

P O L I T I C A L M O R A L I T Y
I N T H E M E Z Z O G I O R N O

by

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ABSTRACT

The politics of the Mezzogiorno represent an interesting point in the politics of modernization. Existing as essentially an enclave of 'backwardness' within a western industrialized country, the people of the Mezzogiorno continue to carry out political functions within a network of arrangements which are generally viewed as 'apolitical' in nature by many observers. Edward Banfield's assertion (in his book, The Moral Basis of a Backward Society) that the society is 'amoral familist' in nature is dealt with in this study, and an attempt is made to formulate a 'moral code' of the Mezzogiorno, portraying political morality as seen through the eyes of the people in that culture. The nature of this 'moral code' is based upon the experience of 'statelessness' in the Mezzogiorno, and the outcome is that the tenets of the moral code are debilitating to change in the sense of moving toward a western democratic form of government. The rules of political morality in the Mezzogiorno dictate that the individual view the government with distrust and attempt to fend for himself. In contrast to Banfield who claims that "political incapacity" is due to "amoral familism", I argue that it is due to the code of political morality at work in the Mezzogiorno.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

Being in the process of reading Luigi Barzini's most recent book, From Caesar to the Mafia, at the time of this writing, I have come across the following passage in which Barzini evaluates Mangione's study of Sicily, in which Mangione has made numerous spelling mistakes in dealing with the Italian language: "One is led to suspect (when one stumbles on one misspelled word after another) that facts are treated as glibly,...". In my own study, care has been taken to assure that the same error is not committed. To those who have studied only the Italian of the university, however, it will appear that there do exist numerous errors in the spelling of Italian words. The reason for this is that many of the responses presented here were origininally recorded in the manner in which they were given; i.e., in dialect. The dialects of the South differ considerably from the high Italian used in the universities, to the point that they are often incomprehensible to those who have not studied a particular dialect or lived in the region in which it is spoken. The following assurance is therefore offered: what may appear to be spelling errors in the Italian language are, in fact, due to dialectal responses which were recorded in their original form.

The duty of the people is to tend to their own affairs.
The duty of governments is to help them do it.
This is the pasta of politics.

The inspired leader, the true prince, no matter
how great, can only be sauce upon the pasta.

From The Discourses of
Italo Bombolini

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The area of concern in this thesis is the co-called "agro-towns" of the South of Italy -- the Mezzogiorno, and the people who carry on their economic and social lives within the cultural context of these agro-towns. The agro-towns are generally small, but may reach populations of tens of thousands, the bulk of which are peasant farmers, contadini, who walk to their scattered fields each day to eke out a living from the harsh environment. The towns are located either in the lower plains or on hilltops, and represent a nucleated settlement pattern. These two basic settlement patterns most probably reflect the conditions which prevailed at the time of original settlement. The most dominant of these two forms is that of the compact hilltop town, perched high, presumably for security, as manifest at Eboli. The other, less prevalent form is that of a neat quadrilateral arrangement set out in the lower plains, and reflects times of relative stability and economic expansion. Examples of this latter type can be seen in Alife, or the now ruined Paestum. More important than the original settlement pattern itself is the fact that these towns seem to prevail in their original form. The hilltop town retains much of its medieval flavor, much to the delight of the tourists, although somewhat perplexing to would-be modernizers. A variety of other explanations exist for the nucleated settlement pattern of the Mezzogiorno -- scarcity of drinking water, prevalence of malaria, insecurity, and land tenure conditions --

some combination of which was undoubtedly instrumental in the original settlement pattern. The persistence of the agro-town appears to be coupled with an added phenomenon -- that of a cultural preference for an urban way of life. Given the nucleated settlement pattern which prevails, most farmers do not live on the land, and hence the daily marches to and from the fields which may take as much as 3 or 4 hours per one way trip.¹

Approximately half of the Mezzogiorno's 20 million people live in these smaller agro-towns, with 7 million people living in towns of less than 10,000 inhabitants. Life within the agro-towns is, by and large, viewed as being self-sufficient, with little connection between the larger cities of Palermo, Naples, and Bari on the one hand, and the smaller towns on the other. The hilltop agro-towns of the Mezzogiorno are generally surrounded by poor soils and irrigation is rare. Further, because of the relatively small size of the fields under cultivation, the peasant farmer is forced to use inefficient units of production. The typical crops are mostly wheat grown in the fields, supplemented by corn, beans, and potatoes; and olives and vines planted on the slopes. The agricultural enterprise is supplemented by the raising of a goat or pig (which most often shares the family's one or two room house) for the family's consumption during the winter months. In some of the higher regions pastoralism is the dominant form of

¹ See Anton Blok, "South Italian Agro-Towns" for a discussion of this settlement pattern in Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 11, No. 1 (April 1969); also Donald Pitkin's "Mediterranean Europe" in Anthropological Quarterly, Vol. 36, 1963.

activity, but this enterprise, too, is characterized by inefficient units of production, the herds being uneconomically small. The outcome of the agricultural enterprise is generally the same no matter how the peasant tries to supplement his income and production: chronic insolvency. Food from the previous harvest lasts until the early spring -- months before the new crop will be ready to harvest. Generally, the family supply of meat has been exhausted in the winter months, and the family continues to live on pasta, beans, and peppers. The insolvency of the family means that the head of the family must go to the local shopkeepers to seek credit, to the landlord to ask for some of provisions (to be paid back with the new harvest), or to a wealthy individual or a bank to seek a loan. All of this is degrading to the individual and his family, for it is an overt admission on his part that he is incapable of fulfilling his role as sole breadwinner for his family. In a society where the concept of mascolinità is highly respected, the admission of economic incapacity is no mean thing.

