracle' began to give way to recession, company bankruptcies and unemployment, a growing tension could be detected between shop-floor workers and managers. The workers' newsletter, 'Lo smeriglio' (Emery) was re-launched for the first time since the 1950s with the aim of contesting the bland self-promotion of the glossy company publication, 'Notizie nostre'. However, from the share-holders' point of view, the 'notizie' were indeed good, and in contrast to many large northern Italian machine manufacturing companies the owners of AMF-SASIB were able to celebrate an impressive rate of profit growth during this period. At the end of 1967, the Confindustria newspaper Il sole 24 ore placed SASIB among the top 250 companies in Italy. As Brini argues, by 1968 SASIB had returned to its status after the Liberation as the most important factory in

⁷⁷ This was especially marked in the case of SASIB because the management had successfully resisted the re-entry of trade unionists into the factory after the purge of Communist and Socialist activists in 1954. The small Marxist-Leninist group, Movimento Politico dei Lavoratori (MPL) conducted a series of 'interviews' with the workforce of several Bolognese factories and the MPL described SASIB prior to 1968 as the 'fascist factory par excellence'. This was not only due to the fact that a former fascist leader was one of its directors, but also because it was company practice to employ workers 'hand-picked by UIL, CISL and the DC' (i.e. anti-Communist trade unions) who commuted from the 'less politicised' outlying comuni of the province. Also the management preferred to employ apprentices from Silesia who were led to believe that SASIB was 'a little paradise' and once they had been taken on none of these 'guest workers' took part in any disruption, no doubt partly from fear of being sent back to Poland. 'MPL-Fabbriche. Sintesi dell'incontro con alcuni operai del consiglio di fabbrica della AMF-SASIB (Bolognina)'. Nelle fabbriche a Bologna, No.15-16, 15th December, 1971.

Bologna.⁷⁸

In October 1967, elections for the factory council (Commissione Interna) were held for the first time since 1965. 740 out of the 943 workers took part in the ballot and the CGIL emerged as the strongest union with four of the seven worker delegates, CISL obtained two and UIL one. This was an important breakthrough for the leftist unions because SASIB was regarded as having a great strategic importance. If a U.S. company was able to freeze-out Communist trade unionists in the stronghold of Red Emilia the PCI knew that its chances of advancing in the rest of the country were bleak indeed. A measure of the Communist Party's organisational recovery within SASIB after the purge of 1954 is provided by Brini who noted that 51 employees belonged to the factory cell while there were over one hundred card carrying members of the PCI who were attached to their neighbourhood sections, or 'sezioni di strada.' A greater optimism on the shop-floor was also bolstered by the results of the national elections of 1968 which saw a consolidation of the PCI's position as the dominant political force in the province.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Giuseppe Brini, SASIB (AMF) Story. 35 anni di sfruttamento della forza-lavoro, Edizioni Galileo, Bologna, 1969, p.233.

⁷⁹ See Table 20.

Table 20. Results of the 1968 General Election in the Comune di Bologna and for the two previous national and local elections.

Party	1968 General Election		1963 General Election	1964 Admin. Election
	Votes	%	%	%
PCI	144,715	41.49	40.4	44.8
DC	82,090	23.54	21.2	22.0
PSIUP	13,896	3.98	-	1.9
PSU	57,399	16.46	-	-
PSI	-	-	11.9	7.6
PSDI	-	-	11.9	7.6
PRI	4,919	1.41	0.8	-
PLI	31,750	9.10	11.1	11.0
MSI	11,610	3.33	4.2	3.4
Others	2,409	0.69	-	-

Source: Ulram, cit.

In Bologna the PCI advanced slightly on its position in 1963 and although the DC also made gains, the left opposition was much strengthened by the PSIUP's 4% share of the ballot, while the Social Democrats and Nenni's United Socialists polled nearly 5% less than in 1963 representing the loss of a quarter of their combined support.

Nationally the left won 31.4% of the vote (PCI 26.9% and PSIUP 4.5%) and the Communists could at least take comfort from the high-price which the electorate had made the PSU pay for the failure of the 'centro-sinistra' to deliver on its reform package, although the DC once again proved its political resilience in the face of

hostile public opinion.

Communist activists were in a buoyant mood and they believed that the Berlinguerian encouragement of the emergent mass movements represented a return to the class struggle Communism of the 1940s and 1950s. The tenacious occupation of the Pancaldi workers had also inspired the workforce in many Bolognese factories and particularly those in Bolognina to wage an uncompromising campaign for the national contract which was up for negotiation in 1969. Older activists were supplemented by a new intake of apprentices who had been recruited at the end of the 1967-68 school year. As we saw in part one, these diplomati had been through the fire of the 'movimento studentesco' and they were much less likely to be subordinated to the discipline of the factory than their predecessors.⁸⁰

At the 4th Workers' Conference of the PCI held in Turin in December 1967, Communist workers were urged to take up the slogan, 'Cambiare la condizione operaia nella fabbrica, nella società e nello stato'. With the more pro-active stance of the Party a new combative spirit developed among the generation of orthodox militants who, as we saw in chapter four, had been marginalised by Fanti's rinnovamento of 1959. This new mood was reflected in the publication of a factory newspaper entitled Riscossa Operaia (Workers' Revolt) which was produced by the PCI's factory cell. Riscossa Operaia's contributors linked the conditions at SASIB to the national political situation and imperialism in Vietnam in a similar way to the leaflets and journals of the M.S. operaista and the extraparliamentary left.⁸¹

The first test of the labour movement's new found industrial strength was to come in December 1968 when a trade unionist was summarily dismissed by the SASIB management. The response to the sacking was spontaneous and quite unexpected, and the following day the workforce came out on strike in protest for the first time since 1961. The December 27th strike was to be the start of many such stoppages which

⁸⁰ Ibid. pp. 250-254.

⁸¹ Ibid. pp.246-247.

cumulated in over 500 hours of industrial action in support of national and local contract demands during the course of the following year. From December onwards SASIB became the point of reference for the whole labour movement in Bologna and the focus of attention for the many extraparliamentary left groups who were hoping for some local repercussion from the factory conflicts of the great northern cities.⁸²

In order to circumvent the increasingly effective industrial disruption of the main union federations, the management of SASIB began to radically alter its production process by doubling its use of more than 60 satellite factories which were scattered throughout the provinces of Bologna, Modena and Reggio. These were the archetypal firms of the 'modello emiliano'; small, family-run, non-unionised enterprises that were capable of taking on small-batch precision engineering contracts and turning orders around very quickly.⁸³ The SASIB workers told their interviewers that the firm was so delighted with the savings on production costs it had achieved through sub-contracting that the management intended to make SASIB, 'an enormous specialised assembly line' which would buy in all the necessary finished components from outside allowing the company to make at least a 50% cut in its workforce.⁸⁴

⁸² 'Sintesi dell'incontro con alcuni operai del consiglio di fabbrica della AMF-SASIB (Bolognina)', Alternativa Socialista/Nelle fabbriche a Bologna, Movimento Politico dei Lavoratori, No.15-16, 15th December, 1971, p.8.

⁸³ The degree of industrial decentralisation which the Sasib management undertook in the early 1970s was nevertheless quite modest when compared to companies such as GD or Marposs. The real savings came from passing on machine investment costs to the supplier companies as can be seen in Table 21.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Table 21. Rate of investment and degree of decentralisation among a sample of manufacturing companies in the Province of Bologna in 1975.

Company	Millions of lire invested in machinery per employee	Percentage of decentralisation
GD	2.6	50
Zanasi	1.6	50
Cognetex	2.1	40
Calzoni	1.1	30
Sirmac	3.0	40
Marposs	-	72
Wrapmatic	-	75
Plessey Arco	1.1	5.8
Ducati-E	1.0	10
Sasib	1.1	20
Minganti	1.1	18
Giordani	0.4	15
Casaralta	0.2	15

Source: FLM (Bologna), 1975 in Barbiani & Conti, cit. Vol.I, p.234.

After five months of near continuous industrial action in support of the abolition of piece-rate payments at SASIB the trade unions achieved their first victory. The management agreed to abolish piece-rate working in every department of the factory but it continued to resort to productive decentralisation and the selective re-

deployment of union militants in order to weaken the resolve of the workforce.⁸⁵ The consequences for the cohesiveness of the labour movement were very severe because small firms were net gainers from this exercise and trade unionists were unlikely to mount secondary pickets outside the factories of the 'padroncini rossi' whose livelihoods would be threatened by an extension of industrial action into the small firm sector.⁸⁶

The contradictions of the economic strategy which Guido Fanti had championed with its emphasis on small firm investment and 'mutual respect' between trade unionists and factory owners now started to be openly contested within the PCI itself. Several groups affiliated to the 'Manifesto' tendency grew up inside the Bologna federation of the PCI and they were quick to establish factory organisations. The Imola faction of Manifesto attacked the idea that the working-class in Emilia-Romagna were somehow isolated against the effects of capitalist exploitation because they happened to live under red administrations. 'What difference is there,' argued the 'Operai-Studenti Manifesto di Imola', 'between the condition of a worker from Imola exploited perhaps by a 'padroncino' with the party card of the PCI and a worker from Milan or Turin?' The article went on to argue that if the PCI is content with its role as 'a simple administrator' (according to L'Unità of 10th May, 1970) 'by adhering to the economic, social and cultural reality of the country' all the giunte rosse were doing were simply aligning themselves with capitalism.⁸⁷

One of the most important ways the working-class could contest 'the democracy of the bosses' according to Manifesto was to organise themselves politically at their places of work. The industrial action at SASIB as well as at Pirelli and FIAT had developed

⁸⁵ 'Ristrutturazione della fabbrica e crisi del potere dei padroni sugli operai', Il manifesto - Bologna, collettivo operai-impiegati SASIB del "Manifesto", Bologna, December, 1971. p.2, AIGER.

⁸⁶ 'Operai Studenti' Il manifesto - Imola, No.8, 1970, p.2, AIGER.

⁸⁷ 'Il comunismo dei consigli', Operai-Studenti. Il Manifesto - Imola, No.8, May 1970, p.2.

new experiences of struggle, 'which have not been imposed by a few union bureaucrats,' but which have, 'objectives and forms of struggle directly chosen by the work force.'⁸⁸ The most important form of worker democracy according to Manifesto was the 'delegato di reparto' or shop delegate. These delegates were directly elected by their work colleagues and could be recalled at any time, but the main advantage which this figure had for the class struggle was that, 'he is not a union bureaucrat who comes every so often to hold a meeting or who shuts himself off in an office to 'study' the problems of the working class; he is a worker who suffers daily exploitation in the factory like any other.'⁸⁹

However as the Manifesto group at SASIB pointed out in its journal, the constant re-deployment of the labour force makes it almost impossible for the 'worker delegate' to represent a homogeneous group of workers. Also by promoting 'older' and more 'experienced' workers to foremen and supervisor positions, the management aimed to produce a climate in which labour skills are 'secretly passed on' to the younger apprentices thus reproducing the subordinate hierarchies which allow one group of workers to be used to control the other.⁹⁰

Despite this counter-offensive by the management, SASIB workers had succeeded in winning additional concessions from their employers to those already achieved by the metalworkers' unions on a national level. But although wages had improved and piece-rate working had been mostly abolished, in the province of Bologna it was still common for employees to be required to undertake compulsory overtime involving a 56 hour week while improvements in working conditions had occurred only in a piece-meal fashion. For this reason Manifesto urged its supporters to continue the struggle on a day-to-day basis in order to defend the gains already made and to win better pay and conditions, including the elimination of compulsory over-time and shift work.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p.8.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ 'Ristrutturazione della fabbrica..' cit. p.3.

There was some scope for the achievement of these objectives in the larger factories of the province of Bologna, but the overwhelming majority of industrial workers still depended on firms employing less than ten people which allowed owners to avoid much of the compulsory contributions and employment protection which had been won at a national level and which was later incorporated into the 'Workers' Charter' (Statuto dei lavoratori).⁹¹ This was a major concern to the Manifesto group at SASIB who dedicated an entire article to the problem of working class unity and the workers' struggle in the small factories.

The article admitted that there had been divisions within the movement over re-grading which had been opposed by skilled workers in many factories who feared the loss of advantageous differential pay and conditions. This had allowed the owners to drive a wedge between unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers. Nevertheless, the mass mobilisations in favour of the automatic re-grading of workers on the lowest 'qualifica' and for the abolition of piece-work had achieved notable successes. However, 'there has remained a sector, that of the small and medium-sized industries, in which the 'autunno caldo' struggles have not left any organisation among the working class.'⁹²

It is interesting to compare this analysis by shop floor delegates at SASIB with the anonymous 'head of the PCI's Factory Commission in a Red Belt federation' who provided Stephen Hellman with this insight in late 1969:

'Let's understand at the outset that there is nothing to say about those with more than

⁹¹ Passed in May 1970, the statuto legally enshrined several fundamental rights of labour (which the Constitution had already provided for) such as the right to organise, the right to trade union representation and to protection from unfair dismissal. It was accompanied by a general amnesty for all workers who had been charged or convicted for minor offences in pursuance of a trade dispute. Lumley, States of Emergency, cit. p.251 & Tarrow, Democracy and Disorder, cit. p.313.

⁹² Ibid.

twenty workers, at least not in any way that can be generalised...'

This statement is bizarre enough given the PCI's own pivotal role in backing the FIOM led strikes at SASIB, Ducati, Weber, SABIEM and many other larger firms in Bologna in 1969, but the real surprise comes when this Communist official described the situation in the small firm sector:

'Given the kind of industry we have in Tuscany and Emilia, the issue of renewing contracts places the workers' interests and those of the artisan and small producer in direct conflict, and therefore calls the entire line into question. On an idealistic level, many are on our side, but now, with unprecedented militancy reaching all the way down to firms with, say, three workers, paternalism and all sorts of other issues have come forward. Tactically, we do all we can, which is to minimize the damage, but still there are open breaks with the party because of the workers...The fact is that this is an insoluble contradiction, and so we have to manoeuvre tactically.'⁹³

It is possible that this description of class war in firms of three workers might just apply to a tiny Communist enclave near Massa-Carrara or Piombino, but it is quite ludicrous to suggest that such a conflict could be universally observed in other 'red belt' federations and indeed Hellman provides no corroboration for this testimony.

⁹³ Stephen Hellman, 'The PCI's Alliance Strategy and the Case of the Middle Classes', cit. pp.399-400. Paul Ginsborg argues that '...for most of the 1960s, it was not difficult for the local authorities to mediate between employer and employed, both of whom probably voted for the Communists. But in the 'hot autumn' such mediation fell apart.' Ginsborg, A History of Contemporary Italy, cit. p.396. In fact, in the larger factories the PCI had never been welcomed as a mediator, particularly in the wake of the 1962 strikes, while in the smaller firms the very low level of industrial conflict obviated the need for such a role. In his summary of the Hot Autumn Ginsborg does however concede that in the 'Third Italy' a 'less direct conflict between capital and labour' prevailed. p.341.

The Manifesto group of workers at SASIB, who if anything had an interest in exaggerating the spread of the 'lotta di classe' in Bologna, lamented the fact that Bologna's factory owners were,

'Presenting the workers in the small factories as saboteurs of the struggle and therefore as their adversaries.'⁹⁴

Furthermore local capitalists were, 'playing on the weakness of the workers' movement in the small and medium factories in order to force these workers to accept overtime and under-the-counter payments thus increasing their net profit in a dramatic way.'⁹⁵

The deliberate decentralisation of production by SASIB management was evident from the many machines which were lying idle. This was not a crisis of production but proof that, '...most production is being contracted-out where costs are much less and production times much shorter...'⁹⁶

'Managerial' Communist leaders such as Galletti and Fanti who talked of the 'open region and the importance of production skills',⁹⁷ at a time when, 'the workers are waging a hard struggle against production,' were implicitly condemned for,

⁹⁴ 'Ristrutturazione della fabbrica...' cit.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ The 'open region' (regione aperta) is a concept which Guido Fanti developed during the course of the first regional election campaign in 1970. Fanti wanted to apply the 'consociationalism' that he had practised in Bologna to the new regional authority and he called on the 'parte sana' (the healthy or progressive part) of all the main political parties to join him in a search for new forms of democratic participation (such as the neighbourhood councils with their DC 'mayors') and political innovation based around commonly held principles. L'Unita, 14th April, 1970 cited in Anderlini, Terra rossa, cit. p.120. See also the introduction to chapter seven, below.

'developing armchair theory on the alliance with the so-called productive middle class which pays lip-service to the salvation of the condition of the working class while in reality the productive middle class make bigger profits exclusively on the backs of the working class.'⁹⁸

Writing on industrial relations in Bologna in the early 1970s, the Swiss journalist, Max Jaeggi, claimed that, 'the Bolognese entrepreneurs have little to laugh about.'⁹⁹ According to Jaeggi this was because, 'The class struggle is waged more vigorously in Bologna than in virtually any other Italian city. Hardly a week goes by without a report on the local page of L'Unità about a dispute between workers and employers... Workers, whether employed in small or larger firms, are not afraid to fight energetically for the demands of their colleagues in other firms, thereby demonstrating the unity of workers' interests.'¹⁰⁰ In spite of the fact, as Jaeggi admits, that Bologna lacks any real large-scale manufacturing and that the industrial structure is overwhelmingly dominated by artisanal firms and small and medium-sized enterprises, 'the Bolognese workers demonstrate a true class consciousness and a truly enviable disposition to struggle.'¹⁰¹

If Bologna's workers did have this enviable disposition to struggle, as many did, it was not from the Communist dominated CGIL that the militant workforce took its instructions, but from their own workplace organisations and the several extraparliamentary groups who were seeking to challenge the PCI's hegemony in the factory.¹⁰² At Ducati-Elettronica, Avanguardia Operaia had proposed the holding of

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ M. Jaeggi, R. Mueller, S. Schmid, Bologna rossa. I comunisti al governo di una città, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1977, p.60.

¹⁰⁰ Jaeggi, et al. Red Bologna, cit. p.78.

¹⁰¹ Bologna rossa, cit.

¹⁰² Barbiani & Conti contend that so important and decisive for the PCI was the prospect of the re-birth of a unified trade union movement (which seemed increasingly

an open-air assembly and the blocking of the via Emilia, but Lotta Continua reluctantly had to report that this proposal had been opposed by the CGIL which held an internal assembly and was able to block these forms of direct action by securing an overwhelming majority of votes on the factory council.¹⁰³

More 'articulated' forms of action took place in Ducati under the organisation of the Comitato di Base which involved, '...hard forms of internal struggle with the expulsion of white-collar employees and managers during the strikes, internal demonstrations, assemblies, etc.'¹⁰⁴ Contrary to Jaeggi's assertion, these forms of struggle were not continually reported by L'Unità, and this is hardly surprising given the Bologna PCI's desire to keep the CGIL-CISL-UIL 'intesa' together and to prevent the formation of autonomous workers' organisations which had temporarily threatened the trade union leadership in the northern factories.¹⁰⁵

likely with joint negotiating positions being advanced by CGIL-CISL-UIL) that any threat to this new found unity in the factories would be resisted. Also, unlike in 1962 when strikes were undertaken to win more favourable contracts at plant level, in 1968-9 the emphasis was on winning 'a lasting national agreement.' Luttes politiques, Vol.1, p.217.