The agro-towns further exhibit a cultural orientation which is, at least superficially, debilitating to efforts directed at the elimination of poverty through the production of standard goods and services. The pre-industrial urbanism cultural patterns of the agro-towns are characterized by an ethos of humanism -- a synthesis of classical and medieval cultural patterns forged during the Renaissance.² Donald Pitkin identifies ten characteristics of the pre-industrial city which

² Pitkin, op. cit.

he finds prevalent in the agro-towns of the Mezzogiorno. These characteristics of the pre-industrial city which seem to manifest themselves in the agro-towns of the Mezzogiorno are:

- 1) the city is a centre for political, administrative, military, and non-industrial economic functions;
- 2) the city is spatially compact, with the central place dominated by religious or governmental structures;
- 3) the rich live in the centre of the city, while the poor live on the periphery;
- 4) a rigid class structure exists with little chance for mobility;
- 5) daily life is carried out within the context of familism;
- 6) there exists no standardization of product or price;
- 7) manual labor is depreciated;
- 8) recruitment is carried on through kin and personal ties;
- 9) decision-making is personalistic and power systems assume clientele form;
- 10) the intellectual tenet of the "literati" is humanism.³

Fully seven out of the above ten (numbers 4 through 10) characteristics of pre-industrial urbanism can be directly related to the poverty of the Mezzogiorno, either as contributing factors to, manifestations of, or products of this poverty.

The larger cities of the area such as Naples, Bari, Palermo, or Catania, are viewed as something distant and often hostile to the peasant of the smaller agro-town. The perception is not entirely without basis in fact. The larger cities are often the home of the absentee landlord who "milks" the peasant in the form of rents which remain stable -- or worse, rise -- regardless of the quality and quantity of the harvest.

³ Ibid., p. 126-127. See also Gideon Sjöberg's "The Preindustrial City" in The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. LX, No. 5, March 1955.

The larger cities are also the seats for much of the administrative bureaucracy with which the peasant must contend, and to which he most often loses. Contact with the outside world has generally meant trouble to the peasano -- in the form of conscription, taxes, rents, and ridicule and derision at the hands of Italians from more "civilized" places. The task of contending with "outside" forces is exacerbated in that the peasant with his parochial dialect is often unable to understand the language of those with whom he most contend. Although the peasant of the Mezzogiorno may not fully comprehend the language of those from Naples or Rome, he does understand one thing -- intrallazza, intrigue for personal gain, which those in power, particularly the government, exercise at his expense. The perception is that the government has never given the southerner his "fair share", and operates principally for the officeholder and his friends. The attitude toward the government is best summed up in the epithet used for all types of calamities and misery -- governo ladro (thieving government) -- the implication being that this particular problem, like most others, was brought about by the government.

The peasant's view of the government, however, is not entirely in accordance with the facts. Currently the problem of regional disparity between North and South has assumed the position of top priority in the government's economic plans. The founding of the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno (Fund for the South) in 1950 represents an attempt to do more than pay lip service to the problem of regional disparity between North and South. Since the founding of the Cassa in 1950, its budget has

steadily increased in an attempt to develop the necessary infrastructures for economic development and to attract industry. In the first twenty years of its existence, income per head in the South rose from \$320 to \$800 per year, and the number of people employed on the land has been cut in half. Despite these sanguine statistics though, the southerner may have good reason for his pessimism and fatalism, for the position of the southerner with regard to his northern counterpart has not increased,⁴ and despite over \$12 billion poured into the South by the Cassa, the total number of jobs in the South has actually decreased. What economic relief has come is more probably due to the emigration of some 5 million people from the South over the last twenty years, thereby lessening the demand on the resources of the area.⁵ To the peasant of the agro-town, all of the efforts of the government, both through the Cassa and investment by state holding companies do not mean much. Generally investment is directed toward those areas which he considers hostile, such as Naples, or Palermo; and he seldom feels the effects of any benefits of these grand governmental machinations. He feels that he has always been, and always will be, cheated by those in power. For years he has felt the sting of relative deprivation by comparing himself with his northern counterpart, and his northern

⁴ For example, during the period of 1951-53 income per capita in the North was 122% of the national average while in the South the income per capita was only 63% of the national average. The figures for the period of 1967-69 were essentially the same, being 120.8% and 63% respectively. Thus the southerner has been continually living with approximately half the level of income that his northern counterpart enjoys (Source: OECD economic survey of Italy, 1971).

⁵ See The Economist, 15-21 April 1972, for a recent economic survey of Italy.

counterpart has been all too quick to remind him of his degraded status. Until the peasant of the Mezzogiorno feels that he is getting "his fair share" from the government, he will continue to regard the government as ineffective, illegitimate, and as a thief, operating for the benefit of others at his expense.

It is the purpose of this thesis to explore the peasant view of politics and authority further, attempting some inside view of the way in the peasant of the Mezzogiorno perceives political reality. It represents an attempt to formulate a general set of rules, or a code which can be used to explain his orientation toward political authority and participation, and further to account for what Edward C. Banfield calls the "political incapacity"⁶ which characterizes the agro-towns throughout the Mezzogiorno.

In presenting this "inside-view" I will contrast my own interpretation of the various phenomena with that presented by Banfield. Further, I will show that much of the evidence given by Banfield in support of his own hypothesis can be seen as supportive of a contrasting interpretation. In accounting for the political incapacity of the village of Montegrano which Banfield says appears to be fairly typical of the South, he gives the inability of the southerners to create and maintain organizations of a voluntary nature as one of the primary impediments.

⁶ Edward C. Banfield, The Moral Basis of a Backward Society (New York: Free Press, 1958), p. 32. Here Banfield refers to the relatively weak position of political parties, erratic voting behavior, the inefficacy of political leaders, the absence of any "political machines," and the weak and unstable nature of party organization.

For my own purposes, this assertion appears to be logical as well as useful, and indeed there does exist widespread agreement throughout the literature on the subject, that the inability to cooperate is of prime importance in the culture of the Mezzogiorno. Regarding Montegrano, Banfield states that the extreme poverty and backwardness are to "...be explained largely (but not entirely) by the inability of the villagers to act together for their common good or, indeed, for any end transcending the immediate, material interest of the nuclear family."⁷

Banfield goes on to state that this inability to concert activity beyond the nuclear family derives from the ethos of "amoral familism", which is characterized by a population who behave as if they were following the rule: "Maximize the material, short-run advantage of the nuclear family; assume that all others will do likewise." From this hypothesis Banfield derives a set of "logical implications" by which one can predict the political behavior and attitudes of those living in a society of "amoral familists". The ethos of "amoral familism" derives principally from the two phenomena of "poverty" and "class antagonisms".⁸ The ethos is labelled as "amoral" by Banfield in that it contains no concept of moral "goodness" or "badness" to those outside of the immediate nuclear family.⁹ The "amorality" is inculcated

⁷ Banfield, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

⁸ Ibid., p. 42. Here it appears that Banfield's assertion is cyclical; i.e., poverty is to be explained largely by the inability of concert activity beyond the nuclear family (pp. 9-10), the inability of concert activity is largely due to the ethos of "amoral familism" (p. 10), and "amoral familism" derives at least partially from poverty (p. 42).

⁹ Ibid., p. 83.

into the individual throughout the socialization process where one learns that gratification and deprivation depend upon the caprice of one who has power, and are unrelated to any principles of "good" or "bad". No abstract principles are internalized as "conscience" and one learns to calculate alternative courses of action solely in terms of advantage.¹⁰

Contrary to Banfield's interpretation and explanation of the inability to concert activity beyond the levels of the nuclear family, I will attempt to show that this incapacity is due to a world-view and moral code which Banfield fails to note. Rather than characterizing the Southern Italian peasantry as "amoral", I will argue that the society is highly moralistic, adhering to a moral code whose values are incongruous with the values demanded in a western-style democracy. That the "moral code" of the Mezzogiorno should posit values and behavioral norms incongruous with the norms desired for the efficient functioning of a western-style democratic state is not surprising. For centuries the state has been ineffective in much of this area, and is generally viewed as an "outsider" at best. Jane Schneider alludes to the development of this "moral code":

In the absence of the state, pastoral communities and agricultural communities in their midst, developed their own means of social control -- the codes of honor and shame -- which were adapted to the intense conflict that external pressures had created within them and between them.¹¹

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 152

¹¹ Jane Schneider, "Of Vigilance and Virgins: Honor, Shame and Access to Resources in Mediterranean Societies" in Ethnology, Vol. X:1, January 1971, p. 3.

The absence of the state and the attendant governmental apparatus, does not mean that political functions are not carried out within the given society. As Schneider states, alternative methods of performing political functions have developed. While the institutions and personal arrangements which fulfill these various political functions may be foreign to those of us who live in a society where the prevalence of the state is pronounced, we must be able to look behind the facade of seeming ineffectiveness to see how these rather "strange" customs do, in fact, function in their own environment. The "statelessness" of the Mezzogiorno has meant that political functions must be carried out through an alternative framework to that of the legally constituted government, and the basis of this framework can, I believe, be found in the "moral code" of the Mezzogiorno.