¹⁰³ 'Bologna: Sospensione alla Ducati', Lotta Continua, Bologna edition, numero unico, 14th November, 1969.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Although the existence of 'delegates councils' and CUBs is well documented, even in the most strike-prone city and region in Italy, (see Table 21) the legitimacy of the trade union federations was never seriously called into question. As Lumley writes, 'The almost unanimous vote in favour of the unions' final recommendation of acceptance of the contract offers in December 1969 and January 1970, was also a vote of confidence in their leadership. The increase in unionisation, which in the province of Milan rose from 30% to 44% of the workforce in 1968-1970, was a sign of greater interest in and identification with the unions.' States of Emergency, cit. p.247. In Bologna, Sighinolfi describes how although the national and CGIL were interested in building on the experience of delegates' councils in their demands for greater worker participation in the

Attempts at unofficial action were therefore sporadic and mostly unsuccessful. An 'anticipatory strike' by SASIB workers who picketed the neighbouring Bolognina factories of Acma, Casaralta, Minganti and SAMP Macchina won only token support, and the other workers did not join the SASIB 'wild-catters.' Lotta Continua had to admit that, 'the initiatives of the workers' vanguards, at least in Bologna, clash increasingly violently with the trade unions which are now clearly showing their repressive features in many situations.'¹⁰⁶ In another incident which echoed the PCI's industrial policy after the Liberation, a number of activists who had taken part in a violent demonstration were denounced to the police by Communist officials.¹⁰⁷

Internal demonstrations and 'articulated' strikes at Ducati in the following year were met with a violent response by the owners who, according to Lotta Continua, used 'fascist squads' of middle-managers and foremen to break-up a picket of an assembly plant which had been kept open by 'crumiri' (blacklegs). The official trade unions retaliated by organising an external picket but once again the white-collar workers responded by organising a counter-demonstration, and (imitating 'autonomist' tactics) blocked the road outside the factory. The 'servizio d'ordine' of the CGIL physically prevented worker and student activists from Lotta Continua and other extraparlimentary groups from 'castigare fino in fondo i fascisti.'¹⁰⁸

management of the firm, the CISL and UIL local leadership would not hear of it. In the interests of preserving the unity of the 'intesa' these proposals were therefore never tabled by the unified Camera del Lavoro. M. Sighinolfi, 'Le tappe di sviluppo del processo unitario a Bologna,' Quaderni di rassegna sindacale, March-April, 1971, p.78 quoted in Barbiani & Conti, cit. p.221.

¹⁰⁶ 'Sospensioni alla Ducati,' cit.

¹⁰⁷ 'Bologna - Scioperi e cortei', Lotta Continua, Year I, No.1, 22nd November, 1969, p.8.

¹⁰⁸ 'Bologna: La città in lotta', Lotta Continua, Year II, No.8, 24th March, 1970, pp.8-9.

These episodes serve to illustrate the marginal impact of extremist groups on the organised working-class in Bologna's factories and also the inability of either the new left or the established trade union organisations to create a unity of action among shop-floor workers and employees. As in Milan, relations between blue and white-collar workers grew increasingly hostile and impiegati who refused to take part in strikes were sometimes driven out of the factory by 'spazzate' (sweepings) of younger militant workers.¹⁰⁹ However in Bologna such incidents were rare and the official trade unions never allowed industrial action to degenerate into acts of 'voluntarism' and reprisal even if this meant alienating the most active part of the workforce.

In other large Italian cities it took several months (and in some factories several years) before the main trade union organisations were able to reimpose their authority and discipline on the shopfloor, whereas in Bologna the Camera del Lavoro continued to be the command and control centre of the workers' movement. Indeed the CGIL's strength greatly improved as a result of the 'autunno caldo' and the mushroom growth of extraparliamentary groups was largely a reaction against this entrenched reformist hegemony rather than the filling of a power vacuum as was often the case in Lombardy, Piedmont and the Veneto.¹¹⁰

If the 'enemies to the left' of the PCI had been easily defeated in the 'war of manoeuvre' for the control of the factory proletariat during the Hot Autumn, it is necessary briefly to examine the challenge of the 'new social movements' to Communist hegemony outside the factory. Once again we will focus primarily on housing and popular participation as two of the most important pillars of the PCI's territorial 'politica delle alleanze.'

Taking Over the City? Housing and collective provision in Bologna seen from the 'Movement.'

¹⁰⁹ Lumley, States of Emergency, cit. p.203.

¹¹⁰ On the re-organisation of CISL and CGIL in 1969 see John Low-Bear, Protest and Participation, cit. pp.32-33.

On November 19th, 1969, a nationwide general strike lasted 24 hours and involved 20 million people. The strike was called in protest at the crisis in Italy's housing and it had the backing of all three trade union confederations and the parties of the left.¹¹¹ The housing protest movement reached its peak in 1971 when mass demands for the swift introduction of the housing reform bill (No.865 implemented on the 26th May) culminated in a second general strike in April.

But while housing struggles may have been the most important recruiting card for groups like Avanguardia Operaia in Milan and Lotta Continua in Turin (where the movement was also strong among the assembly-line workers at FIAT), the same could not be said for Bologna. The tenants' union, SUNIA was under the complete control of the PCI and it worked assiduously to support the housing schemes proposed by the comune and collaborated actively with the neighbourhood commissions charged with the task of widening community involvement in the planning process. Organised squatting and 'autoriduzione' of rents which were endemic in some working class neighbourhoods in Milan, Turin and Rome were almost unheard of in Bologna.

The only national tenants' group which existed on the left of the Communist Party was the Unione Inquilini (UI). UI drew its membership from among the various groups of the extraparliamentary left and it saw housing as the site of revolutionary struggle capable of mobilising the working class and channelling this protest into political action. It was critical of SUNIA's legalistic and narrow trade union type organisation and unlike SUNIA, UI called for the self-management of housing estates and the removal of allocation powers from the IACP in favour of tenants' groups.¹¹²

'The difference between the reformists' position and ours is this: for them the left-

¹¹¹ Bonaccini, Aldo. 'Lo sciopero generale per la casa nell'azione del sindacato per le riforme' Critica Marxista, 7, No.6 (Nov-Dec), pp.12-26, cited in Angotti, Housing in Italy, cit. p.45.

¹¹² Angotti, cit. p.46.

wing municipal giunta is already the expression of mass power, and therefore should be the principal actor on the political scene. We do not maintain that bourgeois state institutions - no matter how much they be 'occupied' by the left - can be expressions of true democracy and the basis for future proletarian power.¹¹³

Given the strategic objectives of Communist policy in Bologna it is obvious why SUNIA might be regarded with suspicion by the PCI's leftist opponents, as Angotti remarks;

'One of the criticisms of SUNIA from the left is its alliance with the national association of small property owners and shopkeepers. The alliance is aimed at bringing the middle-class into a broad reform coalition.'¹¹⁴

As with Manifesto's critique of the 'padroncini rossi' as 'little exploiters', UI saw the petty-bourgeois rentiers and the shop-keepers of Confesercenti as being parasitic on working-class labour rather than 'victims' of the great monopolies. Cervellati's ambitious plan for the Centro Storico could not disguise the fact that the vast majority of working-class families were forced to live on the new peripheral estates where service provision, although better than in most other Italian cities, was still lacking in many areas.

One of the few articles to deal with the housing question in Bologna from a new leftist perspective reported on an assembly held in the Pilastro, the poorest and largest of the PEEP estates and home to many southern migrant families. An old Communist partisan who had joined Lotta Continua explained why he had left the PCI,

'I've been in the party for 27 years, I took part in the partisan war, I've been in prison, but now the PC are just a load of bourgeois. I'm a working-class communist

¹¹³ Unione Inquilini, 1975 cited in Angotti, p.47.

¹¹⁴ Angotti, cit. p.66.

in Lotta Continua, In '45 they disarmed me, but they won't get away with it now.'¹¹⁵

LC were convinced that many such disillusioned older Communists would come over to their party, but this was rather a false hope at a time when the PCI was seeing its membership expand quite considerably.¹¹⁶

Table 22. Percentage of voting population belonging to the PCI in the Comune di Bologna, 1968-1976.

1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
12.87	12.94	12.99	12.92	13.12	13.23	13.35	13.89	14.33

Source: Barbagli & Corbetta, 'Partito e movimento...'cit. p.18.

LC claimed that an increasing number of families were taking part in rent strikes, particularly those from the south, but Angotti has shown how even an organised tenants' union like UI was unable to break the organisational monopoly of the PCI on the PEEP estates and Lotta Continua never managed to organise the working-class residents of the run-down estates into a political movement as it had in parts of Turin.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ 'Bologna: La città in lotta', Lotta Continua, Year II, No.8, 24th March, 1970, pp.8-9.

¹¹⁶ See Table 22.

¹¹⁷ Referring to the establishment of the consigli di quartieri in Turin, Stephen Hellman argues that as they, '...took on a semi-institutional character, the influence of the New Left overshadowed the more established parties. Under the leadership of groups such as Lotta Continua, more confrontational forms of politics, such as fee or rent strikes, often unruly demonstrations, and occupations in public housing projects became more frequent...While the leadership of the federation generally condemned "excesses",

The giunta comunale was only too aware that the mobilisation of the factories and the universities were bound to have repercussions on a local level. As mayor Renato Zangheri admitted, Bologna's building programme had been limited by central government financial constraints, but although the lack of affordable housing remained a problem, through the PEEP schemes the municipal authorities had been able to demonstrate its commitment to 'il diritto alla casa'. Groups like Lotta Continua and Manifesto were able to attract a small number of students and a handful of disillusioned militants, but the Bolognese working-class knew that their hopes for a better quality of life depended entirely on the PCI, and the Communists improved performance in the 1970 local and regional elections further confirmed the Party's domination of its traditional constituency.¹¹⁸

most party militants active in the urban struggles participated in them. And since some protests enlisted the support of an astonishingly large number of citizens, even the party's formal condemnations were often quite muted; Italian Communism in Transition. The Rise and Fall of the Historic Compromise in Turin, 1975-1980, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1988, p.70.

¹¹⁸ In 1973 the Comune di Bologna provided for 57% of all new housing compared to a national average public provision of 3%; Red Bologna, cit. p.60. For the results of the 1970 administrative elections see table D.

Table 23. Results of the 1970 Administrative Elections to the the regional government of Emilia-Romagna.

	Percentage of Votes	Number of Seats
PCI	44.0	24
DC	25.8	14
PSI	8.0	3
PSDI	7.5	2
PRI	4.0	2
PLI	3.7	1
MSI	3.0	2
PSIUP	3.8	2
PDIUM	0.2	2
Total	100.0	50

Source: R. Leonardi, 'Political developments and institutional change in Emilia', cit. p.17.

Table 24. Results of the administrative elections to the Comune di Bologna, 1970.

Party	Votes	%	Seats
Due Torri	149,339	42.45	27
DC	74,956	21.35	14
PSI	26,462	8.53	4
PSDI	36,852	10.5	6
PRI	9,347	2.66	1
PLI	25,493	7.26	4
MSI	15,633	4.46	2
PSIUP	11,545	3.29	2
PDIUM	1,411	0.4	-
Total	360,537	100	60

Source: *Dieci anni di decentramento*, p.368.

As we saw in chapter five, the interest in participation in direct forms of democracy contributed greatly to the redefinition of the objectives of the consigli di quartieri and the relationship between the quartiere and the local economy became more politicised as a result of the 'autunno caldo.'¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ An interesting but short-lived expression of the extension of the factory council within the quartiere is to be found in the consigli di zona which developed in parts of Bolognina and Borgo Panigale in the early 1970s. In essence these 'consigli' were similar to other groups of local service consumers such as parents or council tenants. They did not see their role as being antagonistic to the consigli di quartieri and indeed worked to cooperate with the decentralised authorities in order to negotiate for better transport and canteen facilities from local employers. G.C. Trocchi, 'La costruzione dei consigli di zona a Bologna,' Quaderni di rassegna sindacale, November 1972-February

Industrial disputes at Ducati and other factories had involved the comune as a service provider which would be able to allocate resources won from employers for the benefit of local workers. A good example of this were the asili nidi which were built in Borgo Panigale and financed by Ducati.¹²⁰ But other concessions were wrung out of local employers such as a compulsory annual contribution to the social fund (a modest £1,400 - £1,600 in 1976) and company subsidised public transport.¹²¹

If the Communists and Socialists were to maintain their political presence within the 'subcultura rossa' the comune had to play an active role in creating new collective forms of expression for popular demands.¹²² In the neighbourhood councils and the neighbourhood commissions, the comune believed that it had established just such a mechanism for channelling civilised discontent. Examples of 'active mobilisation' were to be found in the neighbourhood councils of Bolognina and Corticella which involved local residents in petitioning for the transfer of the old army barracks (the 'Caserme Rosse') to the quartiere for use as a community centre. This was a popular campaign and it was also politically 'safe' because the target of the mobilisation was the central government. The same initiative was followed by the Marconi consiglio di quartiere who wanted to take over the old state tobacco factory in order to create a new park in an area of the city which had very little greenery.¹²³

1973, p.122 quoted in Barbiani & Conti, cit. p.222.

¹²⁰ See above and Red Bologna, cit. pp.84-85.

¹²¹ *Ibid.* p.82.

¹²² The task was defined by Armando Cossutta, head of the PCI's local government commission, as the establishment of a 'new mode of governing.' See, A. Cossutta, 'Unità e partecipazione per un modo migliore di governare regioni, provincie, comuni,' in A. Cossutta & E. Berlinguer, I comunisti nel governo locale, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1978, p.34.

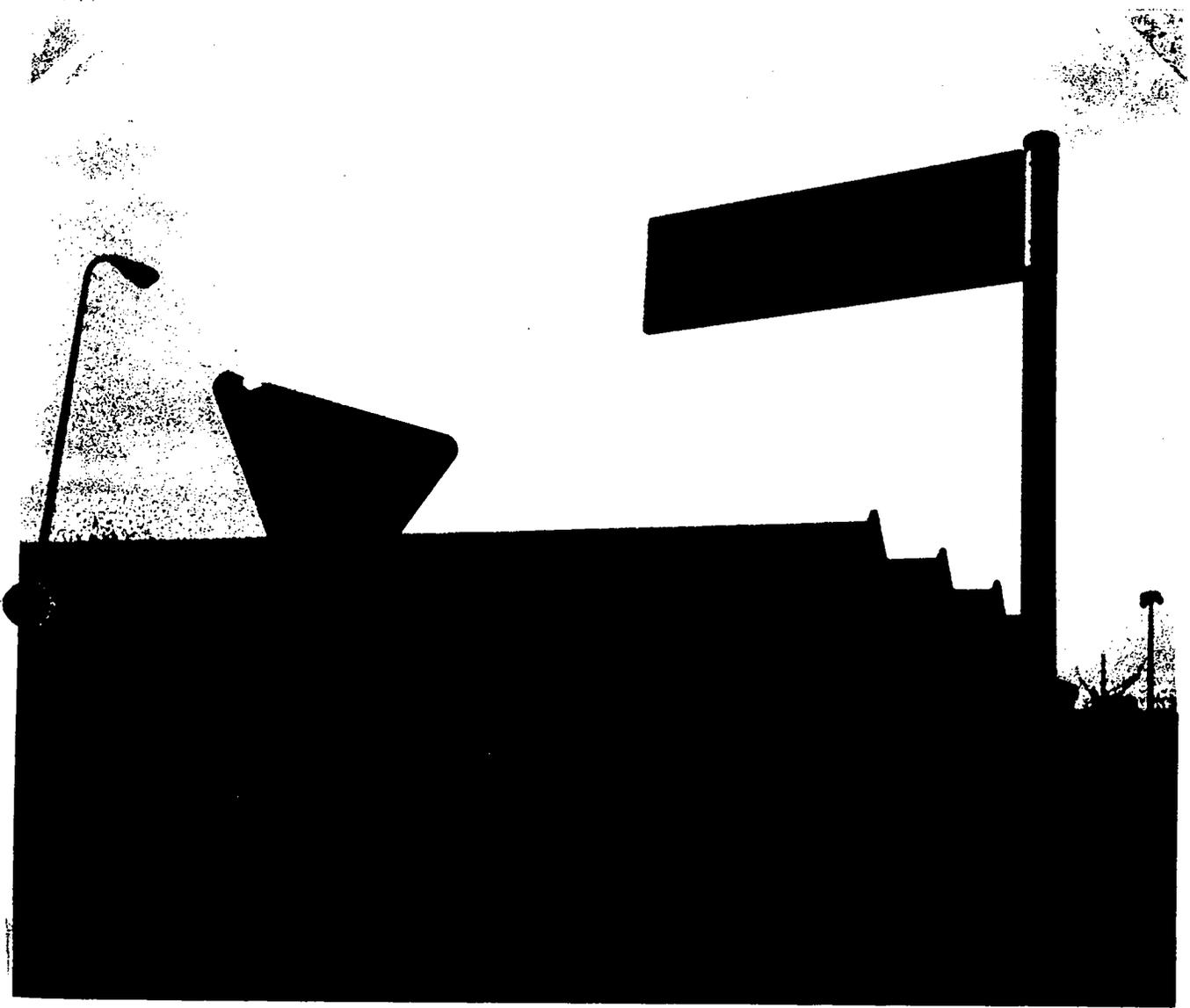
¹²³ Giuseppe Longo, 'Esperienza del decentramento amministrativo-organizzativo e della partecipazione nei consigli,' cit. p.81. However, popular participation in this case can lead to bureaucratic inertia. Some twenty years on, the neighbourhood council and

As we have seen, schooling, social services, transport, urban development all became live political issues in the years after 1968, but the consigli di quartieri proved to be more than an adequate safety-valve for the expression of these collective needs and demands.¹²⁴ The rapid creation of similar democratic structures in all the major cities of Italy confirmed that popular participation was an idea whose time had come, even if, as we shall discover in the concluding chapter, there were many 'new social subjects' who could not identify with a political system which made the establishment of consensus and the maintenance of authority its guiding principles.

the comune have still not come to a decision on the use of the ex-tobacco factory.

¹²⁴ Renato Zangheri could therefore say with some justification that, 'In reality there is no important question which affects the life of the comune...which the quartieri, their councils, their commissions, and their assemblies cannot confront.' Renato Zangheri, 'Partecipazione democratica e trasformazione dello stato,' in Cossutta, A., Stefanini, M. & Zangheri, R. Decentramento e partecipazione, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1977.

The 'Due Madonne' municipal bus depot, Bologna.



CHAPTER SEVEN

The City of Ideas and the Idea of the City: Conclusions on movements, institutions and Communist strategy in contemporary Bologna.

1. 1968 and the 'Emilian Model' in Bologna: An Afterview.

By using the energy and enthusiasm of the social movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the PCI and its allies were able to re-articulate the traditional agenda of structural reforms and the creation of a democratic and pluralist regional assembly in terms of a radical new political vision. When Guido Fanti assumed the presidency of the region in 1970, the Communists were also able to realise their 'grand coalition' of the 'parte sana' of the Emilia-Romagnan political community.¹ The Leninist Keynesian strategy of a centrally controlled economic development which had operated through the cooperatives, artisans, small entrepreneurs and trade unions could now be coordinated on a regional basis without the threat of direct central government interference.

The PCI in Bologna had 'ridden the tiger' of the new social movements of 1968-1971 and remarkably had escaped with barely a scratch (the Manifesto expulsion was the only internal conflict which drew blood). But the Hot Autumn had galvanised opposition to a capitalist system which in Bologna the ruling Communist Party had sought to win over

¹ Leonardi shows how Fanti's 'open region' policy also depended on the active support of the regional secretary of the DC, Ermanno Gorrieri who, 'was deeply committed to the cause of state reform and the democratisation of the Italian political system... Thus the DC was not at all reluctant to open up a dialogue with the leftist parties in Emilia-Romagna on innovative ways of managing regional affairs.' Robert Leonardi, 'Political Developments and Institutional Change in Emilia-Romagna, 1970-1990' in Leonardi, R. & Nanetti, R. (Eds) The Regions and European Integration, cit. p.15.

to its vision of the enterprise culture. The opponents of Amendola's accomodationist strategy came from the traditional vanguardist wing of the PCI, but they also came from the new social movements, from radical Catholic movements, from the universities and from the factories where union officials had not previously dared to show their faces. Yet groups like Lotta Continua, Potere Operaio and the newly formed splinter party Manifesto-PDUP could only be the cheer-leaders of the 'contestazione' of '69-69, and /8 ironically it was organised labour and national bargaining structures that benefited most from the social mobilisations which the extraparliamentary groups had worked so assiduously to promote.²

² See Table 25.