Further, I believe that it is inaccurate to place the label "amoral" on the familism that Banfield found in Montegrano in that the nuclear family forms what Baily calls the "moral community"¹² wherein there exists a shared set of values, obligations, and rules of conduct which are observed not for the sake of expediency, but rather because they are seen as honorable and good, in and of themselves. The nuclear family is the basis and embodiment of this moral conduct, and is viewed as a moral entity. Because of the rest of the cultural milieu of the Mezzogiorno, an "amoral" act is nearly impossible. Most actions are

¹² F. G. Bailey, "The Peasant View of the Bad Life" in "Peasants and Peasant Societies, edited by Teodor Shanin (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1971).

judged by the effect that they will produce upon the moral community (in this case, the nuclear family) and are therefore judged as "moral" or "immoral", depending upon whether they enhance or degrade the family's position; but actions can seldom be judged as "amoral".¹³

Ideally the limits of the moral community are said to extend to the village level, with the differentiation being made between paesani and forestiere. "Within the moral community the peasant understands the range of possible action; within limits, he knows what his opponent will do, because he and his opponent share certain basic values;..."¹³ In practice, however, the level of the moral community most often extends only as far as the family, and actions are judged as "moral" or "immoral" as they affect the family. Speaking of Sicilian society Boissevain says:

The central institution of Sicilian society is the nuclear family. The rights and obligations which derive from membership in it provide the individual with his basic moral code.¹⁴

It is this "moral code" which I shall attempt to formulate and discuss. This "moral code" is more than a mere set of expedient rules for survival in the Mezzogiorno. It is a set of rules geared to the aim of honoring and maintaining the moral community of the family. Insofar as action is undertaken in accordance with these rules to the end of maintaining the sanctity and integrity of the family, the action may be said to be moral in intent. Certainly action in accordance with the following moral code can be taken

¹³ Ibid., p. 307.

¹⁴ Jeremy Boissevain, "Patronage in Sicily" in Man, Vol. 1:1, March 1966, p. 19.

without a view to maintaining the sanctity and integrity of the family -- in this case the action cannot be viewed as being strictly moral in nature. Knowledge of the purpose to which behavior is directed is a necessary component in establishing the morality of that behavior. The moral code formulates a code of conduct beyond that of mere expediency, in that behavior in accordance with the moral code is most often undertaken with the view of enhancing what is culturally defined as a moral good, i.e., the family. The failure of many western observers to fully comprehend the behavior of the peasantry of the Mezzogiorno is, in part, due to their failure to recognize the family as a moral good which is beyond the mundane considerations of what it can provide for the individual. The morality of the goal, the innate and inherent morality of the family, is what gives behavior in accordance with the code, a "moral" quality. The formulation of the "moral code" is a recognition of the inherent morality of the family, and therefore, the morality of behavior directed toward the end of enhancing that moral community. Implicit in this approach is a rejection of Banfield's argument:

Standards are obligatory when they are in some way associated with what is sacred. Because they are sacred, their violation is felt as guilt. For most of the people of Montegrano, nothing is sacred. This being so, they feel neither obligation nor guilt.¹⁵

¹⁵ Banfield, op. cit., p. 135. Yet Banfield reports that in TAT #4, the child does not appreciate the sacrifices made by his family, but then he grows up and "...becomes aware of the evil he had done and wishes to make amends...." (p. 176).

On the contrary, the family, the most prevalent phenomenon in Banfield's study is considered sacred and moral, in and of itself. The rights, duties, and obligations connected with the family are, by far, the most important elements of the moral code.

The "moral community" of the Mezzogiorno, though, is not strictly limited to the family. Outsiders do at times become part of the moral community of the family, as, say, in the tradition of godparenthood. God and the saints (at least some of them) are also considered part of each family's "moral community", and are perhaps the only individuals who can be accepted into the community of so many individual, often antagonistic, family units. Indeed, the heavenly personages may often be considered the most important adjunct to the community of the family. The favor of God and the saints would place one's family in what is by far the most honorific position in the community. Like other members of the family though, God and the saints share in the affiliation of the family independent of their "good works". They are seen as part of the moral community, and as such, respect and esteem is given to them.

Through my exposition of the "moral code" I hope to demonstrate that the hypothesis generated by Banfield's study of Montegrano is incorrect in that it attributes behavior to a mistaken set of goals and values. Further, I hope to demonstrate that the values articulated in a moral code of the Mezzogiorno are the most salient phenomena governing conduct within that political culture. My own formulation of a moral code for the native of the Mezzogiorno is, in all probability, incomplete; but I believe that it goes further in explaining the conceptual framework

with which the peasant of the Mezzogiorno views the political world around him than does the Banfield hypothesis. This moral code I take to be the following:¹⁶

- I. The family is a moral end, in and of itself. The family gives you a place of honour in a hostile world; honor your family, and protect its honor.
- II. Don't overstep your place. There are those above you and below you. Don't intermeddle into the affairs of those who are over you, don't criticize others, and don't gossip about others.
- III. Make no enemies; one must have friends in the world to whom he can turn. Commitments alienate people, do not commit yourself needlessly. Return favors to those who help you.
- IV. Honor God and the saints.