Table 25. Membership of main trade union confederations in Italy, 1968-1974.

Year	CGIL	CISL	UIL
1968	2,461,297	1,622,158	-
1969	2,625,442	1,641,591	-
1970	2,943,314	1,809,028	-
1971	3,136,345	1,973,499	-
1972	3,214,827	2,184,279	-
1973	3,435,405	2,214,199	900,000
1974	3,827,175	2,372,701	1,050,000

Source: Crouch & Pizzorno cit. Vol.1, p.317.

Table 26. Wage and Salary variation at 1970 and 1985 prices in Italy for the years 1970-1985. Gross wages and salaries per capita ('000 lire).

	1970	1973	1976	1978	1982	1985
1985 Prices	1,635	2,475	4,305	7,434	13,030	18,366
1970 Prices	1,635	1,961	2,302	2,288	2,389	2,405

Table 26.1. Wage and Salary variation at 1970 and 1985 prices in Italy for the years 1970-1985. Percentage changes.

	1970-73	1973-76	1976-79	1079-82	1982-85	1970-85
1985 Prices	14.8	20.27	19.97	20.57	12.12	18.88
1970 Prices	6.25	1.19	4.02	1.45	0.22	3.22
Consu- mer prices	8.06	18.85	15.33	18.84	11.88	15.18

Source: Labour and Employment Policies in Italy, cit. p.23.

Arringa and De Luca show that the substantial increase in trade union power which resulted from these mobilisations, '...was manifested essentially on two fronts: substantial wage gains, both nominal and real, together with a pronounced levelling of salary differentials; and the imposition of a series of guarantees...on working conditions within the firm.'³ Tables 26 and 26.1 emphasises how significant these improvements in real wages were, although their redistributive effect was weakened by the increased tax burden which applied to dependent employees. The strike weapon had proved its effectiveness and by the early 1970s it was increasingly used to demand social reforms which were not directly connected to workplace disputes.⁴ Employers found themselves

³ C. Dell'Aringa & P. De Luca, 'Wages and Industrial Relations', Chapter IV of Ministero del Lavoro e della Previdenza Sociale, Report '87. Labour and Employment Policies in Italy, CER/Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, Rome, 1987, p.135. See also Tables 26 & 26.1.

⁴ Because official strike statistics are collated from 'strikes in pursuance of a trade dispute' this has led to considerable under-recording of 'political strikes' in Italy during and after the Hot Autumn.

confronted with national stoppages over health insurance, pension benefits, taxation and education as well as traditional salary and contract claims.⁵ The Italian workforce had never been so assertive and combative, and for the first time in the post-war period, even the peasants of the agrarian South were beginning to organise and strike in great numbers.

Although Bologna and Emilia-Romagna have never been considered a locus classicus of the 'Hot Autumn', an examination of the strike statistics for the period 1968-71 quickly reveals that the region was consistently among the most strike prone in Italy.⁶ In 1968-69 there were over 13 million hours of strikes in the province of Bologna alone, and nearly 2.3 million of these occurred in the farming sector which by 1971 employed only 12.4% of the active workforce of the province.⁷

⁵ Ida Regalia, Marino Regini and Emilio Reyneri, 'Labour Conflicts and Industrial Relations in Italy' in Colin Crouch and Alessandro Pizzorno (Eds) The Resurgence of Class Conflict in Western Europe since 1968, Volume 1, Macmillan, London, 1978, p.121; Tarrow, Democracy and Disorder, cit. pp.225-6. It is important to put these new forms of industrial unrest into some perspective however; for example in 1971, a year which saw 103,590,000 labour hours lost due to industrial action, only 925,000 hours (less than 1%) were the result of 'solidarity' action and although 18.2 million hours were not worked for various 'other causes', contract renewal and salary claim actions still accounted for over 57 million strike hours. ISTAT, Annuario di Statistiche, 1972, p.358.

⁶ See table A.

⁷ See Tables 27 and 28.

Table 27. Hours lost (000,000s), number of disputes ('000s), workers participating (000,000s) and national 'league table' position (in parentheses) among the top six most strike-prone regions in Italy, 1968-1971.1

All disputes

Year/ Category	E-R	LO	PI	VE	TO	SI
1968						
H/L	8.9(2)	14.5(1)	6.8(5)	6.3(6)	7.4(4)	7.8(3)
N/D	0.3(5)	0.7(1)	0.2(7)	0.3(6)	0.3(4)	0.4(3)
W/P	0.7 (2)	0.9(1)	0.4(4)	0.4(6)	0.5(3)	0.3(5)
1969						
H/L	38.1(3)	87.5(1)	43.4(2)	22.6(4)	21.8(5)	11.6(8)
N/D	0.3(7)	0.8(1)	0.2(3)	0.4(4)	0.3(5)	0.5(2)
W/P	0.9(2)	1.9(1)	0.6(4)	0.4(6)	0.7(3)	0.4(7)
1970						
H/L	13.3(4)	36.1(1)	19.4(2)	11.8(5)	17.5(3)	8.8(6)
N/D	0.3(8)	0.8(1)	0.3(7)	0.4(4)	0.3(5)	0.6(2)
W/P	0.4(2)	0.7(1)	0.3(4)	0.2(6)	0.4(3)	0.2(5)
1971						
H/L	10.1(4)	19.2(1)	10.2(3)	7.9(6)	6.5(7)	9.3(5)
N/D	0.4(6)	1.0(1)	0.4(7)	0.6(4)	0.5(5)	0.6(3)
W/P	0.4(2)	0.9(1)	0.3(4)	0.3(5)	0.3(3)	0.2(6)

¹ Numbers are given to the first hundred thousand (or hundred) but have not been rounded.

Key: E-R=Emilia-Romagna, LO=Lombardy, PI=Piedmont, VE=Veneto, TO=Tuscany, SI=Sicily.

H/L=Hours lost (millions), N/D=Numbers of disputes (thousands), W/P=Workers participating (millions)

source: ISTAT

The agrarian struggles in Bologna in the late 1960s are evidence of the strong 'movementist' continuities with the 'anni duri' but as Arbizzani admitted, the rural peasantry had become the forgotten proletariat and because the occupational and economic importance of farming had diminished, in Emilia at least, the PCI had failed to make agrarian reform one of its priorities.⁸ In 'Ceto medio e Emilia Rossa', Togliatti had argued that because historically the Emilian braccianti had been more politically advanced this meant that they should lead the urban working-class. But as a result of the contestatory innovations of the new social movements, Ingrao believed that the industrial working class were developing new forms of self-management and democracy within the workplace which could modernise and radicalise the contemporary struggles of the rural workforce.⁹

The Emilian peasants' forms of struggle might have been traditional but the urban proletariat had nothing to teach the Bolognese rural workforce when it came to the 'stomach for the fight.' Nearly half of all the working hours lost in the agricultural economy of Emilia-Romagna in 1968 were due to strikes organised by Bolognese farm workers. Indeed more than three times as many working hours were lost in the province of Bologna than in the whole Veneto farming region for the same period, and only Puglia toppled Emilia-Romagna from its domination of the agrarian labour dispute league table in 1969 and 1971.¹⁰

⁸ Luigi Arbizzani, 'Ruolo e alleanze della classe operaia', round table, Rinascita, No.47, 1969 in D'Attorre (Ed) I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, cit. p.222.

⁹ Pietro Ingrao, *ibid.* p.119. This position, unlike Togliatti's, marked more of a return to the urban-rural alliance strategy that Gramsci had developed in the 1920s.

¹⁰ See Tables 28 and 29.

Table 28. Agriculture¹. Hours lost ('000,000s) and national 'league table' in the top six most strike-prone regions in Italy.

Year	E-R	LO	PI	VE	TO	SI
1968	2.4(1)	0.1(-)	0(-)	0.3(5)	1.0(4)	1.5(2)
1969*	6.3(2)	0.3(-)	0(-)	0.4(5)	1.7(3)	0.8(4)
1970	1.6(1)	0(-)	0(-)	0.2(4)	0.3(2)	0.3(3)
1971*	4.2(2)	0(-)	0(-)	0.2(6)	1.8(3)	1.1(4)

¹ Numbers are given to the first hundred thousand (or hundred) but have not been rounded.

² Cumulative totals of less than 100,000 hours per annum are marked as a nil return.

Key: E-R=Emilia-Romagna, LO=Lombardy, PI=Piedmont, VE=Veneto, TO=Tuscany, SI=Sicily.

* In Puglia 3.8 million hours of agrarian strikes were recorded in 1969 and 9.4 million hours in 1971.

Source: ISTAT

Table 29. Number of Strike Hours in the Province of Bologna, 1962-1975.

Year	Agriculture	Industry
1962	1,066,384	2,862,507
1963	411,310	1,093,040
1964	843,695	935,103
1965	168,745	661,526
1966	736,532	3,032,183
1967	385,000	443,000
1968	1,112,473	1,745,592
1969	1,170,000	9,159,000
1970	540,000	1,513,000
1971	402,000	1,099,000
1972	750,000	3,274,000
1973	-	-
1974	-	-
1975	966,000	2,694,000

Source: Barbiani & Conti, cit. Vol.I, p.231.

At the 3rd Regional Conference of the Emilia-Romagna PCI in 1970, Sergio Cavina took up Ingrao's theme of constructing a new historic block and he emphasised the need to forge a new alliance between workers, peasants and *ceti medi*. There were certain resonances of the agrarian reform programme of the 1940s in Cavina's speech, particularly when he repeated the old campaigning slogan of 'the land to those who work it.' But as Cavina admitted, the lack of a national agricultural reform had strengthened

the domination of large agricultural holdings such as Eridania-De Rica-Arrigoni over the rural economy in Emilia while the position of small farmers had deteriorated. The social mobilisations in the countryside in the late 1960s were an attempt to redress the balance in favour of the dependent labourer, but the structural imbalances in land ownership could not be resolved through improved wages and working hours.

The Communists saw the new regional authority as offering the solution to the problems which small farmers encountered in gaining access to modern machinery, fertilizers and adequate distribution and marketing. A new regional agricultural development agency would be established, and the local authorities would invest in research and development facilities, agricultural consultancy and the market infrastructure which the consorzi of agro-coops had already pioneered. In line with Togliatti's classic strategy, the 'regione aperta' and the great anti-monopolist campaign required the unity of all farming categories, but there was a new departure insofar as, 'this policy brings together all the forces of the left, Catholics and DC and those oriented towards the Socialists and Republicans in order to make this terrain a point of common research, action and initiative.'¹¹

Anderlini and other commentators have rightly argued that this prefigured the compromesso storico with the DC on a national level.¹² But unlike Berlinguer who saw the historic compromise as a defensive measure aimed at preserving the democratic institutions against a Chilean-style coup, Fanti and his colleagues were more positive in that they believed the PCI had 'educated' the centre parties and the DC in the practices of 'buon governo' so that political and economic collaboration could take place on the basis of mutual respect and commitment. It was clear from the Party's policy on cooperation for example that a tension existed between the belief in working with the

¹¹ Opening speech by Sergio Cavina to the 3rd Regional Conference of the PCI, Bologna, 9th-11th January, 1970, in I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, cit. p.239.

¹² Stephen Hellman has even argued that the very structure of the 'Emilian model' with its emphasis on consensus and institutional mediation, 'recalls the ambitious formulations of the compromesso storico...' Italian Communism in Transition, cit. p.69.

'forze più aperte' of the DC and the Republicans and the need to 'break every link which connects and subordinates cooperation to a Catholic and Republican orientation, to the Federconsorzi and Confagricoltura.'¹³ What Cavina meant by this was that individual Catholics and Republicans would be welcome to join the 'regione aperta' but that their cooperative and trade union organisations were still considered a hostile occupying force within the red sub-culture.

Critics of this 'consociativismo' strategy were quick to point out that the economic prosperity Fanti was seeking to promote could only be achieved through a more intensive and extensive exploitation of Emilian labour. While every effort was being made by the regional development authority to support small business and artisanry, the traditional craft-based nature of the 'modello emiliano' was changing in ways which considerably weakened the power of organised labour. Emilia-Romagna continued to be a significant contributor to the industrial conflict of the early 1970s, but the continuing diffusion of small and very small enterprises made trade union recruitment and organisation very difficult.

In an important article, Fergus Murray has argued that labour militancy in Emilia-Romagna was deliberately lessened by the PCI's influence over the local trade union leadership,

'Workers protests in Emilia during the Hot Autumn were, because of the dominance of the PCI less explosive and more disciplined than those in the North.'¹⁴

¹³ Sergio Cavina, introductory speech to the 3rd regional conference of the PCI, in *I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna*, cit. p.240.

¹⁴ Fergus Murray, 'Flexible Specialisation in the "Third Italy",' *Capital & Class*, No.33, Winter 1987, pp.84-95.

Table 30. Manufacturing Industries¹. Hours lost (000,000s) and national 'league table' position in the top six most strike-prone regions.

Year	E-R	LO	PI	VE	TO	SI
1968	4.1(4)	11.6(1)	5.8(2)	4.7(3)	4.0(4)	1.8(8)
1969	21.6(3)	74.8(1)	37.0(2)	17.4(4)	12.2(5)	3.2(-)
1970	5.9(5)	26.1(1)	14.4(2)	6.8(4)	10.5(3)	0.2(-)
1971	3.3(4)	14.0(1)	7.6(2)	4.7(3)	2.2(7)	1.2(-)

¹ Numbers are given to the first hundred thousand but have not been rounded.

Key: E-R=Emilia-Romagna, LO=Lombardy, PI=Piedmont, VE=Veneto, TO=Tuscany, SI=Sicily.

Source: ISTAT

Murray argues that strike figures suggest that Emilia's working-class tended to strike for demonstrative rather than contractual ends. In fact the high number of workers involved in agrarian and industrial disputes, and the lengths of the disputes themselves do not bear out Murray's assertion, but he is right to support Trigilia's claim that the PCI discouraged disruption in the small firm sector just as it had done after the war.¹⁵

class collaboration

In a similar vein Ferraresi and Tosi argue that in Bologna, 'the Communist Party has paid for its inter-classism through the type of alliances which it has applied - and in its vision of the relationship between the party and the base: a hierarchical vision which demobilises the base at the moment when it is called to the struggle.'¹⁶

¹⁵ Trigilia, Grandi partiti e piccole imprese, pp.122-3, cited in *ibid.* If the regions were 'weighted' according to the number of industrial workers and the relative importance of the industrial sector in the regional economy, Emilia-Romagna would rank even higher in the index of industrial disruptiveness; see table A2.

¹⁶ Franco Ferraresi & Antonio Tosi, 'Crisi delle città e politica urbana', in Graziano, L.

The leadership of the federation were very much alive to the 'contradictions' which inter-classism posed for Communist activists in the factories. Cavina talked of the need to develop the political autonomy of the Party alongside the autonomy of the trade unions. He was also aware that the politicisation of young workers and students was increasingly taking place outside the formal confines of the PCI itself and that there was absolutely no point in shouting generic slogans if this increasingly disillusioned workforce was to be won over to the Party's position.¹⁷

Yet the 'anti-monopoly' alliance which the PCI hoped to build was based on the naive assumption that the small firm sector and the industrial giants such as FIAT were 'corpi separati' and that the activities of the large monopolies were solely aimed at destroying small, family enterprises. In fact as Murray argues and as we have shown, big manufacturers were able to offset their labour rigidity and investment replacement costs during and after the Hot Autumn by sub-contracting into the artisanal sector of Emilia-Romagna and the Veneto. The success of the Emilian model depended on the low-wage and flexible (i.e. precarious) structure of these types of enterprises. It may have been that some of these entrepreneurs were victims of the anti-trade union purges of the 1940s and 1950s, but the 'padroncini rossi' were not averse to doing business with their former employers. In the late 1970s this relationship became more formalised with groups of artisans' firms forming consortia which had enough manufacturing capacity to take on the complete sub-assembly work of large manufacturing companies. In turn this brought in more investment capital and hi-tec industries which were keen to exploit this ready-made skills base.¹⁸

Although artisans and small business owners benefited from this process, the trade union movement was severely weakened by the effects of industrial restructuring. An FLM survey of Bolognese engineering companies conducted in the early 1980s found that of

& Tarrow, S. La crisi italiana, Einaudi, Turin, 1979, p.592.

¹⁷ Sergio Cavina, speech to the 3rd regional conference of the PCI, in I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, cit. p.251.

¹⁸ Murray, cit.

the 88,000 workers employed in the engineering sector, 28,000 (32%) worked for artisan firms employing less than 16 people. In these firms, the FLM admitted that unionisation was 'scarce' and it is estimated that the rate of unionisation throughout the whole of Emilia-Romagna's manufacturing industries was less than 50%. An organiser Murray interviewed in 1982 estimated that union membership within the small engineering firms was around 200 (6%) in a workforce of between 3 and 4,000 and falling. Employment conditions reflected those in other non-unionised sectors, and an earlier survey which the FLM commissioned in 1977 revealed that of 71 engineering firms contacted, 40 had no employment contract, and of the firms that did have contracts these only applied to wages and working hours and conditions were subject to no union supervision or control.¹⁹

By the 1st regional congress of the Emilia-Romagnan party in 1977, the contradictions of the 'modello bolognese' were accentuated by the impact of the post-1973 fiscal crisis which hit Italy very severely. Local government spending went into reverse and Berlinguer joined his political opponents in calling for a programme of austerity in order to revive the economy and to bring the country's galloping inflation under control.²⁰

In his concluding address to the assembled delegates, Berlinguer made the by now familiar disclaimer that Bologna should not be considered 'a happy island' of actually existing communism. 'Emilia-Romagna,' he stated, 'has never been and will never be a proletarian island in the midst of the sea of Italian society. It has been a focal point of the general contradictions within our country and of the political struggles which from the end of the last century in Italy have revolved around one decisive question: the question of the accession of the working-class to the direction of the society and the

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ 'Berlinguer called on the working people of Italy to make sacrifices and he promised them that these would not be in vain: 'A more austere society will be a more just society, with greater equality, more real freedom, more democracy and more humanity.'" Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, cit. p.356.

state.²¹

Table 31. Total number of votes cast, percentage of the vote, and seats won in administrative elections to the Comune di Bologna, 1975-1985.

Party	1975			1980			1985		
	Votes	%	S	Votes	%	S	Votes	%	S
Due Torri	179,622	49	31	158,585	46	29	151,109	44	29
DC	84,840	23	14	77,548	22	14	77,208	23	15
PSI	34,178	9	5	32,275	9	6	40,970	12	7
PSDI	24,509	7	4	21,840	6	4	10,472	3	2
PRI	10,659	3	1	13,656	4	2	15,373	5	2
PLI	13,535	4	2	13,897	4	2	10,008	3	1
MSI	19,067	5	3	15,787	5	2	17,970	5	3
DP	-	-	-	5,897	2	0	8,967	3	0
AIP	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,967	1	0
PNP	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,623	-	0
PD-UV	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,375	-	0
Lista del Sole	-	-	-	4,467	1	-	-	-	-
Part. Fed.	-	-	-	468	-	-	-	-	-

²¹ Enrico Berlinguer, concluding speech to the 1st regional congress of the PCI Emilia-Romagna, Bologna, April 1977, in *I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna*, cit. p.345.

Source: Comune di Bologna, Annuario statistico, p.225.

Voting percentages have been rounded.

In Emilia, and in Bologna in particular, the PCI had reached its highest point in the administrative elections of 1975 winning an absolute majority in the Comune di Bologna for the first time.²² But Berlinguer's speech did not dwell on the past glories of Emilian Communism. Instead he drew the delegates' attention to the parallels between the Scelban persecution, the massacre of workers at Modena and Reggio and the economic war against the CGIL and the red cooperatives. 'Whoever is conscious of these attacks,' warned Berlinguer, 'should not be surprised at the provocations which were organised last month against the workers' movement in Bologna.'²³

The Communist Party secretary was referring to the events which followed the shooting of a young student by the carabinieri in Bologna on the 11th March; an event which Berlinguer might have been expected to include in the list of Modena and Reggio martyrs. The fact that he did not can only be explained through a careful analysis of what was to become known as the 'Movement of '77', a conjuncture which was to symbolise in an extreme form what can only be described as the crisis of the Bologna model.

²² See Tables 31 & 31.1.

²³ Ibid.

2. The Return of the Repressed: The Movement of '77 and the crisis of the 'model'.

Cronistoria di Marzo '77.

On the morning of the 11th March, 1977, the fundamentalist Catholic group *Comunione e Liberazione* (CL) held a meeting in the Institute of Anatomy at the University of Bologna. A small number of demonstrators from the 'Movement' attempted to get into the lecture hall in order to disrupt the meeting.²⁴ Subsequently a fight broke-out between CL members and the demonstrators and the police were called by the rector of the University and by the CL organisers.²⁵

²⁴ For convenience we will refer to the various groups, cultural organisations and activists who were involved in the mobilisations of March 1977 in Bologna as 'the Movement.' This is not to homogenise a variegated and often conflict-ridden cultural-political milieu, but 'il Movimento' became a generic term for the young urban counter-culture which developed in around the universities in Italy in this period. A comprehensive and fascinating account of the 'fatti di Bologna' by protagonists of the Movement is contained in: Various authors, Bologna marzo 1977...fatti nostri..., Bertani, Verona, 1977.

²⁵ The decision was taken during a meeting of the University Senate at which were present two professors with known links to the PCI. Mayor Zangheri was not informed of the decision, a fact he was to lament in a later interview although he did not say that he would have opposed it. According to the NUS (nucleo universitario socialista), 300 students from CL were present at the assembly in the Institute of Anatomy, and the conflict began when 5 'extraparlamentari' opened the emergency doors to allow their fellow demonstrators into the lecture hall. The CL activists responded by arming themselves with sticks and throwing benches at the door. The CL organisers also called the police, and the 'Movimento' students who were outside realised that the CL were attempting to provoke the forced 'disoccupazione' of the faculty by the carabinieri and police, but by this time events had begun to take their own course. Vittorio De Matteis & Angelo Turchini, Machina. Osservazioni sul rapporto tra movimento, istituzioni, potere a Bologna, Dedalo Libri, Bologna, c.1979, pp.20-22.

Soon a considerable number of police and carabinieri had arrived on the scene and the first violent exchanges occurred between the students and the 'forze dell'ordine.' Tear gas cannisters were fired into the crowd and a molotov was thrown at a police jeep. At this point live gunfire was heard, and at the cross-roads between via Imerio and via Mascarella, the body of a young militant of Lotta Continua, Francesco Lorusso is found dead. Witnesses said they saw a tall, helmeted carabinieri officer take careful aim at the fleeing students. They heard 5,6 or 7 bursts of gunfire from a revolver, 4 of which hit Lorusso who fell ten metres from the corner of the street.²⁶ A plain clothes officer of the Polizia Statale (P.S.) was also seen discharging his revolver into the crowd of students.

This killing was to spark the longest period of violent civil disorder in Bologna's post-war history, and while street battles between the police and the extreme left were a continuous feature of metropolitan life in late '70s Italy, not even Milan or Rome experienced such a severe and protracted battle. Within the space of a few hours, news of Lorusso's death had spread throughout the university and barricades were quickly erected in the central square of the university district, Piazza Verdi. Increasingly large groups of youths took to the streets armed with molotovs which they directed at the remaining police and carabinieri.

A mass meeting of students decided to call on the main trade union federations and the factory councils for support and it was decided to hold a protest march that evening. In the meantime the CL bookshop 'Terra Promessa' (Promised Land) had been completely destroyed and the atmosphere in the university district became increasingly angry and tense. Only the metalworkers' union, the FLM, gave its support to the demonstration and the contingent of some 10-15,000 students moved off without the anticipated support of local workers.²⁷

²⁶ Various Authors, 'Living with an Earthquake' - Italy 1977-8, Red Notes, London, 1978, p.19.

²⁷ Within the leadership of the Camera del Lavoro there appeared to be severe disagreements between officials about whether the unions should participate in the

As the march moved up via Rizzoli several luxury fashion shops had their windows broken and a section of the demonstration attempted to attack the headquarters of the DC and the questura. Pitched battles broke out between the police and the hard-core of the demonstrators and several more windows were broken in via Ugo Bassi. It was at this point that a contingent broke-away from the main demonstration and headed for the railway station which was occupied in a military-style manoeuvre which suggested considerable pre-planning. For almost an hour a serious battle developed between about 400 occupiers and the police and nearly a hundred rounds of ammunition were fired from both sides. It was clear that a sizeable core of the Movement were armed with small calibre pistols and that they were prepared to use them. Later a restaurant was looted in the university district and by nightfall the number of arrests totalled 46.

The following day, many activists boarded coaches for a national demonstration in Rome which had been planned for some time.²⁸ A large number of 'compagni' stayed behind

demonstration or condemn it. The main confederations finally moved to block all cooperation with the Movement and only certain voices inside the FLM were heard to dissent from the decision. A journalist of the Movement even claimed that PCI cars equipped with loudspeakers were touring the working-class neighbourhoods urging supporters to come to the centre to combat the 'fascists' and 'hooligans.' In the light of subsequent reporting of the Movement by the Communist press this account seems entirely credible. G. Buselli, 'Il moderno principe a Bologna', Primo Maggio, IV, 1977, No.8, cited in Machina, cit. p.24.

²⁸ This demonstration had been called some time ago by the extraparliamentary left and independent trade unionists in order to denounce the 'historic compromise' and the PCI endorsed policy of austerity. Many voices inside (and outside) the Movement argued that it was no coincidence that Lorusso had been shot the day before this major demonstration and that the encouragement of 'armed insurrection' by the ultra-left was the key plank in the security services' 'strategy of tension.' Predictably enough the march did degenerate into violence, masked activists wielding P.38s fired on the police while undercover police officers dressed as 'hippies' fired back from behind the riot shields of their uniformed colleagues. Lotta Continua reported that all the major barracks in and

and attempted to join a demonstration which had been organised by the trade union federations in solidarity with Lorusso's family in Piazza Maggiore. In spite of a trade union 'cordon sanitaire' around the square, about half the 4,000 activists from the Movement succeeded in getting through. The platform organisers would not let Lorusso's brother speak nor any other representatives of the Movement.²⁹ At 2pm a press conference was held with journalists and the production-collectives of the free radio stations, but it broke-up when news filtered through of a police attack on the university. Barricades were reinforced and several skirmishes broke-out in the city centre and the university zone. By this time the conflict had started to acquire the characteristics of a 'revolutionary theatre', the police fired volleys of tear gas into the crowded streets and indignant members of the public also began to join together and demanded that they withdraw. An old Communist gave the signal to re-group after each volley of tear gas grenades by playing 'Bandiera Rossa' on his mouth-organ.³⁰

At about 8.30pm the police withdrew and the students held emergency meetings to decide on their next action. It was decided to move to Piazza Maggiore where they could debate with the cittadini just as their predecessors had done in 1968. Shortly after, an armoury was broken into and a considerable number of guns and ammunition were removed. Eye witnesses claimed that those responsible for the break-in were well known local

around Rome had been mobilised in preparation for intervention at a moment's notice. Soldiers were put on full alert once again on 23rd March during the regional general strike. 'Living with an Earthquake', cit. pp.59-62.

²⁹ Once again the FLM was alone in urging dialogue with the students, on the day of the shooting of Lorusso, the provincial secretariat put out a communiqué which declared that the killing was an attempt to outlaw the movement and to divide the workers against the students'. The leaflet stated, 'It is the task of the workers' movement to prevent this design by means of an immediate mass mobilisation together with the students to deny any space to those in the 'forze dell'ordine' and in the city who are trying to provoke an unstoppable spiral of violence.' FLM Bologna, 'Comunicato', 11th March, 1977, AIGER.

³⁰ 'Living with an earthquake', cit. p.21.

criminals. It was also alleged that local fascists and agent-provocateurs were behind the act, but undoubtedly some of the hard core of the Movement who had already decided that the P.38 was a legitimate response to the police violence also profited from the occasion.

All this time, news of the response to the killing of Lorusso had been relayed 'in diretta' by a local free radio station, Radio Alice. Radio Alice was one of the pioneering 'pirate' stations which sprang-up in 1976 and which had been declared legal after the Constitutional Court ruled against the state's monopoly of broadcasting. As one of the most provocative and outspoken of the stations, Alice was considered to be 'the voice of the movement', not least because its editorial policy was to broadcast the opinions of its listeners live (unless they were considered to be 'fascists'), a facility which the state claimed had been used by a group of conspirators to coordinate the street violence against the 'forze dell'ordine'. Late on Saturday, 12th March, the police moved to close Alice down and all the staff who were in the building at the time were arrested on charges of 'association and instigation to commit crimes.'³¹

Rioting in the university district carried on into Sunday morning but when the police returned at dawn with 3,000 men, armoured cars and light tanks, they found the university completely deserted. On Monday 14th March, Francesco Lorusso's funeral was held under the conditions of a blanket ban on any type of demonstration. The PCI refused to attend and the Socialists sent only a token delegation.

³¹ Ibid. p.32. L'Unità was strongly in favour of this hypothesis and the PCI daily described the radio station as, 'one of the principle centres of the grave provocations of the last few days.' The broadcasts were, according to L'Unità, designed to encourage exasperated young people to commit acts of violence. Furthermore the paper's readers were asked to draw parallels between the radio stations which sprang up in Chile in order to destabilise the Allende government and Radio Alice which seemed bent on overthrowing the local Communist administration. By asking 'who exactly is behind Alice', L'Unità sought to connect the CIA organised coup against Allende with recent events in Bologna. L'Unità, 14th March, 1977.

The trade unions called for a one hour strike in the factories at the same time as the funeral and students went to talk to assemblies of workers in the larger factories to explain what had been happening over the last few days. However, an attempt to hold an open air meeting in San Donato was thwarted by the police.³²

The following day a demonstration had been called by the PCI and the other main parliamentary parties together with all three trade union confederations to condemn the killing of Lorusso, but also to denounce the violence and lawlessness of the 'fascists' and 'hooligans'.³³ An attempt by a small group of students to lobby the high school students of the Aldini-Variani technical college failed when they found it closed by order of the comune. Not only that, but SASIB workers went on strike and picketed the school when they heard that a 'horde of autonomists' were coming to make trouble. By this stage it was obvious to even the most optimistic of the Movement activists that the solidarity which existed between students and groups of workers in 1968-9 had no chance of being re-enacted, particularly after the SASIB workers' intervention.

While the 'official' rally took place in Piazza Maggiore, Communist and trade unionist stewards ensured that the large gathering of students who had assembled in via Rizzoli would not be able to get into the main square. After having been once again refused permission to speak, Giovanni Lorusso, Francesco's brother, read his speech to a singing and chanting crowd of some 10,000 students who staged a sit-down in protest at the

³² 'Living with an Earthquake' cit. p.26.

³³ A joint PCI-DC-PSI-PRI-PSDI leaflet on behalf of the regional authority and the province and commune of Bologna was put out which declared, 'Bologna, Emilia-Romagna, the democratic institutions, the people's movement have seen the signs in these last few days of a very serious attack, of a genuine subversive onslaught.' It urged young people and democrats to energetically oppose this violence and went on to state in smaller print, 'The widest solidarity goes out to all those who have been affected by violence and intolerance, to the guardians of public order, to the townspeople and to the shopkeepers;' 'Appello ai cittadini di Bologna e dell'Emilia-Romagna', Bologna, March 1977, AIGER.

refusal of the 'official' rally organisers to allow them into the square. The demonstration then headed for Piazza dei Martiri, and although many townspeople left the main rally to join the counter-protest it was clear that the Movement was marching on its own.³⁴

The political parties and the trade unions led by the PCI's impressive organisation had succeeded in mobilising a wide body of public opinion against not only the acts of vandalism perpetrated by certain parts of the movement, but against the entire raison d'être of the youth and student protests. The 'historic compromise' was cemented much more firmly together in the joint operations between the parties against the 'force eversive.' However, there were many inside the PCI, the PSI and DC who were concerned that the 'moral panic' that Renato Zangheri and other Communist leaders were generating could have dangerous long term consequences. It is important therefore to examine the question that every commentator and sociologist began to ask in the weeks and months following the March 11th events: 'Why the revolt?', and more specifically, 'Why Bologna?'

A Body without Organs: Anatomy of the Movement of '77.

The Movement of '77 presents enormous problems for social scientists and intellectuals who wish to explain how it came into existence and what its goals and objectives were. Umberto Eco argues that this is because the continual re-coding of the Movement's language and symbols and the intensity and variety of its ironic discourse excluded the scribes of 'il potere' as well as potentially sympathetic intellectuals and activists from its subculture. By inverting well-known PCI and trade union slogans the Movement parodied the formalised vocabulary of protest of the parliamentary left. In this way Lumley argues, the Movement demonstrated its familiarity with the mainstream language of the organised working class, but while this is obviously true, it was a familiarity which bred a good deal of contempt on both sides.³⁵

³⁴ Ibid. p.27.

³⁵ States of Emergency, cit. p.303.

Thus when the students chanted slogans such as 'Gui and Tanassi are innocent, the students are delinquents' at a trade union demonstration in Rome, the slogan was 're-translated' by the workers as 'Gui and Tanassi are delinquents, the students are innocent.' Eco suggests that it was not that the workers did not understand the ironical content of the message, but that they could not accept it as a means of political expression.³⁶

In 1968 trade unionist leaders such as Luciano Lama had grown accustomed to being called reformists by student leaders, but at least 'reformism' belonged to a grammar which both movements agreed on and understood. When Lama made the mistake of coming to the occupied University of Rome in February 1977 he found a platform already occupied by a dummy version of himself complete with pipe and a large valentine's heart which read, 'Nessuno L'Ama' (no one loves him).³⁷ The presence of 2,000 PCI and trade union stewards and a sizeable number of autonomists almost guaranteed that there would be violence, but although most students did not take part in the fighting, many saw Lama's visit or 'fatherly talk' as an act of provocation.

The Movement appeared to assume the collective role of the precocious child 'sending-up' the father (the state) and the mother (the old PCI, the old workers' movement) in a show of petulant intellectual superiority. This is not to suggest that the social conflict of the late 1970s can be reduced to the familial Oedipal triangle, but rather that the generational aspect of the confrontation between Movement, parties and institutions has

³⁶ Umberto Eco, 'Une nouvelle langue; l'Italo-Indien' (trans.) from L'Espresso, 10th April, 1977 in Fabrizio Calvi (Ed), Italie 77. Le 'mouvement', les intellectuels, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1977, p.125.

³⁷ Taking up Berlinguer and Lama's call for workers to restrain their pay demands so that the depressed Italian economy might recover in order to provide 'jam tomorrow', a group of Metropolitan Indians (the satirical/surrealist 'terrorists' of the Movement) chanted 'Sacrifices, sacrifices we want sacrifices', 'More churches, fewer homes', and 'More work, less pay.' They were lampooning the old Stalinist dichotomies that Orwell had satirised in Animal Farm, i.e 'Four legs good, two legs bad!' Living with an Earthquake, cit. p.53.

LAMA STANA

NEL TIBET

O⁷ MERLEND PONTY
CI GUARDA
E APPROVA

VIA IL PCI

perhaps been neglected in the rush to understand the expressly political component of the challenge to the existing order.³⁸

It was this elaboration of a new 'metalanguage' (Italo-Indian, Mao-dadaist, transversalist) based on what Melucci has called 'other codes' that sociologists and cultural critics had great difficulty in understanding and explaining.³⁹ But while sophisticated intellectuals tried desperately to grasp the rudiments of this language; 14 year olds were able to comprehend the syntagmatic array of films (from 'Yellow Submarine' to 'Lassie Come Home'), music (from Strauss to Frank Zappa), and literature (from Lewis Carol to Majakovsky) which were discordantly spliced together in the press and radio broadcasts

³⁸ Achille Ardigò has described the student's experience of the university as a form of 'prolonged adolescence' which defers or even circumscribes completely the normal rites of passage which a young adult would have to perform. He argues that this is not the fault of the individual undergraduate but a necessary outcome of an economic system which uses the universities as 'parking lots' for intellectual labour. It was because in the mid-1970s, the Italian economy had a large surplus of intellectual labour that the laurea was no longer sufficient to guarantee a career, particularly for arts graduates. The 'un-guaranteed' (non-garantiti) were a feature of the disfunction of reformist Keynesianism and it was not surprising that their reaction against the state, the political parties and the older generation who made promises they could not fulfil would be an angry and violent one. Achille Ardigò in Gianluigi Degli Esposti, Perché la rivolta. Giovani sotto inchiesta, Cappelli Editore, Bologna, 1978, pp.24-43.

³⁹ The authors of a 'Lettere dal Movimento' described the relationship between the intellectuals and the young in Gramscian terms as a conflict between the 'generazione dei vecchi' and the 'generazione dei giovani.' The older generation could not understand because they did not want to understand 'fino in fondo', whereas only the work of Pier Paolo Pasolini in Le belle bandiere showed how a radical dialogue between different generations could be positive and productive. Sandro Iovinelli & Silverio Novelli (Eds), Lettere dal 'Movimento'. Cari compagni... saluti non a pugni chiusi perché a sto punto non so che significa, Napoleone, Rome, 1978.

of the Movement.⁴⁰

This hermeneutical crisis which most intellectuals over the age of 30 were facing was not however an exclusively Italian phenomenon. All over Europe, 1977 was the year in which the 'marginaux' took to the streets in ever increasing numbers, united in the anti-authoritarian punk subculture which had grown up in inner-city Britain the year before. But unlike the 'my generation' iconoclasts of the '50s and '60s, the cynicism and anger of the 1970s rebels could not easily be channelled into the consumption of new cultural commodities and the cultural watchword of 1977 was 'do it yourself.'⁴¹ Indeed what distinguished '77 from the counter-culture of the 1960s was the violent rejection of 'packaged' alternative culture from pop music to politics.

The 'generation of year 9' as Eco described the participants of the Movement of '77 were also in revolt against the values of the 'summer of love' and the pacifist soft politics of the '60s drop-outs. Culturally at least Eco is right to suggest that the Movement of '77 wanted to make a tabula rasa of '68, yet there was also a sense in which the older leaders of '77 were re-playing the 1969 revolt in the high schools for greater stakes and that for them the 'fatti di Marzo' represented a culmination of the anti-authoritarian struggles of the previous decade.⁴²

⁴⁰ Umberto Eco, 'La communication subversive neuf ans après '68' (trans.) of an article in Corriere della Sera, 25th February, 1977 in Fabrizio Calvi (Ed), Italie 77. Le 'mouvement', les intellectuels, cit. p.111.

⁴¹ An impression of this underground cultural explosion can be gained from the estimated 300 'garage-bands' which sprang-up in Bologna in 1977. Some of the city's most popular groups such as Skiantos became nationally famous and the patois of Bologna's urban periphery could even be heard in the street slang of Rome and Milan.

⁴² A key figure in the Bologna movement and one of the most important theorists of the Movement of '77, Franco Berardi (Bifo), sees 1977 as, 'the culminating moment of the process which began in '68,' but also as an, 'imminent precipitation of the forms of socialty and culture which have animated the revolutionary movements of the twentieth century.' Franco Berardi, Dell'innocenza. Interpretazione del '77, Agalev, Bologna,

Although the Movement has been frequently depicted as a purely violent, negative or nihilist rebellion in the press and by establishment commentators. Such a reading privileges the P.38 and the 'partito armato' over the 'creative' and feminist wing of the movement which rejected the cult of violence and the neo-Leninist style of *Autonomia Organizzata*. However, as Lumley contends, the degeneration of the street conflict, the special laws and generalised and indiscriminate persecution of the Movement allowed the 'armed faction' to impose its agenda on the rest of the groups.⁴³ The disappearance of the Metropolitan Indians and the 'Vipere Padane' (as they were called in Bologna) was symptomatic of the decline of the 'creative wing' and of the transition from a culture of revolt which expressly labelled itself as 'jacquerie' to a much more desperate and vengeful Thermidor.