In order to understand this "moral code", a clear understanding of the values which it represents and which colour the interpretation given to these rules by the people of the Mezzogiorno, is crucial. Without the cultural transition represented by viewing the moral code through the interpretation given it by the people of the Mezzogiorno, the code can only represent an unintelligible and often contradictory set of rules which are, at times, dysfunctional to the well-being of the family. One must understand the goal of the "well-being of the family" as the

¹⁶ It is interesting to note that Banfield asked respondents to give their definitions of a "good" man or woman. One typical response ran as follows: "A man or woman is good who demonstrates good will and is courteous toward others, is charitable when someone asks for something but, especially, minds his own business and doesn't criticize anyone or gossip" (Banfield, op. cit., p. 128).

people in the Mezzogiorno view that goal. The goal of maintaining and enhancing the family cannot be viewed as that same goal is viewed in much of western Europe and North America. The point is that "the well-being of the family" is defined differently in the Mezzogiorno than it is elsewhere. Of key importance in the culture of the Mezzogiorno is the seeking after prestige and respect. The best way that one can honor one's family is by bringing respect and prestige to the family in the eyes of others. The flow of prestige is essentially a bi-directional phenomenon; i.e., prestige accrues to the individual through his connection with the family, and prestige accrues to the family via the positions of the individual members of the family in the community. The routes to prestige and respect are many, but so, correspondingly, are the pitfalls along these routes.

Equally important is the formulation and interpretation of the "moral code" of the Mezzogiorno is the world-view of the man of the Mezzogiorno. His world is a hostile one, and his life is characterized by a war of each against all. The forces of nature and evil are pitted against each individual, who must attempt to make his way in the world and provide for himself and his family. Consequently, the man of the Mezzogiorno is shrewd, calculating his number of alternatives and attempting to hedge his bets against the future. Possibly the best example of this is the tendency to prefer a land tenure system which separates one's fields. A sudden hailstorm may strike one side of the mountain, destroying all the crops, and yet leave the other side untouched. The man who works fields in different areas has "insured" himself against this type of disaster. One must keep all of the possible options open,

and never needlessly alienate anyone (mortal or saint) who might some day be in a position to help him in his time of need. Political affiliation is particularly precarious to the individual, in that he will generally alienate all those who hold opposing opinions. Banfield interviewed a teacher in Montegrano who was a "member of a leading family":

I have always kept myself aloof from public questions, especially political ones. I think that all parties are identical and those who belong to them -- whether Communist, Christian Democrat, or other, -- are men who seek their own welfare and well-being. And then too, if you want to belong to one party, you are certain to be on the outs with the people of the other party.¹⁷

Besides being alienative, and therefore potentially harmful to the individual and his family, political affiliation is viewed as ineffective in providing the necessary functions to the individual and his family, unless it is carried on within the traditional manners of friendship. Interest groups are of no value in the peasant's struggle for survival. The government is largely ineffective in its legally constituted forms of action, and the war of every man against every man is effectively carried on within a "stateless society".

Given the inefficacy of these "modern" political institutions and arrangements in the Mezzogiorno, it is incumbent to seek out those methods of political control which are, in fact, efficacious in the Mezzogiorno. Not only must one note those institutions which carry out

¹⁷ Banfield, op. cit., p. 84.

essentially "political" functions, but one must attempt to understand the dynamics which influence and define the role of these institutional arrangements in a "stateless society".

Given this "moral code" and the two preliminary observations of the high position of prestige, and the hostile world which the peasant faces, the remainder of this thesis will be directed toward a more thorough investigation of the political culture of the Mezzogiorno in an attempt to see the relationship between this "moral code" and the dominant features of the political environment. This relationship between a "moral code" and the values which it represents on the one hand, and the political environment on the other, I take to be a two-way mutually re-inforcing relationship. That traditions dysfunctional to the political organization necessary for a modern democratic society have persisted over so long a span of time would seem to indicate that these traditions do have a great deal of viability in the cultural environment. It is, I believe, exceedingly presumptuous and ethnocentric to dismiss these traditions as useless or "amoral" and attempt to prescribe cultural patterns for community organization and participation.

Further, it is missing the point to dismiss these traditions prematurely. One cannot be content to view these traditions through his own eyes, but rather he must attempt to view them through the eyes of those who live these traditions, and see what functions they fulfill within the context of that environment. The dynamics of another culture are difficult to perceive at best, but one cannot be content to dismiss them due to his own lack of understanding. This is the case with much of the

tradition in the Mezzogiorno. A closer look is needed in order to see what functions or needs the current traditions fulfill and why they persist.

The dominant features of the cultural environment which impinge upon the political system I take to be; 1) the poverty of the area, and its translation into an outlook on life; 2) patron-client relationships; 3) the Church; and 4) the family. These four phenomena appear to be of importance in that they do exhibit aspects of a moral code and the values related to that moral code; and they impinge upon the political system, relating that moral code to the political system, as it were. Behavior related to these four phenomena in the Mezzogiorno is largely colored by the moral code of the Mezzogiorno, and when that behavior is adequately related to the moral code, a clearer picture of both the goals and acceptable rules of conduct in the pursuit of "the good" can be drawn. These four phenomena also impinge upon the political processes of the Mezzogiorno, in that behavior with regard to the four topics often consists of essentially political functions which are de jure the prerogatives of the state. Because behavior related to the four topics is often political in nature, the moral code (which is characteristic of the Mezzogiorno but not the legally constituted authority system) can be seen to impinge upon the politics of the Mezzogiorno.