The 'appeal of the intellectuals' and the 'Conference on Dissent.'

In July 1977 a group of leading French intellectuals including Jean-Paul Sartre, Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, Félix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze issued an appeal which condemned the arrest and persecution of Movement activists and the closing down of radical bookshops and radio stations and demanded the release of all political prisoners. It immediately sparked-off an angry debate in the Italian press, and several Communist intellectuals rushed to condemn the appeal, accusing their French colleagues of excessive naivety or willful misrepresentation of the facts. Even Sciascia who was no apologist for the PCI leadership or the historic compromise accused Sartre and Guattari of national chauvinism for assuming that Italy's repressive characteristics had not been manifest and

1989. In his essay 'Il cielo è caduto sulla terra', which was issued as a leaflet in February 1977, he describes the struggle for 'autonomia' as necessarily revolutionary and opposed to the containment strategy of the PCI which was described as an 'instrument of terror and repression against the emarginated, the young, the unemployed and the students.' 'Finalmente il cielo è caduto sulla terra. La rivoluzione è giusta necessaria possibile' in Lucio Castellano (Ed), Aut.Op. La storia e i documenti: da Potere Operaio all'Autonomia organizzata, Savelli Editori, Perugia, 1980, p.145.

⁴³ See Lumley, States of Emergency, chapter nineteen, cit.

apparent to ordinary Italians for some time.⁴⁴ Paolo Spriano described Italy as, '...the freest country in the capitalist west,' while even il Manifesto accused Sartre and his co-signatories of 'exaggerating.' The Corriere della Sera tried to connect the authors of the appeal with the anti-Marxist 'nouveaux philosophes' and Renato Zangheri angrily told Le Monde that instead of showering accusations from Paris, these intellectuals should actually come to Bologna to discover whether the repression existed for themselves.

The appeal committee took up Zangheri's offer and the 'conference on dissent' took place in the following September. For a few days the Movement was briefly re-activated as tens of thousands of young people from all over Europe descended on Bologna for an international conference on dissent.⁴⁵ They came expecting to find armoured cars but instead they were greeted by marquees and free refreshments and entertainment courtesy of the comune. There was no need for autoriduzione, since Zangheri had decided that the city would foot the bill. It was an important sign of the PCI's 'opening to the ultra-left' but by then the city fathers had little to fear since rather than constituting the renaissance of the Movement, the September conference proved to be its requiem.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ L. Sciascia, 'Le droit (et le revers)' (trans.), La Stampa, 11th August, 1977 in F. Calvi, (Ed) Italie '77, cit. p.212.

⁴⁵ Paul Ginsborg describes the conference itself as 'a damp squib, marked by opportunist interventions by the French "nouveaux philosophes" and by squalid hand-to-hand fighting for control of the microphone...' But however unruly the conference might have been, it is quite wrong to argue as the Corriere della Sera did that the French visitors were 'nouveaux philosophes.' Gilles Deleuze in a pamphlet entitled, 'Signs and Events' attacked 'nouveaux philosophes' writers such as Andre Glucksman for being anti-Marxist and pro-capitalist, while Jean-Paul Sartre said that, '...the nouveaux philosophes are nothing, they aren't philosophers, they are people who are disgusted by Marxism who want to make a career for themselves, they are publishing company directors, they are nothing.' 'Libertà e Potere non vanno in coppia', Lotta Continua, 15th September, 1977, reprinted in Various authors, Lo stalinismo italiano, Agalev, Bologna, 1990, p.42.

⁴⁶ Berardi has written that, 'Unfortunately, the Convention turned into a reunion against repression, and this greatly reduced the theoretical importance and the possibilities of this

According to Guattari, '...it seemed (to the people who created Radio Alice) that a movement that could succeed in destroying the vast capitalist-bureaucratic machine world would, a fortiori, be capable of constructing a new world. Collective competence would grow with collective action; it is not necessary at this stage to be able to produce blueprints for a substitute society.'⁴⁷ But any political movement needs to be in broad agreement about its aims and objectives, the culture of the void and the 'micro-politics of desire' could never be a vehicle for the concrete transformation of society, and the Movement's theorists could only take consolation from their belief that an alternative cultural practice was in itself revolutionary.

This illusion could not persist for long, and the Movement's house journals Zut and A/traverso announced in typically sensationalist style, 'The revolution is over. We've won!' However this time the publishers were not inviting an ironic reading, at least in the first statement. What remained of the Movement 'dissolved itself', although this might have seemed a contradiction in terms given the refusal of most of the Movement to organise itself in the first place.⁴⁸ In practice, the collectives disappeared, the small publishers folded and the free radio became increasingly party oriented as PDUP and the remnants of Lotta Continua reformed under the banner of Democrazia Proletaria and swept-up the debris. Leninism, that repression-proof stand-by of the extraparliamentary left, offered its cheerful orthodoxies to comfort the wounded. The rest, and there were many more of them, found comradeship in the needle, began inward journeys via Lacan and radical psychoanalysis, or outward ones to different if equally bleak 'ghetto scenes' in Berlin, Paris and London.

period...the gathering concluded without producing any direction for the future, any new program, and without advancing the Movement...A long crisis had begun for the Movement, a crisis that involved dispersion, disorganization and above all, the lack of prospects.' Franco Berardi, 'Anatomy of Autonomy' in 'Italy: Autonomia. Post-Political Politics', Semiotexte, Intervention Series, Vol.III, No.3, New York, 1980, p.160.

⁴⁷ Félix Guattari, 'Millions and millions of potential Alices' in Molecular Revolutions. Psychiatry and Politics, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1984, p.241.

⁴⁸ Berardi, Dell'Innocenza, cit. p.8.

The 'Plague-Bearers' and the PCI.

If the Movement's targetting of the Zangheri administration had stemmed from the extraparliamentary left's hatred of the historic compromise and the right-ward swing of the PCI towards an increasingly 'law-and-order agenda',⁴⁹ the clash between Movement and municipality was also the result of the city administration's greater accessibility to local protest. As Friedland has argued,

'The electoral-representative arrangements which underpin municipal governments make them vulnerable to popular discontent...local governments are often important loci for popular participation because they are structurally accessible, the point of daily contact between citizen and state. The relative visibility of local government policies and the relative accessibility of local government agencies make them a more susceptible target of political opposition than other levels of the state.'⁵⁰

Unlike in 1968 when the Party had sought to use its University organisation to direct the movement towards the PCI's national 'structural reform' strategy, in 1977 the Communists and their administrative leaders had become too closely identified with the government of national solidarity, with the call for austerity and the war on the 'enemies of the Constitution and the Republic' to play a genuinely oppositional role in civil society. The local state which Giuseppe Dozza had built in the teeth of fierce opposition from Scelba's prefects, became in the eyes of the Movement increasingly co-terminous with the nation-state and the hated Interior Ministry of Francesco Cossiga. Zangheri's 'conspiracy theory', his support for the police intervention, his ambiguous attitude

⁴⁹ See Stuart Hall et al, Policing the Crisis. Mugging, the State and Law and Order, Macmillan, London, 1978, for an explanation of the 'law-and-order agenda' in the case of Britain in the 1970s.

⁵⁰ Friedland, R. et al 'Political conflict, urban structure, and fiscal crisis,' International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, Vol.1, 1977, pp.449,451 in Saunders, Social Theory and the Urban Question, cit. p.301.

Il volto civile e democratico della città riaffermato ieri dalla protesta popolare

La compattezza dei lavoratori e dei cittadini bolognesi dice «no» ai corpi estranei che inquinano il libero pacifico confronto di idee - Sciopero di un'ora domani nelle aziende del Bolognese



PARTITO COMUNISTA ITALIANO

Federazione di Bologna

Da alcune settimane è in atto a Bologna una torbida manovra di provocazione e un attacco contro le istituzioni democratiche e la stessa convivenza civile, i diritti di libertà e di organizzazione, patrimonio di tutta la popolazione.

Gli atti di violenza e di devastazione nulla hanno a che fare con l'emozione e lo sdegno suscitati dall'uccisione dello studente Francesco Lo Russo. Gruppi ben individuati di provocatori fanno leva sul disagio reale dei giovani e degli studenti, per scavare un solco tra settori delle masse studentesche, i lavoratori e la città, per seminare confusione e panico nella popolazione con atti di squadristico, per rendere sempre più arduo alle forze dell'ordine il compito di tutelare la libertà e la sicurezza dei cittadini.

L'uccisione a Torino del brigadiere Giuseppe Ciotta, i gravi incidenti di Poma e di altre città confermano che quanto avviene a Bologna si inserisce in tentativi che si propongono di colpire le forze democratiche e popolari, le loro conquiste sociali e politiche.

I comunisti bolognesi

parte fondamentale della vita democratica chiamano i lavoratori, i giovani, gli antifascisti alla mobilitazione e alla vigilanza di massa per stroncare la violenza, riaffermare - nello sviluppo e nel consolidamento dell'ordine democratico - la difesa dello Stato repubblicano nato dalla Resistenza.

P.C.I. Federazione di Bologna

13 marzo 1977

towards the killing of Lorusso, which took a back-seat to the PCI's solidarity with the bottegai victims of teppismo, enraged the students and many on the left of the PCI.⁵¹ However the national leadership stood firmly behind Zangheri's support for the forces of law-and-order and the description of the Movement as 'fascists', while expressions such as 'black shirts' and 'squadrace' fell thick and fast from the lips of Communists as diverse as Amendola and Pajetta. The Movement of '77 had become the new folk-devils of Italian society, and Zangheri was outraged that they had brought their contagion to the healthy environs of Red Bologna.

Yet as the violence subsided and the tear gas began to clear, while many PCI hierarchs still saw the leaders of the Movement of '77 as 'plague bearers' (as Berlinguer had described them at the Festa dell'Unità in Modena), many Communists knew that the 'ragazzi di settantasette' were not the devils they had been painted, not least because some of them were their own sons and daughters. In an attempt to explain why Lama had been chased out of Rome University, one of the Communist Party's most respected intellectuals, Alberto Asor Rosa, wrote of the existence of 'two societies' in the Italy of 1977. The first was represented by the organised working class and the second by marginalised and unemployed youth; 'non-garantiti' for whom state legislation and the trade unions offered no protection against unemployment, under-employment and non-representation.⁵² It was tempting for many Communists to join with Asor Rosa in

⁵¹ See for example, 'Zangheri: c'è stato un complotto', La Repubblica, 15th March, 1977, and Zangheri's speech to the Bologna Confesercenti conference in which he likened the events of March to the fascist violence of 1920-21. He confessed that the city administration's mistake was in not recognising that the acts of vandalism and autoriduzione should have been 'strangled at birth' by the forces of law and order. 'No-one should delude themselves said Zangheri - amidst loud applause - that our tolerance means giving in. We should know how to discuss and respect other ideas: but we will not give into violence or force...' 'I commercianti chiedono con forza un nuovo corso politico nel Paese', L'Unità, 3rd April, 1977.

⁵² A. Asor Rosa, Le due società, Einaudi, Turin, 1977, in Lumley, States of Emergency, cit. p.308.

condemning the state and (to a much lesser extent) the trade unions for creating this 'stato di disagio' among the young. However in the case of Bologna this meant pointing the accusing finger at the 'modello' which PCI leaders had cheered to the echo for delivering more votes than ever before in the elections of 1975 and 1976. By the mid-1970s with their control over the region, the province and the comune complete, the Communists had to admit that in a partial but significant sense, 'l'état c'est nous.'

Unsurprisingly therefore Zangheri was unable to agree with Asor Rosa's 'two societies' theme although he did acknowledge that special problems were presented by the large presence of southern students and 'fuori sede' particularly in regard to housing.⁵³ Generally, Zangheri said that employment levels, service provision and general well-being was high, although he admitted that among the unemployed there were a significant number of young people, and in particular high school and university graduates.⁵⁴

⁵³ In fact Zangheri was probably correct to identify Bologna as 'the biggest southern university in Italy'. In the accademic year 1976-1977 there were 57,500 students registered at Bologna University (more than twice the number in 1968) of which it is estimated that 40,000 came from provinces outside Bologna, and among these a large proportion would have come from the south. (Comune di Bologna, Annuario statistico, 1986, p.128.) Because of poor university facilities and the lower status of a southern degree, if they are in a position to be able to, many students preferred to enroll in a northern university in order to increase their employment prospects and to perhaps enjoy a more liberal life-style than certainly young women would be allowed in their home towns.

⁵⁴ Ibid. p.18 Vittorio Capecechi saw the problem in much starker terms. As the research director for the FLM in Bologna he described how the tertiary sector in the province of Bologna had began to contract in the second half of the 1970s leading to an over-supply of graduates and high-school leavers who were traditionally attracted to these professions. Although the metal mechanical industries continued to expand, these firms had no use for arts or even for science and engineering graduates who were well versed in theory but who had no practical experience of manufacturing. Degli Esposti, Perché la rivolta?, cit.p.59.

Zangheri suggested that the exasperation of the students from outside Bologna may be a result of arriving to find so much wealth and affluence in the city and assuming that they should be able to enjoy it too without realising that this is the product of 'struggles, battles and sacrifices' and that it had not been offered on a plate.⁵⁵

If the subtext of Zangheri's observation was that the Movement were nothing other than 'fuori sede' petty-bourgeois 'figli di papa', he was an astute enough politician to realise that if the shop-window of Italian Communism was not to be broken again, something concrete had to be done to harmonise relations between the city and the university. But as with the M.S. of 1968, the PCI was only able to propose an institutional solution to the youth and student problem.⁵⁶ Since the Movement could not and would not provide the PCI and Bologna's administration with responsible spokesmen, the Party contented itself with involving the Socialists⁵⁷ and the opposition in a 'profound analysis' of the

⁵⁵ Ibid. pp.18-19.

⁵⁶ The Emilian Communist leadership wanted to integrate the universities more fully into the regional planning apparatus and called for a modernisation of courses and teaching methods. The PCI criticised the Malfatti reforms for their threat to 'open access' (this had been the original catalyst of the faculty occupations earlier in 1977), but the Communists were less forthcoming about how they proposed to overcome the chronic overcrowding in the universities and the problem of graduate unemployment. See, Luciano Guerzoni, 'Relazione introduttiva - 1 Congresso regionale del PCI-Emilia Romagna,' Bologna, 14th-17th April 1977, in I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, cit. pp.319-320

⁵⁷ The PSI took a more open stance on the Movement of '77 which allowed it to be critical of the wilder statements of local PCI spokesmen. There are two possible explanations for the Socialists' 'softer' line, the most obvious is that they saw some electoral advantage in distancing themselves from the PCI's position and the other is that, in Bologna at least, the PSI was becoming a power base for the post-'68 generation who found that the opportunities for political advancement were far greater in the PSI than in the rigidly hierarchical PCI. Having come from a movementist background, these young Socialist leaders such as Franco Piro had much in common with the anti-Communist

problems which confronted young people and the reasons for the violence of the protest.⁵⁸

The trade unions, the federation leadership and the administrative representatives were concerned that they had in Zangheri's words 'been taken by surprise' by the Movement of '77.⁵⁹ Criticisms were made of the federation leadership's complacency in ignoring the changing character of the local economy and the problems it posed for the non-integrated sections of the province's population. However, this critique which had been advanced in particular by the '68 generation in the local PCI hierarchy went far deeper than a specific response to the 'fatti di Marzo'⁶⁰ since it called into question the

iconclasts of '77. For an assessment of the PSI's 'pursuit' of the generation of year 9, see Gianfranco Pasquino, 'Il PSI. Un alternativa per il Movimento o un movimento per l'Alternativa?', Il Mulino, No.250, XXVI, March-April, 1977, pp.250-259.

⁵⁸ Because the political will was lacking, Salvatore Sechi argues that the promise made by Zangheri to open a dialogue with the students, 'without reservations and preconditions' had little outcome. 'Il PCI: l'albero, la foresta e la nuova peste', Il Mulino, No.250, 1977, p.280. Instead the PCI contented itself with the establishment of 'comitati di difesa dell'ordine democratico e per la sicurezza dei cittadini' which were more of an exercise in public relations than an attempt to provide a concrete response to the youth revolt. See the speech of Luciano Guerzoni in *ibid.* p.318.

⁵⁹ Renzo Imbeni, secretary of the PCI in Bologna, at the XVth party congress of the federation asked, 'what were the mistakes and the limitations of our initiative, if a part of the youth was able to direct its own dissatisfaction even against the party and the democratic institutions?' (Emphasis added) While Berlinguer at his speech to the regional congress admitted that, 'we are not immune from the vices of bureaucratism and hierchism.' Marzio Barbagli & Piergiorgio Corbetta, 'Partito e movimento: aspetti e rinnovamenti del PCI', Inchiesta, Year VIII, No.31, Jan-Feb, 1978, pp.3-46.

⁶⁰ Antonia La Forgia who was the secretary of the PCI University Section and a leading figure in the occupation of the Physics faculty (see above chapter six, section one) had risen to the position of PCI group leader on Bologna city council by 1977. In a round-

'administrationist' culture which had overtaken the PCI and led to calls for a re-definition of the Party's strategy which finally resulted in the first regional congress in April 1977.⁶¹

The Historic Compromise in Bologna

Paradoxically, it was the post-Fantian generation of technocratic reformers who came under attack for their conservative attitude to local government and their reluctance to institute a specifically political agenda. The striving for consensus and 'consociativismo' had diluted the Party's principles so effectively, argued the left, that Communist administrators no longer knew what they stood for. As De Matteis and Turchini put it, 'In Bologna the political intellectual tends to become an administrative intellectual,' and one might add, an intellectual who begins to see administration as an end in itself. With the 1975-76 fiscal crisis and the Stamati decree which almost eliminated local government fiscal autonomy, the administrative agenda had to be re-drawn in the light of resource

table discussion with the FGCI periodical La Città Futura, La Forgia accepted that the PCI had experienced difficulty in imposing its class hegemony over the Movement of '77 just as it had been difficult in 1968 to weld together the student movement with the workers' movement. He attributed some of the blame to the national leadership of the Party which failed to recognise the impact that 40,000 'extra-provincia' students would have on the base culture of the city but, but he also claimed that the PCI had been slow to reflect on the changing nature of the 'mass' and had become dangerously time-locked in its conception of the working-class. 'Il partito, gli studenti, gli intellettuali - Una riflessione sul dissenso e la "criminalizzazione"', La Città Futura, No.9, 6th July, 1977.

⁶¹ The distinction between the preceding regional conferences and the regional congress was perhaps more one of a style than substance, although the 'congress' denomination implied a plenary assembly rather than a forum for the discussion of policy objectives. This reflected the growing importance of the regional party apparatus which in turn took its legitimacy from the PCI's control of the regional assembly. See Robert Leonardi, 'Longitudinal change in councillor attitudes towards the regional institution, 1970-1988' in Leonardi, R. & Nanetti, R. (Eds) The Regions and European Integration, cit. p.49.

constraints and hence the political priorities of the giunta came under much closer scrutiny within the federation.⁶²

Guido Fanti had encouraged the administrative intellectuals to develop their own political agenda in the comune and the region, and this had been justified by the exigencies of the 'regione aperta' strategy and the need for autonomy in negotiations with coalition partners and opposition groups. However, the 'open region' strategy which was already under great strain after Fanti's resignation as Regional President in May 1976, could not survive the crisis of 1977. In 1970, Emilia-Romagna had been the first regional administration to experiment with the 'historic compromise' which Enrico Berlinguer was to announce three years later.⁶³ and Bologna symbolised the type of political cohabitation which Berlinguer sought to promote on a national level.⁶⁴ But if Emilia had to an extent anticipated the 'compromesso storico' in 1970, in 1977 it was the first to experience its demise. During the PSI's vote of no confidence in the regional giunta, the DC capogruppo, Menziani gave his reasons for torpedoing the regional 'compromesso storico.'