Sources for this study are both primary and secondary in nature. Data from the Almond and Verba five-nation study will be used where applicable. These data were made available by the Inter-University Consortium for Political Research. Neither the original source of the data,

nor the Consortium bear any responsibility for my analysis of that data. Banfield's study is, I believe, a proper starting point, in that he points to the proper direction that a study of this type should take -- that of looking at the culture to account for what appears as "political incapacity". He has, however, failed to get deep enough into that cultural milieu that is the Mezzogiorno to see the values and behavior of the people through their own eyes. This study will attempt that somewhat schizoid task.

CHAPTER II

Poverty

Those who must concentrate only on survival
usually do not revolt; they are too hungry.

J. C. Davies

Yet while man does not live by bread alone,
without bread he does not live at all.

R. C. Cook

The Mezzogiorno is poor. It has always been poor. The fertile soils found in the Po Valley are missing from the Mezzogiorno with its hilly and rocky terrain complemented by marsh lands. The Mezzogiorno lacks the navigable rivers which aid transport in the North. The Mezzogiorno enjoys no equivalent of the Po system with its tributaries, and canals dug in the Po plain to extend the system. Important minerals, too, seem to have been limited to the North. Iron ore is found around Lago di Como, Val d'Aosta, and in Umbria. The South, however, has been limited to deposits of sulphur, lead, and zinc. The North has enjoyed the advantage of inexpensive hydroelectric power from Alpine streams, while rates for electricity in the South are much higher due to the great distances of transmission, or the less efficient use of coal for generating the electricity.

Besides the natural poverty of the Mezzogiorno, the area was retarded in its economic development by other factors during the periods of great industrial expansion. The close proximity of Northern centers to other European markets gave them a distinct advantage over points further South. This proximity to the rest of Europe also undoubtedly had its effects upon these Northern centers which felt the impact of

ideological changes in Europe. The ideal of progress was instilled through the glorification of the achievements of such cities as Venice, Milan, Florence, and Genoa during the Renaissance. The South, on the other hand, was characterized by landlords who clung tenaciously to their landed status, channelling wealth into the conspicuous consumption of palatial villas, and leading the life of the great seigneurs. Further, the relative absence of railways at, say, the time of unification (1861) was an initial impediment to economic development of the region. The South, with 41% of the land area, had, in 1861, only "one fifth as much railway and one third as much roadway mileage per capita, and one seventh as much railway and one third as much roadway mileage per square kilometer of territory as the rest of the country."¹

All of the above disadvantages and relative disadvantages of the South were undoubtedly significant during the early stages of economic modernization, but even more important have been the multiplier and accelerator effects governing the location of a second firm or industry. Industrial growth has tended to settle in those areas (Turin, Milan, and Genoa) where there exist other industries to provide the necessary backward and forward goods and services to complement their own. The result of this pattern of economic growth is that the Mezzogiorno has been left in poverty while the rest of the country has moved into an age of relative prosperity. Many of the people of the Mezzogiorno live in one or two

¹ Shepherd Clough, and Carlo Livi. "Economic Growth in Italy: An Analysis of Uneven Development of North and South" in The Experience of Economic Growth, edited by Barry E. Supple (New York: Random House, 1963), p. 357.

room hovels which they share with their animals.² Nearly all of those engaged in agricultural activities are unemployed for a great part of the time. The more industrious spend their time gathering and selling charcoal, herbs, or snails.³ Most, however, wait around the piazza, hoping to be picked for work by one of the landlords who is repairing his barn, or some other odd job. Many go to the Camera del Lavoro, a service run by the Communist Party which is often mistaken for the government employment office, in order to seek a couple of days work on the road gangs, or other part-time employment.⁴

The poverty of the Mezzogiorno, however, is more than the lack of work, insufficient amounts of food, and generally unsatisfactory material living conditions. The poverty of the Mezzogiorno has been turned into a philosophic outlook which defines that poverty and gives it significance. It is the outlook of la miseria -- pessimism, fatalism, distrust, struggle, alienation, and social degradation. "The peasants' economic poverty is translated into social insignificance, subordination, contemptibility."⁵ Given the emphasis placed upon prestige and respect in the culture of the Mezzogiorno, the peasant of the Mezzogiorno suffers both from his material deprivation and his social deprivation measured in terms of relativity.

² For a description of the housing situation of the Mezzogiorno, see Ann Cornelisen's Torregreca (New York: Delta Books, 1969), Chapter VI; also Carlo Levi's Christ Stopped at Eboli, Chapter 13.

³ See Danilo Dolci's To Feed the Hungry, translated by P. D. Cummins (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1959).

⁴ The Camera del Lavoro has no authority to hand out jobs as such, but merely attempts to keep a listing of available vacancies.

⁵ Joseph Lopreato, "How Would You Like to be a Peasant?" in Peasant Society, edited by Jack M. Potter, et al. (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1967), p. 427.

Banfield notes this social element in his description of la miseria:

"...la miseria is as much or more the result of humiliation as of hunger, fatigue, and anxiety."⁶

There are many routes to prestige and respect in the Mezzogiorno -- most of which are closed to the peasant. The ability to forego manual labor -- particularly agricultural labor -- affords the individual one of the most prestigious positions. Labor is negatively valued,⁷ and one of the most envied positions is that of the non-laboring landowner who can live on the rents from his lands, and indulge in conspicuous consumption, either in the local town or in the larger urban centers with their cultural amenities. The landowner maintains his village ties through ownership of the land and a few of his relatives who are not quite so fortunate, but considers himself (and is considered by others) to be above the petty problems involved in the agricultural enterprise. To the peasant, however, this route to prestige and respect for himself and his family is closed. He must continue to work in the dirt (and often not his own dirt), and is referred to by others as pedi 'ncritati

⁶ Banfield, op. cit., p. 160.