'...Our refusal is based on the fact that we consider the conception, in which the defence of the institutions against destructive attacks works better in conditions of confusion

⁶² See chapter five above and the graph on municipal expenditure, Figure 4.

⁶³ On the development of the historic compromise and its consequences for the PCI see Peter Lange, 'Crisis and Consent, Change and Compromise: Dilemmas of Italian Communism in the 1970s' in P. Lange & S. Tarrow (Eds), Italy in Transition, London, 1980.

⁶⁴ Renato Zangheri highlighted the significance which the historic compromise had for the PCI in Bologna, 'This compromise consists of joining in the necessity of planning and working together, all forces in the population, whether Communist, socialist or Catholic...This, of course, implies a Christian Democratic Party which initiates an energetic process of self-criticism and which just as energetically suppresses its tendency to arrogant, improper use of power. What we are doing in Bologna fits organically into this PCI policy.' Red Bologna, cit. p.194.

rather than in a situation where the role of each political force is clear, to be deeply mistaken if not politically unprofitable.⁶⁵

For the DC it was certainly more electorally profitable to allow the Communists to assume full and exclusive responsibility for the events of March. Had Botteghe Oscure looked to Emilia for an indication of how 'consociativismo' could work out in practice, Berlinguer might have had reason to question the Christian Democrats' real commitment to 'national solidarity.'⁶⁶

With the appointment of Renzo Imbeni to the direzione of the PCI in 1976, the national Communist leadership had at least recognised the electoral and strategic importance of Bologna as a 'punto caldo.' But there was another and more significant reason for Imbeni's elevation, and this was directly related to the increasing criticism of the giunte rosse and their perceived lack of political accountability. With Imbeni's heightened status, the Party 'machine' had a federal secretary who was prepared to restore Party discipline and to impose democratic centralism on the more wayward elements of the municipal, cooperative and trade union apparatus.

Imbeni earned himself the reputation of the 'wood-cutter' for his energetic restructuring of the federation; but in practice his re-organisation of the Bologna PCI was more of a 'damage-limitation exercise' aimed at restoring party unity and harmonising relations between the federation, the comune, and the collateral organisations.⁶⁷ Imbeni's defence of the secretariat's swift condemnation of the violence of the 11th March confirmed his advocacy of 'my party right or wrong', but in private, criticisms were being levelled not only at Zangheri's 'Sun King'-like leadership style, but also at the Party's subordination

⁶⁵ Cited in Robert Leonardi, 'Political developments and institutional change in Emilia-Romagna,' cit. p.23.

⁶⁶ Anderlini has described the 'consociative' politics in Emilia-Romagna in the mid-1970s as a natural outcome of the 'consociativismo implicito' of the 1960s. Terra rossa, cit. p.143.

⁶⁷ Machina, cit. p.97.

of its strategy to the professional and commercial ceti medi who (with the exception of the artisans) did not appear to repay in votes what the PCI invested in political concessions.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ It was ironic that for all Renato Zangheri's appeals to the commercianti to join with the Communists in the struggle against fascism and subversion that the neo-fascist MSI-Destra Nazionale Party, after the Christian Democrats, attracted more shop-keeper votes than any other party in the period 1972-1976. In these three elections the MSI-DN took 19%, 17.9% and 13.1% of the commercianti vote. In the same elections, the DC took 53.6%, 57.8% and 67.5% of the commercianti electorate which suggested that although the votes of the far-right declined, they were being collected by the Christian Democrats and not the parties of the left. See Fausto Anderlini, 'I caratteri territoriali del comportamento di voto' in Anderlini, F. Schadee, H. & Corbetta, P. Comportamento elettorale città e territorio. Le elezioni amministrative nell'area metropolitana bolognese, Clueb, Bologna, 1981, p.100. See Tables 32 and 33.

Table 32. PCI share of the votes of different occupational categories in the province of Bologna, 1968-1976.

	1968	1972	1975	1976
Manual Workers	81.0	86.2	90.8	90.7
Artisans	57.3	54.9	60.4	61.6
Service workers (basic grade)	48.6	37.2	52.9	49.5
White-collar employees (salaried)	3.7	2.8	9.5	5.2
Shop-keepers & commercial trades	2.7	4.0	0.0	1.5
Managers & professionals	2.7	2.2	0.1	1.5

Source: Anderlini, Corbetta & Schadee, Comportamento elettorale città e territorio, p.102.

Table 32.1. Total share of PCI vote by occupational category, 1972-1976.

	1972	1975	1976
Farm workers	1.6	1.5	1.4
Manual workers	61.4	57.7	58.4
Artisans	25.3	24.7	26.0
Service workers (basic grade)	8.9	11.2	11.0
White-collar workers (salaried)	1.6	4.8	2.7
Shop-keepers & commercial trades	0.6	0.0	0.2
Managers and professionals	0.5	0.0	0.3

Source: Anderlini, Corbetta & Schadee, *Comportamento elettorale città e territorio*, p.100.

Imbeni's swift translation from federal secretary to sindaco in 1980 represented a return to the traditional pattern of élite selection within the PCI.⁶⁹ After a decade of experimentation, for the most part positive, it was felt that a period of consolidation was necessary. The PCI's dramatic transition to power in every major city in Italy in 1975 was reversed in the successive administrative elections and Bologna once more stood alone

⁶⁹ Before the appointment of Zangheri as mayor, Communist civic leaders had generally been party career functionaries and not intellectuals. Apart from Giuseppe Dozza who enjoyed a special prestige within the PCI in his own right, all the other mayors of Bologna (Fanti and Imbeni) had been federal secretaries and their assessori had held senior positions within the Bologna federation, with the exception of some noted 'imports' such as Giuseppe Campos Venuti.

as the 'roccoforte' of Communist city government.⁷⁰ If the Emilian Communists were starting to develop a siege mentality they had good reason to. Already the Craxian struggle for power which was to result in the 'pentapartito' national governments of the 1980s was having repercussions within the local and regional giunte. Liguria fell in 1980 and this was followed by Lazio and Piedmont in 1985.⁷¹ In Emilia-Romagna, although the Socialists were not in a position to bring down the PCI regional giunta of Lanfranco Turci, they refused to join it and the Communists were forced to govern with the support of the PDUP. Also in the Comune di Bologna, Imbeni was obliged to form a giunta monocolora in the summer of 1989, although the Socialists continued to support the administration on crucial votes like the budget.

As Bellini argues, the statutory definition of regional powers in the Law 382 of 1975 and the DPR 616 of 1977 gave the Emilia-Romagnan executive a much better idea of its powers of planning and intervention.⁷² There is no doubt that the position of managerial

⁷⁰ Peter Lange partly attributes the PCI's decline in the post-1976 general and local elections to the strategy of the compromesso storico itself, arguing that the Communists' obsession with electoral alliance underscored their lack of political direction and identity. Peter Lange, 'Crisis and consent, change and compromise', in P. Lange & S. Tarrow (Eds), Italy in Transition, Frank Cass, London, 1980. A similar argument is made by Raymond Seidelman in his study of Communist organisation in Florence where he argues that the PCI was unable to respond to the emergent youth and student movements because of its obsession with the 'national-popular' constituency of the ceti medi and organised labour. See R. Seidelman, 'Urban movements and community power in Florence', Comparative Politics, Vol.13, No.4, 1981; and also 'PCI, decentramento e politica delle alleanze', Il Mulino, 257, May-June, 1978.

⁷¹ Leonardi, 'Political developments and institutional change', cit. p.27,

⁷² See chapter five above. DPR 616 was particularly important because in Article 11 it stipulated that, 'the central government shall determine national economic planning goals with the aid of the regions. The regions shall determine regional development programmes in harmony with the national economic planning goals...' The provision was significant because it made the regions a key interlocutor in the national economic debate

Communist leaders such as Turci was strengthened by the elevated status of the regions, but the Emilian experience still failed to impress the national Communist leadership in Rome. As Turci declared in 1985,

'I am convinced, and I've never tried to hide this conviction, that if it wasn't for the fact that Rome (i.e. Botteghe Oscure) is very backward, and even now, slow to bring together the experience of Emilia-Romagna with all its richness, complexity and potential implications...one could gain from this experience as much as one needs for the the construction of a culture of government, or if we prefer, a more concrete approach...to the themes of national government.'⁷³

It was a familiar refrain, and one could have heard it from Turci's predecessor, Guido Fanti, a decade before. But what Turci's complaint underlined was the persistence of a 'dual track' strategy within the Party leadership which dated back to Togliatti's speech in Reggio in 1946 when he celebrated Emilia's 'exceptionality' and importance as a 'laboratory of socialism' without ever indicating that the comuni rossi would provide a blue-print for the real socialist society to come.

As an epilogue to this final chapter it is worth briefly examining how the 'laboratory' survived the uncontrolled explosion of 1977 and how it faced the new tests of the 'post-political' environment of the 1980s.

3. Bologna in the 1980s: From reflux to the recovery of the model?

and recognised the need for economic planning for the first time since the collapse of the ill-fated Vanoni plan. Sabino Cassese, 'Italy: A system in search of an equilibrium', chapter two of M. Hebbert and H. Machin (Eds), Regionalisation in France, Italy and Spain, London School of Economics, London, 1984. p.12.

⁷³ Lanfranco Turci, interview with P. Carta in Quarantacinque, Jan-Feb, 1985, cited in Nicola Bellini, 'Il socialismo in una regione sola. Il PCI e il governo dell'industria in Emilia-Romagna', Il Mulino, 325, No.5, Sept-Oct. 1989, pp.707-732.

After the failure of the historic compromise on a local and national level the PCI was once again able to look to its left, and an opportunity for dialogue with the ex-Movement and the administration presented itself for the first time. By the early 1980s there were signs of at least a partial rapprochement between the 'generation of year 9' and the city administration.⁷⁴ In 1980 the comune launched its piano giovani which aimed to increase training and employment opportunities for young people, to involve Bologna's youth more directly in the local decision making process by coopting representatives onto local neighbourhood commissions, and to provide autonomous spaces for culture, entertainment and socialising.⁷⁵ many of the participants in these schemes were ex-Movement activists and some were even given jobs in the administration. The comune committed itself to establishing 'self-managed' centri giovanile in every quartiere and youth workers were seconded to provide administrative and technical help and assistance.⁷⁶

In the employment field, the comune sponsored new cooperative ventures such as 'Opencoop' which employs ex-offenders (several of them former Red Brigades members) and produces recycled paper products for the comune and other local organisations and businesses.⁷⁷ In the field of social services and community care, the comune also

⁷⁴ This included the commissioning by the Comune di Bologna of a sociological study into the attitudes and behaviour of approximately 1,000 young people aged between 14 and 25 in the peripheral quartiere of 'Barca' by Adele Pesce and Vittorio Capecci. The study's findings are summarised in Capecci & Pesce, 'Paure e incertezze convivono con speranze e progettualità,' Bologna (Mensile dell'amministrazione comunale) Supplement to No.2, February 1985, pp.54-58.

⁷⁵ Patrizia Faccioli, 'Un bilancio fra stabilità e sperimentazione' in Bologna (Mensile dell'amministrazione comunale) Supplement to No.2, February 1985, pp.61-62.

⁷⁶ Interview with Lamberto Gamberini, officer in the Youth Plan Office of the Assessorato alle Politiche Sociale, 15th February, 1988.

⁷⁷ Interview with Dr Raffaele Tomba of the Assessorato alle Politiche Sociali, November, 1989.

provides training for young people working in cooperatives formed to provide, for example, services for the handicapped or the elderly. The city administration, together with the region and the province has also been an important sponsor of community theatre and the performing arts, while Bologna has two arts cinemas, one of which (the Lumière) provides video and film-production courses and it is also an important venue for the work of local film-makers.⁷⁸

The 'underground' media which the Zangheri administration accused of plotting to overthrow Italian democracy has in recent years been on the receiving end of local government grants rather than municipal invective. The assessorato alla cultura now sees community radio and alternative publishers and printers as a vital component of the cultural life of the city.⁷⁹ The radical printing coop Alpha beta which was once the scourge of the giunta rossa receives orders from the comune and even the PCI. Publishing cooperatives are also able to benefit from an information technology training scheme promoted by the region which provides valuable income for the cooperatives themselves and interesting and varied experience for school leavers attracted to a career in the media.

On the political level it was highly significant that in the 1990 administrative elections, Diego Benecchi, the Bologna leader of Lotta Continua in the Movement of '77 was

⁷⁸ For a discussion of Bologna city council's cultural and arts policy in a wider European context see, Stephen Mennell, Cultural Policy in Towns, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1976.

⁷⁹ This was true until the last administrative elections of 1990 when the Socialists took control of the assessorato and the new assessore made it clear that support would only be given to prestige cultural institutions such as the Teatro Comunale and the Teatro Duse. This policy was intended to disrupt what the PSI saw as the cosy relationship between the Communists and the ex-Movement. While the alternative culture sector in Bologna is far from pro-PCI or (PDS), it is uniformly hostile to the strongly Craxiite Bolognese PSI and so this reaction might have been expected.

elected to the consiglio comunale on the PCI's Due Torri list.⁸⁰ It was a measure of the political distance which some former leaders of the extraparliamentary left such as Benecchi had travelled that a Communist pensioner could ask the ex-Lotta Continua leader and other PCI candidates why they were proposing to privatise the municipal pharmacies which Giuseppe Dozza had worked so hard to establish. The 'settantasettino' was not able to re-assure the older members of the neighbourhood section that this policy really was in the best interest of the working-class.⁸¹ Had the PCI finally embraced that brand of electoral reformism that Togliatti had warned his militants away from in the 1940s, or was Imbeni's 1990 programme merely another step on the 'Italian Road to Socialism?'

Transformations

The new managerial agenda which characterised the 'Due Torri' programme in 1990 was already evident in what was to become known as the 'third phase' of decentralisation in Bologna which was launched in 1985. If, as we saw in chapter five, the first phase covered the period 1960-1968 and was associated with the creation of the idea of

⁸⁰ Benecchi was in fact arrested and charged for his involvement in the March revolt to the loud approval of Communist leaders at the time. Salvatore Sechi, 'Il PCI: l'albero, la foresta e la nuova peste,' cit. p.283.

⁸¹ Electoral meeting of the Nanni-Reggiani section of the PCI, Bolognina, on 'The private-public relationship and local authority autonomy', 23rd April, 1990. For the recent debate on 'privatisation' in Bologna see, 'Bologna, comune chiama privati', L'Unità, 21st September, 1989 and 'Se la Thatcher va a Bologna', La Repubblica, 25th September, 1989. Interestingly the CGIL leadership supported the 'arms length' management of some municipal services although many of its members struck in protest at not being consulted in advance on the proposals. This was convincing proof that in spite of 30 years of decentralisation, the Communist administration still preferred to deal with policy issues at the level of the 'vertenza' - an eloquent testimony to the procedural continuity between the 'epoca Dozziana' and the new management culture in Bologna.

neighbourhood, the second from 1969 to 1984 represented the moment of participation and the delegation of powers. The third phase really constitutes a response to the late arrival of the welfare state all'italiana which as Ginsborg argues was probably the only positive outcome of the 'compromesso storico.'⁸² The 1985 re-organisation of the consigli di quartieri constituted the new politico-administrative face of sub-municipal government and the 'territorialisation' of service provision.⁸³

The new administrative culture also derived from a recognition that contrary to the views of the founders of the quartieri, the party system could not always guarantee the full representation of the community and its active participation in decision making.⁸⁴ As the 'anni di piombio' demonstrated, the danger to Italian democracy of a 'blocked system' in which emarginated groups felt they had no legitimate representation was all too apparent. Bologna had not only experienced the trauma of 1977 but it also witnessed the horror of fascist terrorist violence on the 2nd August 1980 when a bomb exploded in the central railway station leaving 85 people dead and over 200 wounded.

The 'crisis of representation' which had given rise to the break-down in the democratic fabric of Italian society, argued Walter Vitali, the new assessore for decentralisation could only be resolved by giving life to new representative structures which can also exist outside the formal apparatus of the party system. This meant enfranchising previously

⁸² The most important pieces of legislation were the creation of a national health service in 1978 which was to be administered by the regions via the comuni, and the housing and town planning acts which were passed in 1977 and 1978. Ginsborg, A History of Contemporary Italy, cit. pp.390-394.

⁸³ Comune di Bologna, Nuovo regolamento sul decentramento e sulla partecipazione dei cittadini nell'amministrazione del comune, 25th March, 1985.

⁸⁴ This amounted to a full recognition of Achille Ardigò's conception of organic neighbourhood democracy which as we have seen dated from the Libro Bianco of 1956. However on this occasion the Communists were more than willing to acknowledge their debt to the professor. Introductory speech of Walter Vitali in Problemi del decentramento e del riordino istituzionale, Dibattito del consiglio comunale, February - March, 1984.

Free radio in Bologna as part of the comune's broadcasting training programme.



marginalised groups such as the unemployed, the sick, the elderly and the young.⁸⁵ The 1985 decentralisation reforms therefore set the consigli di quartiere the task of combining the flexibility and sensitivity of 'extensive' participation in the localities with the cohesion and integration of administrative practice which would allow the city to function effectively as a whole. So difficult had this balance been to achieve in the light of the new national welfare reforms that not until the middle of 1986 was final approval given for the transfer of all social services functions to the quartieri.⁸⁶

By the end of 1989, the decentralisation of social services had been virtually completed and small teams of social workers and administrative personnel had been established in Bologna's nine quartieri.⁸⁷ As part of the greater commitment to community involvement provided for in the 1985 regulations, the comune sought to prioritise the role of neighbourhood commissions as a means of creating a dialogue between the neighbourhood centre workers and the local service users.⁸⁸ However Vitali had to concede the limitations of this form of participation and in a debate in the consiglio comunale he admitted that petitions were a more effective means of community participation than assemblies and commissions.⁸⁹ Vitali's less than enthusiastic support

⁸⁵ Walter Vitali, 'Dai consigli di quartiere all'area metropolitana' in Partecipazione e Potere Locale supplement to Democrazia e Diritto, No.6, Nov-Dec. 1984.