⁷ "In the world of la miseria, possession in itself is an insufficient sign of distinction, particularly if we keep in mind that the use of wealth, the idea of investment by the individual, is largely unknown in southern Italy; exemption from labor then becomes the only true criterion of distinction: he who is at the lowest level of the economic and social scale has to work with his hands; he who belongs to the 'better classes' gives proof of it by disdaining manual labor" (F. G. Friedmann, "The World of La Miseria", in Potter, et al., op. cit., p. 329).

(muddy feet).

The peasant is often forced to expose himself further to disgrazia by allowing the women of his family to work. Besides an overt admission of his incapacity to fill the culturally defined role of economic breadwinner, the man runs the risk of exposing the women of his family to sexual temptations which may ruin the family's reputation for generations to come. To avoid these risks of disgrazia, the small landowner or renter may hire braccianti (day laborers) to work for him. The hiring of others also enhances one's prestige, in that he can himself escape the labor necessary to keep up his fields. Most often, though, this is not economically feasible, and the peasant is forced to work the land himself, and forego the honorific activities associated with leisure time in the local piazza.

The peasant of the Mezzogiorno is further barred from prestige and respect due to the status given to his position by the larger "community" of Italy. Northern Italians have always considered the Southerners as slow, lazy, and untrustworthy. They have always treated the Southerner with contempt -- and the Southerners are still referred to by their Northern counterparts as terrioni (earth-grubbers). With the advancement of mass media, the Southerner -- particularly the peasant -- has become more acutely aware of his relative deprivation. He cannot afford the luxury items advertized on television, or automobiles displayed in full-color ads in his weekly magazines. Yet his inability to indulge in these things does not curb his appetite. Rather, he feels more cheated, more acutely aware of his humiliation. He cannot meet the standards of

the larger society, yet he is judged by them. And, as Banfield points out: "By the standards of the larger society, the peasant's work, food, and clothing all symbolize his degradation."⁸

Our own suggestion is that over and above whatever other differences may exist between South Italian peasants and many other peasants elsewhere, one is of the utmost importance, and it concerns the rapid economic development and social transformations recently experienced by Italian society. The peasant's own share of the new benefits has lagged far behind the national average, but just the same he has been jerked out of his quasi-feudal state of acquiescence. He now has a greater awareness of his hardship and suffers from a deep sense of relative deprivation. (emphasis his)⁹

The poverty of the Mezzogiorno, and its philosophical manifestation in the concept of la miseria, contain a large element of distrust -- both of one's neighbors or fellow townsmen (paesani) and of outsiders (forestieri). Ideally, the forces of campanilismo (parochialism) should hold the paesani together, giving grounds for mutual trust. In practice, though, this is not the case -- as Maria Prato found out when she bought a defective sewing machine from a paesano who carefully concealed the defect while demonstrating the machine.¹⁰ Much of this distrust is due to superstition and myth. There is the superstition that the envy of neighbors will bring the evil eye (mal 'occhio) upon one. One must, therefore, not be too conspicuous in his good fortune, lest it incite the envy of his neighbors and bring him to misfortune.¹¹ The affairs

⁸ Banfield, op. cit., p. 65.

⁹ Lopeato, "How Would you Like to be a Peasant?" op. cit., p. 436.

¹⁰ See Banfield, op. cit., p. 117.

¹¹ See A.L. Maraschini The Study of an Italian Village (Paris: Mouton and Co., 1969) Chapter IX.

of one's family must be kept secret to guard against this potential danger.

Another reason for distrust of one's fellow man is the high degree of importance placed upon conformance with approved sexual norms by the female, and the myth of the virile, hot-blooded Latin male with his sense of supermasculinity. The accepted belief is that, given a chance, the male will attempt to seduce and conquer; while the woman, given her frail constitution, will be overcome by passion, and give in to the amorous advances of the male. To avoid these evils (but more particularly, the shame which results if the community finds out about it), the family must guard its womenfolk against encounters with males outside the family. The women generally go unescorted only to Church -- at all other times their contact with members of the opposite sex is escorted and carefully scrutinized. Not only forestiere males, but also paesani males are not to be trusted with the women of one's family. Women are part of the family's patrimony, and the weakest link in the chain of family honor.