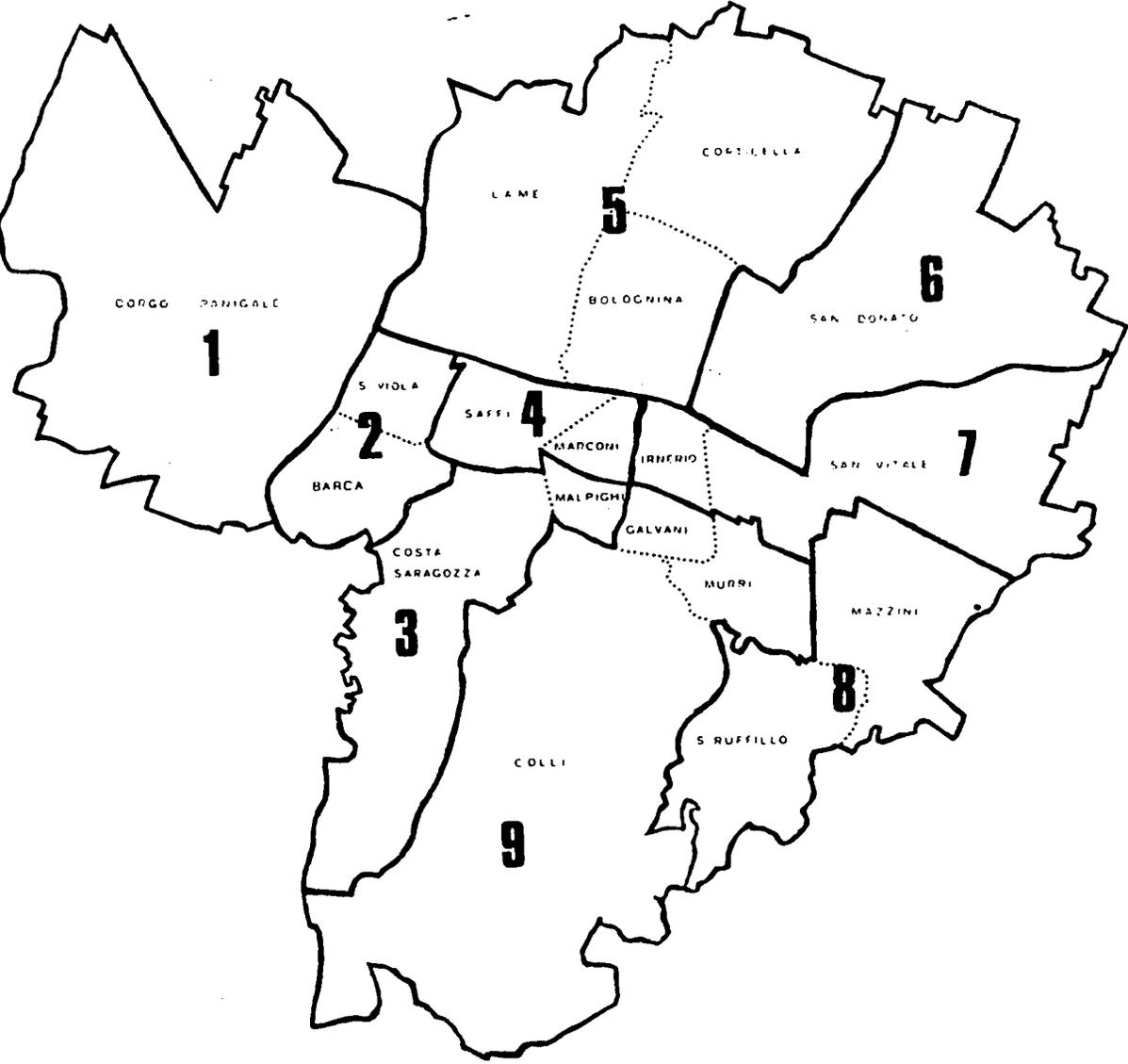
⁸⁶ Interview with Rossana D'Arrigo, administrator in the social services department of the Assessorato alle Politiche Sociali, 17th February, 1988.

⁸⁷ One effect of the 1985 decentralisation regulations was to reduce the number of neighbourhood councils from 18 to 9. The Christian Democrats contested the measure but the PCI, PSI and PRI argued the change was necessary if the quartieri were to work as viable organs of sub-municipal administration particularly given their new role of service providers for the U.S.L.s (district health authorities). Comune di Bologna, Problemi del decentramento e del riordino istituzionale - Conclusioni del dibattito in consiglio comunale, January - February, 1985. See Figure 7.

⁸⁸ Comune di Bologna, 'Nuovo regolamento sul decentramento' (1985) cit.

⁸⁹ Comune di Bologna, Stato di attuazione della riforma dei quartieri, Dibattito del

Figure 7. The enlarged quartieri created in March, 1985.



for what might be termed 'populist' or 'assemblerist' participation no doubt derived from a report which the comune had itself commissioned by the Cattaneo Institute into public attitudes to political participation in Bologna. The report highlighted the difficulties which the left-wing administration faced in creating what Renato Zangheri has called 'a different city.'⁹⁰

Una Città Diversa? The Limits to Participatory Politics in Bologna.

The survey of political attitudes and political behaviour that the Cattaneo Institute undertook on behalf of the city council in 1984 was one of the largest and most detailed surveys of its kind ever conducted in Italy, and nearly 2,000 inhabitants were interviewed. The survey found that 60% of respondents had taken part in some form of political activity in the last three or four years, but the political education of the vast majority of interviewees was extremely poor.⁹¹ 79% declared themselves to be not at all or hardly interested in politics, and 48% admitted to never talking about the political activities of the Comune di Bologna.⁹²

Although 72% of respondents could recall the name of the city's mayor (a much higher percentage than one would expect if people were asked to name the head of their borough or county council in Britain), only 5% could correctly identify the president of their

consiglio comunale, April-May, 1989, p.17.

⁹⁰ This was the title which was given to Enzo Biagi's interview with Zangheri that was published in 1976. The book presentation was interrupted by the university 'collectives' who gave the mayor advance notice of their intention to contest the administrative 'reality' he had tried to describe. The interview itself is contained in Enzo Biagi, Il sindaco di Bologna. Enzo Biagi intervista Renato Zangheri, Franco Levi, Modena, 1976.

⁹¹ Marzio Barbagli & Alessandro Maccelli, La partecipazione politica a Bologna, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1985. p.9.

⁹² Ibid, statistical appendix B, pp.154n.

neighbourhood council. Disconcertingly for the Communists, 50% of respondents were able to correctly name their local parish priest, but only 17% realised that the neighbourhood council was elected by universal suffrage. The PCI could nevertheless take comfort from the relatively high percentage of interviewees who frequented the Festa dell'Unità in 1983 (34%) and the high proportion of lapsed communicants (60% admitted to going to mass 'years ago') which confirmed the secular trend that David Kertzer had previously identified.⁹³

However, the Bolognese' long term commitment to political activity appeared to be sadly lacking, with only 15% of those surveyed admitting to membership of a political party (18% of men and 12% of women).⁹⁴ This figure is all the more surprising if one considers the fact that the PCI claimed a membership of 121,159 in the province of Bologna in 1984 out of a total population of 922,423 (approximately 16% of the adult population). Either these figures prove that the hinterland of the province of Bologna is the real stronghold of the PCI (as election results would tend to suggest) or that rival parties have an almost non-existent membership profile in the capoluogo. An alternative explanation might be that individuals are reluctant to disclose their membership of a political party, or as many of its opponents allege, the Communist Party has grossly exaggerated its real membership base in Bologna.

Whatever the reasons for the discrepancies between the survey and the PCI's own data on party membership, not even Communist assessori would deny that the 1980s witnessed a substantial contraction in participatory activity with respect to the 1960s and the early 1970s. Yet Walter Vitali's ambitious plans to widen participation through voluntary organisations and neighbourhood commissions does at least demonstrate a continuing commitment to the Dossettian ideal of the integrated and self-supporting urban community. Indeed this policy has been a marked success in the area of services for the elderly with a burgeoning of pensioner involvement in the life of the neighbourhood centres which has also brought about improvements in home-care and general service

⁹³ Ibid., David Kertzer, Comrades and Christians, cit.

⁹⁴ La partecipazione a Bologna, appendix B, cit.

provision.⁹⁵

In spite of the difficulties which the comune has experienced in politicising the population of the quartieri through its decentralisation reforms, it is important to realise that even the modest extension of citizen participation which has been achieved in nearly 30 years of decentralisation in Bologna is still a major advance on almost every other European city of comparable size. Paul Hoggett, referring in particular to Bologna, argues that compared to the rest of Europe,

'...the experiments in decentralisation in Italy probably go further...both in terms of devolving political power within representative democratic institutions and in terms of involving the public and community groups in these neighbourhood representative institutions.'⁹⁶

Given the fact that, '...decentralisation alone is not sufficient to provide all sections of the community with access to political power...' are we not setting our critical standards too high in the case of local authorities such as Bologna?⁹⁷ Perhaps a belief in the existence of a 'happy island' of enlightened administrators and active citizens motivated the authors of Red Bologna to become almost evangelic in their enthusiasm for the 'model' they observed in the years before the crisis of '77. A certain utopianism has crept into both friendly and hostile studies of Bolognese Communism which has meant that in a perverse way the city's administrators have become victims of their own success. It is not for nothing that the sometime Bologna PCI federal secretary, Vincenzo Galletti, entitled his own contribution to the literature on the model, 'Bologne non é un'isola rossa.' But there has been a tendency on the part of the PCI and its intellectuals to present Bologna and its political culture as both a victim and a victor over capitalism.

⁹⁵ Interview with Raffaele Tomba. cit.

⁹⁶ Paul Hoggett, 'Political parties, community action and the reform of municipal government in Europe' in P. Hoggett & R. Hambleton, (Eds), Decentralisation and Democracy. Localising public services, SAUS, Bristol, 1987, p.47.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

This is certainly the impression that Renato Zangheri gave in his interview with the Swiss journalists when he declared that,

'We have never claimed to be a model; we have always rejected the idea of Bologna as a model or an exemplary experiment,'⁹⁸ while also arguing that Bologna was, 'an instrument of popular sovereignty. It refuses to act the role of executor of choices made within the mechanisms of capitalist development. On the contrary, the commune is the bearer of a vision which is antagonistic to these choices. It promotes, within its sphere of action, decisions and initiatives which are capable of establishing the priority of social needs and consumption.'⁹⁹

This idea of being in capitalism but not of it has coloured all the PCI's economic and political strategy since the first regional conference in Bologna in 1959. Yet not even the reformers of the time would have had the self-assurance to declare that, '...emergence from capitalism comes about if one solves the contradictions of capitalism.'¹⁰⁰

Neither Colombi, Masseti, Bonazzi or Dozza would have accepted that the task of the Italian Communist Party is to solve capitalism's contradictions, yet in practice, although the PCI could not solve the problems of unemployment, rural dislocation, low-wages and poor housing, in its 47 years of local power and through the growth of its mass organisations it went a long way to alleviating them.

In a stimulating article, Vittorio Capecchi looking back on the post-war development of Communist local government in the Emilian capital asked in the words of a recent PCI electoral poster, 'Is Bologna still the city of ideas?' He argues that Bologna's political system has essentially been characterised by the twin features of 'legitimation' and

⁹⁸ Renato Zangheri in Red Bologna, cit. pp.190-191. Zangheri reinforced this point more recently when he declared, 'Socialism cannot be created in only one region or city.' Interview with author, Rome, March, 1991, cit.

⁹⁹ Renato Zangheri quoted in Ginsborg, cit. p.297.

¹⁰⁰ Renato Zangheri, Red Bologna, cit. p.199.

'exchange' allowing a social and economic development which has created a positive dynamic equilibrium.¹⁰¹ The process of legitimation which Capecchi describes also corresponds to the party and movement-building phase of the PCI in Bologna which Anderlini has called 'negative integration.'

The PCI of Togliatti had been overwhelmingly working-class in its membership and electorate in the 1940s and 1950s and although the pursuit of the productive middle class produced some results for the Communists, the Party's support never really expanded further than the artisans and share-croppers. This made for a rather compact political constituency and the 'noi/loro' dichotomy which the Communists presented in terms of the comune and state, and the monopolies versus the small producers. This division also had an important cultural component in the folk memory of the struggle against fascism and the violent class and ideological polarisation of the Resistance. The celebrations of the 1st May, the defence of the case del popolo and the diffusion of the feste dell'Unità all assisted the creation of a 'red sub-culture' which fostered the conditions for a lasting Communist hegemony within the countryside. Throughout the period of intense rural-urban migration in the 1950s and 1960s the subcultura rossa found its continuity and its articulation in the city through the PCI and PSI sections and an elaborate network of sporting, cultural and recreative associations.¹⁰²

Yet as share-croppers became small-holders and artisans took on the characteristics of entrepreneurs, the 'consensus for legitimation' became progressively transformed into a 'consensus for exchange.'¹⁰³ Planned and socially responsible growth acquired an increasing importance for the rennovators who had overthrown the sacred Dozzian nostrums of the balanced budget and 'il buon governo' as ends in themselves. The

¹⁰¹ Vittorio Capecchi, 'Bologna: è ancora la città delle idee?' Inchiesta, Year XX, No.88-89, April-September, 1990. pp.51-63.

¹⁰² Carlo Trigilia, 'Subcultura rossa e partito comunista' in Silvano Belligni (Ed), La giraffa e il liocorno. Il PCI dagli anni '70 al nuovo decennio, Franco Angeli, Milan, 1983, chapter four.

¹⁰³ 'Bologna: è ancora la città delle idee?' cit. p.59.

administrations of Fanti and Zangheri were pro-active and imaginative in the field of economic development but orthodox in their means of allocating powers and responsibilities.¹⁰⁴ This gave rise to a political structure where the party-condottiere and its lieutenants and subalterns in the region's social movements and institutions combined with the exchange promotion ethic of the social market to produce that unique historico-cultural formation which we have called Leninist Keynesianism.

Unlike social democratic parties in most other European countries, the PCI had the advantage of not having to rely on cumbersome and lengthy selection processes for the renewal of its cadres and political representatives. Given this flexibility to 'hire and fire', the Bologna federation became a veritable forcing ground for talented young administrators and functionaries who the Party allowed (within certain limits) to develop their own agenda. This 'managerial' climate that Fanti and Zangheri created was crucial to the advances which were made in conservation and town planning. As assessori for town planning, Campos Venuti and Cervellati were allowed to develop an internationally acclaimed approach to community architecture and 'radical conservation.' But the negative aspect of the 'ideas first' approach to local government was that the giunta allowed itself to be driven by a reform culture which was understandable in the context of central government immobilism, but which distracted attention from the underlying dynamics of social and economic change.

The prioritising of the alliance with the 'healthy' parts of the Bolognese body politic meant that the spread of the 'Italian disease': high youth unemployment, the

¹⁰⁴ Here we can agree with Panebianco that, 'The more institutionalised the party, the less organised are the internal groups.' Without democratic centralism it is doubtful whether the PCI in Bologna could have survived the rupture of 1959 and the new left challenge of the 1960s. It is in this crucial sense that the PCI differentiated itself from other social democratic parties al potere in that the institution of the party imposed its own logic on the administrative apparatus and not vice versa. Panebianco, A. Modelli di partito, Il Mulino, 1982, cited in Percy Allum, Democrazia reale. Stato e società civile nell'Europa occidentale, Liviana Editrice, Padova, 1991, p.121.

<<La Pantera>> advances on the 19th and last PCI Congress, Bologna, March 1990 with a message from the Movement of '77.



overcrowding of the universities, and disaffection at the widening gap between the guaranteed and the 'precarious' members of society went largely undetected. 1977 proved that Bologna was not immune to this national disorder nor was it uniquely able to dispense a cure, but the instinct for trasformismo which the PCI had acquired in the movementist years of Scelba and Marcuse served equally well to rehabilitate the generation of year nine from their addiction to Majakovski and the Molotov.

It is because this most favoured of Italian cities¹⁰⁵ has survived the severe tests of the last 47 years under a Communist Party whose own administrative practice has forced scholars, journalists and politicians to question their assumptions about Communism (whether of the European or Soviet variety) that the city of ideas may offer a key to understanding the idea of the (socialist) city in its other manifestations.

4. The Idea of the City: Culture, History and Locale: or Political Sociology Otherwise.

This study has sought to demonstrate the need for what might be provisionally called an 'historico-culturalist' perspective on urban social change, a need which arises from the inadequacy of 'formal' analyses of political organisations and political transformations. Notions of contingency and context are anathema to social scientists intent on providing a 'total explanation' for problems which are 'common' to all industrial societies from the housing crisis to drug abuse, and from traffic congestion to civil disorder. But if we dig below the thin synchronic crust of most urban research it quickly becomes obvious that while social problems of this type can be identified in urban environments around the world, we cannot say that they arise from the same causes or that they are experienced in the same way by different city dwellers. These distinctions are immensely important, for without an appreciation of the specificity of different urban experiences, the social scientist is likely to make general claims about environmental or consumption

¹⁰⁵ Bologna has consistently come at or near the top of public opinion surveys on the most desirable city to live in. See Capecechi, Bologna: è ancora...cit. p.51.

determinations which only apply to a particular location or to a particular point in time.¹⁰⁶

The term used by Raymond Williams to describe the mediation between the individual, society, and the process of historical change in The Long Revolution is the 'structure of feeling'. This concept which refers to the distinctive social and cultural practices of an 'active' generation at any one time in history bears with it a number of important features which are conspicuously absent from functionalist paradigms.¹⁰⁷ Williams describes it thus,

'...it is as firm and definite as 'structure' suggests, yet it operates in the most delicate and least tangible parts of our activity. In one sense, this structure of feeling is the culture of a period: it is the particular living result of all the elements in the general organization.'

'I do not mean that the structure of feeling, any more than the social character, is

¹⁰⁶ Peter Saunders in his critique of Pahl's more recent work in which the latter moves away from his earlier 'determinist' positions in relation to housing management and urban location makes the following observation: 'To the extent that (Pahl) offers an answer to the problem, it is that it is an empirical question to be resolved by empirical research. This, however, is inadequate, for it is a recipe for extremely dubious inductive generalisation, the conclusion to which is likely to be no more than the observation that things are different in different places at different times.' Peter Saunders, Social Theory and the Urban Question, Hutchinson, London, 1986. How much less satisfactory it would be however if social scientists abandoned empirical enquiry for fear that 'different realities' might obstruct the search for a totalising urban theory.

¹⁰⁷ Enzo Mingione rightly identifies the tendency of both positivist and Marxist sociologists to provide functionalist explanations of urban behaviour. Fortunately, C. Wright Mills provides a compelling sociological antidote to this disorder in The Sociological Imagination, Oxford University Press, 1959; Enzo Mingione, Social Conflict and the City, Blackwell, Oxford, 1981, p.65.

possessed in the same way by the many individuals in the community. But I think it is a very deep and wide possession, in all actual communities...One generation may train its successor, with reasonable success, in the social character or the general cultural pattern, but the new generation will have its own structure of feeling, which will not appear to have come 'from' anywhere.¹⁰⁸

In this case study, the analytical perspective that the concept of structure of feeling provides has for example been used to explain the generational and political shift in the leadership of the Bolognese Communist Party and in the civic administration in the early 1960s. Similarly the effects of rural dislocation and urban migration have been studied in terms of the cultural continuities and breaks which combined to produce the dense and highly articulated communities which comprised 'Bologna moderna.' But clearly the transition to modernity in Bologna has not been smooth or total, and the persistence of often conflicting structures of feeling helps to explain the need for the elaborate and elastic 'alliance strategy' through which the PCI was able to dominate both 'movement' and 'institution', a strategy which also allowed it to survive its severest challenge in the spring of 1977.

The problematic that Williams advances, and which we have sought to develop in this study, is intensely relevant to the study of the development of urban socialism and social movements where ideology plays such an important part in connecting together periods of struggle and by giving meaning to collective action and institutional conquests.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Williams, R. The Long Revolution, Pelican, London, 1975, pp.64-5.

¹⁰⁹ It is heartening to note that urban theory is also gradually moving in this direction, particularly in the work of Manuel Castells whose book The City & The Grass Roots, (Edward Arnold, London, 1983) marks a considerable advance on the orthodox Althusserian approach of The Urban Question, (Edward Arnold, London, 1977). In his more recent books Castells has emphasised the importance of the diachronic frame and the corrective value of comparative studies in the construction of new theoretical paradigms. For a good review of the contribution of Castells to the theory of urban change and social movements, see Lowe, S. Urban Social Movements. The City After

The threads of this tapestry of collective consciousness bind together historically located structures of feeling to form a continuous pattern, but this process is always selective, haphazard and often unsuccessful,

'We can learn a great deal of the life of other places and times, but certain elements, it seems to me, will always be irrevocable. Even those that can be recovered are recovered in abstraction, and this is of crucial importance. We learn each element as a precipitate, but in the living experience of the time every element was in solution, an inseparable part of a complex whole. The most difficult thing to get hold of, in studying any past period, is this felt sense of the quality of life at a particular place and time: a sense of the ways in which the particular activities combined into a way of thinking and living.'¹¹⁰

To see culture as the historical articulation of forms of social life is not to banalise it, on the contrary, our terminology becomes immeasurably enriched by reappropriating the 'ordinariness' of cultural expression. For the elusive character of urban identity is constructed upon the ensemble of relations between the individual, the family, the neighbourhood, the community and the concrete structures of social life - the workplace, the state, the urban infrastructure. The 'mass' character of urban society has made the investigation of collective identity extremely demanding. But rather than unpicking the threads of urban culture, researchers have generally preferred to treat with statistical abstractions and abandon narrative details to the social historian. There are very good reasons for this approach, but the single pursuit of this form of knowledge can begin to resemble paleontology, measuring and weighing the fossilized remains of human society, as if life on earth had long since disappeared. As Williams again argues,

'...we have become increasingly conscious of the positive power of techniques of analysis, which at their maximum are capable of interpreting let us say, the movements of an integrated world economy, and of the negative qualities of a naive observation

Castells. Macmillan, London, 1986.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. p.63

which can never gain knowledge of realities like these. But at the same time, it is an ideological crisis of just this society, that this inevitable awareness has also led to a privileged dominance of the techniques of rational penetration and a corresponding undervaluation of areas where there is some everyday commerce between the available articulations and the general process that has been termed 'experience'.¹¹¹

h The reproduction of urban identity depends therefore on a matrix of social and economic relations of which fordist modes of production or forms of tenure are by no means necessarily the most important. There ^{are} of course 'contradictions' between lifestyle and political identity, but instead of attempting to understand these contradictions as an essential component of our social identity, political scientists have often attempted to 'control' for them.

In the preceding chapters I hope to have made what I believe is a strong case for the primacy of politics seen in its widest cultural and historical conceptualisation. This is in no sense an excursus against urban theory tout court but an appeal for humility in the face of what are often disagreeably complex social realities. The intellectual founder of Italian communism had this to say about sociology's quest for knowledge,

'...any sociology presupposes a philosophy, a conception of the world of which it is but a subordinate part...Naturally this does not mean that the search for 'laws' of uniformity is not a useful and interesting pursuit or that a treatise of immediate observations on the art of politics does not have its purpose. But one should call a spade a spade, and present treatises of this kind for what they really are.'¹¹²

More than anything else I hope to have demonstrated that the Italian Communist Party in Bologna can be understood in such straightforward terms but only if a careful distinction is maintained between how the PCI and its intellectuals represented its

¹¹¹ Williams, R. Politics and Letters, New Left Books, London, 1979, pp.171-2.

¹¹² Antonio Gramsci Selections From the Prison Notebooks, (Eds) Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1971, pp.426-427.

objectives and achievements and the actual application of the Party's strategy.¹¹³ In presenting not one, but a series of observations, I hope to have answered Gramsci's objection to sociological enquiry as one-dimensional. Any investigation into human society, particularly in a rapidly industrialising country such as Italy, can benefit from new perspectives on the dynamics of social and political change. In this dissertation I have tried to combine approaches to the case study which have not previously been synthesised while seeking to transcend the provincialism which has shrouded much of the existing research.

Many who have studied Bologna from a historical or social scientific point of view have seemed to treat the province as if it actually were an island, while Bologna's administrators have been more outward looking and willing to learn from other experiences of progressive city administration.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless it is fair to say that the 'Bologna model' has perhaps been more influential beyond Emilia-Romagna than in Italy itself. The 'exportability' of the 'modello bolognese' in its various political, social and economic manifestations will always be conditioned by the degree of commonality which exists between the lived experience of political culture in different local and regional contexts. Much more work needs to be done on a comparative European level if we are to locate Bologna within the spectrum of post-war municipal socialist administrations.

¹¹³ This also requires a greater willingness on the part of Communist Party/PDS historians and political scientists to have the courage to 'fare i conti' with the PCI's past, an enterprise which Santomassimo admits most Communist intellectuals, until recently, have been unwilling to undertake;

Gian Pasquale Santomassimo, 'Problemi di ricerca sulla storia del PCI nel secondo dopoguerra' in P.P. D'Attorre (Ed) La ricostruzione in Emilia-Romagna, cit. Ferraroti highlights the importance of the contemporary relationship between the PCI and the intelligentsia but his book lacks an explanation of the mechanics of this relationship. See Ferraroti, F. PCI e intellettuali a Bologna, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1982.

¹¹⁴ Renato Zangheri described how in the 1970s the comune became very interested in, for example, the Ottawa traffic management plan and social service provision in Sweden; interview, Rome, cit.

However, it would certainly be premature to assign the term 'real social democracy' to an administrative and political phenomenon which presents so many complexities and contradictions and which differs in fundamental ways from the organisational and administrative practice of 'real' social democratic parties.¹¹⁵

This study has tried to draw out these contradictions, but it has also sought to reveal how political authority often relies on the management of contradictions and the re/presentation of tradition and collective memory as a commonly shared experience and set of values. This is the hegemonic project which Gramsci sketched out for the Communist Modern Prince, and in large measure, the PCI and its collateral organisations in Bologna were able to achieve this goal. In spite of the very severe drop in membership and electoral support for the PCI which followed the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and the Party's 'reconstitution' as a Democratic Party of the Left, the 47 years of Communist rule in Bologna will continue to provide the Party leadership with an image of socialist government which might ultimately prove attractive to a wider electorate.

Although Togliatti's successors may have paid insufficient attention to the 'Emilian laboratory' in the 1970s and 1980s, the practical experience of regional and city government which Emilia's ex-Communist leaders have benefited from, and the large proportion of the national PDS membership which Emilia-Romagna now represents, seem likely to increase rather than decrease the national importance of 'Bologna la rossa' both for politicians and for students of political science.

¹¹⁵ Robert Putnam correctly states that, '...historical analogies to the social democratic politicians of northern Europe are misleading and, at the very least premature...' 'The Italian Communist Politician' in D. Blackmer and S. Tarrow (Eds) Communism in Italy and France, cit. p.183. Although historically the content of PCI policy may have closely resembled that of European social democratic parties (as we saw in chapter four), the organisational and cultural transition to social democracy in the PDS still remains an aspiration, albeit it one which with the exorcism of 'Rifondazione Comunista', Occhetto has a better chance of achieving.

APPENDIX

Biographical details of leading Communist figures in Post-War Bologna.

Colombi, Arturo. (Alfredo)

Born in Massa Carrara, Tuscany, became a building worker. Political prisoner who was released after the fall of fascism from Ventotene. Led a series of major strikes in Turin in 1944. Member of 'Direzione' of PCI from Liberation until 1960s. Began as regional secretary of Emilia-Romagna and later transferred to Lombardy. Persistent supporter of pro-Soviet position inside the party leadership.

Dozza, Giuseppe. (Ducati)

Born in the province of Bologna in 1901. Son of a baker. Worked as a shop assistant and clerk in his youth. Joined the Communist Party when it was first launched in January 1921. A supporter of Amadeo Bordiga, he became secretary of the Bologna Federation of the PCd'I. His house was burnt down by fascists in 1922. Later called to Rome by the directorate of the PCd'I where he was attached to the central secretariat. Became national secretary of the Communist Youth Federation in 1923. In 1927 went into exile and became co-director with Luigi Longo of the directorate of the FGCI abroad. In 1928 was co-opted to the central committee of the Italian Communist Party and worked in Switzerland and France. In the late 1930s became a director of the internal centre of the PCd'I and lived clandestinely in Italy. Elected as the Italian delegate to Comintern in 1932-33 and became a member of the foreign directorate of the PCd'I.

Returned to France in 1935 where he became political secretary of the Italian

Communists in France. Following an article published in 'Stato operaio' which was critical of the previous line adopted by Stalin, Dozza was summoned to Moscow to account for his behaviour. On his return he was relieved of his duties as a political organiser for the Party. Had to flee from German troops to Toulouse in 1941 where with Sereni he joined the first antifascist national front together with Nenni and Saragat for the PSI and Trentin and Nitti for Justice and Liberty. Returned to Italy via Milan in September 1943 where he joined the CLNAI as a representative of the PCI. Returned to Bologna on 10th September of 1944 and was appointed to the insurrectionary triumvirate for southern Emilia. After the Liberation of the city on 21st April, 1945, Dozza was appointed as mayor of Bologna. Confirmed in his post by the administrative elections of March 1946. In June, 1946 Dozza was elected to parliament as a deputy. Continually re-elected mayor until his resignation in 1966. Dozza died in Bologna in December, 1974.

Fanti, Guido.

Delegate to the 5th Party Congress of the PCI in 1945, Fanti rose quickly through the Communist hierarchy in Bologna, becoming federation secretary in 1959. Fanti was the main architect of the svolta regional conference of 1959. He succeeded Dozza as mayor in 1966 and in 1970 went on to become the first regional president of Emilia-Romagna. In 1976 he was elected to parliament as one of the PCI's most experienced administrators. Had the Communists managed to achieve the elusive 'sorpasso' of the Christian Democrats in 1976, Fanti would have become a minister. He later became a Euro-MP and group leader of the PCI in the European parliament.

Roasio, Antonio.

Piemontese, exiled member of PCI leadership, involved in political struggle in France and Spain, trained in Lenin party school in Moscow. Firm exponent of Togliattian line after 'svolta di Salerno'. Returned to Italy with Novella to join the northern

directorate of the party in 1943, founder of Bolognese federation in 1944. Substituted Colombi as regional secretary for Emilia-Romagna in 1948. Member of national 'Direzione' from 1945. Like Colombi considered to be a political hardliner and strongly pro-Soviet throughout his career.

Zangheri, Renato.

One of Italy's most distinguished professors of economic and agrarian history, Zangheri joined the consiglio comunale as a member of the PCI in 1956. He was a founder of the cultural and political review Emilia and an active supporter of the 'rennovator' wing of the Party. Zangheri succeeded Guido Fanti as mayor of Bologna and continued to hold office until 1980. He was elected to the Chamber of Deputies and later became leader of the PCI group of MPs.

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S.F. Parker

Errata

- Contents
& p.328 substitute **Cronastoria** for **Cronistoria**
- p.xxii line 21 substitute **accomodation** for **accommodation**
- p.3 footnote 6
line 11 substitute **Communists** for **Communists'**
- p.4 line 3 substitute **accomodates** for **accommodates**
- p.7 para 2
line 1 substitute **Similarly** for **Similarly,**
- p.20 line 5 substitute **compleion** for **complexion**
- p.21 footnote
34 substitute **chapter three** for **chapter one**
- p.23 footnote
36
line 16 substitute **Keynsianism** for **Keynesianism**
- p.27 line 13 substitute **univerity** for **university**
- p.28 last para
line 3 substitute **distribtion** for **distribution**
- p.33 para 3
line 9 substitute **form** for **from**
- footnote
14 substitute **chapter two** for **chapter three**
- p.42 line 3 substitute **in spite of** for **inspite of**
- p.43 para 2
line 5 substitute **tansport** for **transport**
- p.45 footnote
42 substitute **popular'** for **popular**
- p.47 footnote
46 insert: **'Cooperatives affiliated to
Federcoop.'**
- p.49 para 2
line 3 substitute **Emilia's** for **Emilia's**

- footnote
53 substitute **table 4** for **Table 4**
- p.63 footnote
81 substitute **december** for **December**
- p.72 footnote
101 substitute **strength** for **strength**
- p.75 footnote
103 delete **'which is discussed in the final part of this chapter'** and append **' . For a discussion of peasant resistance and popular song see the final part of this chapter.'**
- p.77 line 5 substitute **active'** for **active**
- p.78 para 2
line 10 substitute **'quadropartito'** for **'quattropartito'**
- p.82 footnote
113 substitute **prefectural** for **prefectoral**
- p.96 line 14 substitute **'balla liscio'** for **'ballo liscio'**
line 24 substitute **dopolavoro ferroviarie** for **dopolavoro ferroviario**
- p.98 line 4 substitute **postive** for **positive**
- p.100 line 7 substitute **who to write** for **who was able to write**
- p.104 footnote
145
line 6 substitute **Madaonna** for **Madonna**
- p.106 footnote
149 substitute **opponents enemies.** for **opponents, enemies.**
- p.112 footnote
9
line 6 substitute **'welfare state''** for **'welfare state'**
- p.117 footnote
21 substitute **employees** for **employers**
- p.121 para 2
line 4 remove **line-break** between **local** and **authorities.**

p.133 line 4 substitute **accomodation** for **accommodation**

p.135 line 9 substitute 'villaggio della rivoluzione' for 'villaggio della rivoluzione'

footnote 68 substitute **chapter seven** for **chapter five**

following title photograph substitute **"a machia d'olio"** for **"a macchia d'olio"**

p.136 substitute **'machia d'olio'** for **'macchia d'olio'**

para 3 line 6 substitute **unita di vicinato** for **unità di vicinato**

p.138 last line substitute **a misura di uomo** for **a misura d'uomo**

p.146 para 2 line 3 substitute **its** for **it's**

p.147 footnote 9 p.33 substitute **Ibid.p.33** for **Libro Bianco**, **cit.**

footnote 11 p.33 substitute **Ibid.** for **Libro Bianco**, **cit.**

p.148 footnote 12 line 6 substitute **claiming** for **claiming**

p.152 para 3 line 1 substitute **communita intermedia** for **comunità intermedia**

p.154 para 2 line 2 substitute **overwelmingly** for **overwhelmingly**

para 3 line 2 substitute **intermedia** for **intermedie**

p.157 footnote 34 delete **Interview, Rome, February 1991.** and insert **Interview with Renato Zangheri, Rome, March 1991.**

footnote

35 delete **Interview with Renato Zangheri, Rome, March 1991.** and insert **Ibid.**

p.159 footnote 2 substitute **chapter two** for **chapter one**

p.165 footnote 15 substitute **chapter seven** for **chapter five**

p.167 para 2 line 6 substitute **open.¹⁹** for **open.¹⁹**

para 3 line 4 substitute **Part** for **Party**
line 5 substitute **expalined** for **explained**

p.169 para 3 remove line-break between **fact** and **Togliatti**

p.170 line 6 substitute **fanti** for **Fanti**

p.173 line 7 substitute **fanti** for **Fanti**

footnote 35 substitute **Ibid.** for **Interview with Guido Fanti, cit.**

p.179 para 3 in Table 9. alter the second row of the far-right column to read **+14**

p.180 in Table 9. alter the last row of the fourth column to read **+41** and the last column to read **+62**

p.183 footnote 52 substitute **Table 8.1** for **Table 12**

p.184 para 2 line 2 substitute **dell alleanze** for **delle alleanze**

p.186 para 2 line 3 substitute **`exists** for **exists**

p.189 line 2 substitute **of the of the** for **of the**

para 4 line 5 substitute **the argument, the argument** for **the argument**

p.193 footnote 6 substitute **Galleti** for **Galletti**

p.200 footnote 18 substitute **artisans** for **artisans'**

p.201 footnote

19 substitute **Table 20** for **Table 17**

p.204 line 1 substitute **haedquarters** for **headquarters**

para 2
line 7 substitute **Aldini Variani** for **Aldini
Valeriani**

p.205 footnote
27 substitute **ente autonome** for **enti autonomi**

p.207 footnote
31 is deleted

p.214 para 2
line 4 substitute **lsitened** for **listened**

p.224 para 2
line 6 substitute **`the best** for **the best**

para 3
line 3 substitute **mure** for **mura**

p.225 para 1
line 9 substitute **decision making** for **decision-
making**

p.227 para 4
line 2 substitute **(including)** for **including**

p.229. footnote
76 substitute **chapter eight, part one.** for
chapter six, part two.

footnote
79 substitute **Quatiere** for **Quartieri**

p.236 footnote
92 substitute **chapter four** for **chapter two**

p.237 footnote
94 substitute **chapter four** for **chapter two**

p.238 footnote
97 substitute **Appollo, Bologna** for **Zivieri
Editore, Rieti**

- p.252 para 1
line 4 substitute **to end** for **to an end**
- p.256 footnote
9
line 4 substitute **comandered** for **commandeered**
- p.261 para 4
line 6 substitute **aggresivity** for **aggressivity**
- p.262 line 9 substitute **'accomodationist'** for
'accommodationist'
- p.271 para 4
line 5 substitute **'neofeminista'** for **'neofemminist'**
- p.273 para 2
line 7 substitute **realtionship** for **relationship**
- p,276 para 2
line 7 substitute **operaistà** for **operaista**
- p.278 footnote
60 substitute **berardi** for **Berardi** and **'Con Biffo
si passa.** for **'Con Biffo [sic] si passa.**
- p.280 footnote
65 substitute **L'Unita** for **L'Unità**
- p.285 footnote
72 substitute **Acille** for **Achille**
- p.286 last line substitute **Gatto Selvagio** for **Gatto Selvaggio**
- p.296 footnote
92 substitute **Ibid.** for **'Ristrutturazione della
fabbrica...'** cit.p.3.
- p.297 para 3
line 4 substitute **militance** for **militancy**
- p.298 footnote
97
line 1 substitute **conecpt** for **concept**
line 7 substitute **L'Unita** for **L'Unità**
- p.299 footnote
99 substitute **citta** for **città**
- p.300 para 2
line 7 substitute **temporarily** for **temporarily**

- p.306 line 9 substitute **Communists** for **Communists'**
footnote
118 substitute **table D** for **Table 24**
- p.312 line 1 substitute **accomodationist** for
accommodationist
line 6 substitute `69-69, for `68-`69,
- p.314 line 5 substitute **emphasises** for **emphasise**
- p.315 footnote
6 substitute **table A** for **Table 27**
footnote
7 substitute **Tables 27 and 28** for **Table 28**
- p.318 line 1 substitute **national `league table' in** for
national `league table' position in (and
amend table of contents accordingly)
- p.322 footnote
15 substitute **table A2** for **Table 30**
- p.326 footnote
22 substitute **Tables 31 & 31.1** for **Table 31**
- p.327 line 1 substitute **Communione** for **Comunione**
footnote
25
line 6 substitute **`extraparlamentari'** for
`extraparlamentari'
- p.328 line 2 substitute **occured** for **occurred**
- p.333 footnote
34 substitute **Ibid.p.27.** for **`Living with an
Earthquake' cit.p.27.**
- p.335 line 8 substitute **Carol** for **Carroll**
footnote
38
line 8 substitute **Keynsianism** for **Keynesianism**
- p.341 para 2
line 4 substitute **'ragazzi di settantasette'** for
'ragazzi del settantasette'
- p.342 para 2
line 5 substitute **signifcant** for **significant**

- footnote 53 append **F. Mussi, Bologna 77. Renato Zangheri intervista da Fabio Mussi, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1978.**
- footnote 54 substitute **teritary** for **tertiary**
- p.343 footnote 55 substitute **Ibid.** for **Mussi, cit.**
- footnote 57 substitute **spokespmen** for **spokesmen**
- p.344 footnote 58 substitute **in ibid. p.318** for **in I comunisti in Emilia-Romagna, cit. p.318.**
- footnote 59 substitute **hierchism** for **hierarchism**
- p.346 para 2 line 8 substitute **later.** for **later,**
- p.352 para 2 line 4 substitute **the the** for **the**
- p.353 line 9 substitute **many** for **Many**
- p.356 para 2 line 4 substitute **piombio** for **piombo**
- p.359 para 2 line 8 substitute **non-existant** for **non-existent**
- p.360 para 3 line 10 subttitute **Galletti** for **Galleti**
- p.362 para 3 line 4 substitute **rennovators** for **renovators**
- p.363 para 1 line 6 substitute **Keynsianism** for **Keynesianism**
- p.369 para 2 line 3 substitute **from from** for **from**
- p.371 para 1 line 5 substitute **Persistant** for **Persistent**
- p.373 para 2 line 4 substitute **'rennovator'** for **renovator**
- p.375 substitute **Appollo, Bologna, 1989.** for **Zivieri Editore, Rieti, 1989.**