Perhaps more important in the element of distrust, though, is what George M. Foster calls the "image of the limited good",¹² whereby resources are seen to exist in a finite quantity with no means directly available to the peasant to increase the overall total available. Resources, then, become the stakes in a zero-sum "game" -- or more aptly, a "war of each against all and devil take the hindmost". Whatever accrues to one family in the way of land, wealth, honor, security, or status must necessarily be through the deprivation of others. Since the total quantity of "goods" available is insufficient, one must do whatever necessary

¹² George M. Foster, "Peasant Society and the Image of Limited Good." in Peasant Society, edited by Potter, et al., op. cit., pp. 300-324.

to assure his family of a suitable standard of living; and the outcome is the preoccupazione that Banfield found in Montegrano:

In the Montegrano mind, any advantage that may be given to another is necessarily at the deprivation of one's own familyThe world being what it is, all those who stand outside the small circle of the family are at least potential competitors and therefore also potential enemies.¹³

The atmosphere of a culture with the image of the limited good is conducive to a sense of struggle, distrust, and an attempt at "one-upmanship". The idea becomes that of getting ahead of one's fellow, particularly in terms of prestige and respect. The game of "one-upmanship" can be won in two ways: either by increasing one's supply of the "goods", or by decreasing the stock of "goods" of the other man; the moment of victory coming, say, when one strolls across the piazza with the other's girlfriend on his arm. The ideal of getting ahead of one's fellow is not conducive to cooperation, but rather to competition. The people of the Mezzogiorno play this "game" with one another, and they are wary of one another: 78% of Almond and Verba's respondents in the Mezzogiorno agreed that "If you don't watch yourself, people will take advantage of you", while only 13% disagreed with the statement. This attitude extends to all levels of society: "The landowner, the police, the tax collector and even the priest have come to symbolize those who are out to milk the peasant."¹⁴ Indeed, Banfield's rule number 13 speaks of this very phenomenon:

¹³ Banfield, op. cit., pp. 110-111.

¹⁴ Leonard W. Moss and Stephen Cappannari. "Patterns of Kinship, Comparaggio and Community in a South Italian Village", in Anthropological Quarterly, Vol. 33, January 1960, p. 25.

The amoral familist will value gains accruing to the community only insofar as he and his are likely to share them. In fact, he will vote against measures which will help the community without helping him because, even though his position is unchanged in absolute terms, he considers himself worse off if his neighbors' position changes for the better. Thus it may happen that measures which are of decided general benefit will provoke a protest vote from those who feel that they have not shared in them or not shared in them sufficiently.¹⁵

The culture of the Mezzogiorno contains, therefore, an element of what might be called "alienative fellow" to complement Almond and Verba's "alienative subject", and "alienative participant" elements.¹⁶ The element of alienative fellow may be seen in the distrust of those outside the family, and the emphasis upon keeping secret the affairs of the family. The less outsiders know of the family's affairs, the less likely that they will be able to use this knowledge against them in some manner.¹⁷ Banfield notes this distrust of those outside the family in Montegrano:

As the Montegranesi see it, friends and neighbors are not only potentially costly but potentially dangerous as well. No family, they think, can stand to see another prosper without feeling envy and wishing the other harm. Friends and neighbors are, of course, peculiarly liable to envy, both because they know more about one's business than do others and because they feel themselves to be more directly in competition.¹⁸

The data from the Almond and Verba study seem to bear out this concept

¹⁵ Banfield, op. cit., p. 98.

¹⁶ See Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's The Civic Culture (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1965), p. 38.

¹⁷ See footnote in Banfield (op. cit.) on p. 120, where Dr. Gino teaches his sons to keep the affairs of the family secret. It is also interesting to note that 49% of the people interviewed by Almond and Verba in the Mezzogiorno refused to tell the interviewer how much their annual income was.

¹⁸ Banfield, op. cit., p. 115.

of what I have called "alienative fellow". Out of the 360 respondents from the Mezzogiorno, 235 (65%) agreed with the statement "No one is going to care much about you," while only 91 (25%) disagreed with the statement. The alienation was even more profound when the question was asked whether people were inclined to help others, or merely themselves. In responses to this question 88% of the respondents felt that people were more inclined to help themselves, while only 6% felt that people were inclined to help others. "Italian peasants... are strongly socialized in the belief that it is safer to keep one's affairs and political views strictly to oneself."¹⁹ Again, regarding the question "How many people would you avoid discussing politics with?", 58% of the Almond and Verba sample stated that one could "talk to no one", or that there are "many you can't talk to." The general level of distrust is portrayed in Cornelisen's account of life in Torregrèca: "Nothing was so suspicious as the obvious. Only a fool accepted it. The simplest event, to be understood, must be analyzed and reconstructed until it was a lacework of deception and intrigue."²⁰

There is a Sicilian proverb which says: tutta a sciarra e pa cutra -- literally; "the whole struggle is for the blanket." The meaning is that each man fights to cover himself with the "blanket" which, by definition, is an object of limited size. In order to cover himself he

¹⁹ LaPalombara, Joseph. "Italy: Fragmentation, Isolation and Alienation" in Political Culture and Political Development, edited by Pye and S. Verba (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 290.

²⁰ Cornelisen, op. cit., p. 206.

must attempt to take some of the blanket away from others. Although the proverb is a natural outgrowth of a society where, say, four small children share one bed and must attempt to keep warm by "stealing" some of the blanket, the proverb may be slightly misleading in that the blanket is, again by definition, a material object. The struggle, however, is not completely concerned with the material object per se, but rather the material object and the honor, prestige and respect that are connected with those material objects. The concept of the limited good applies to more than material advantage -- something that Banfield's hypothesis seemingly overlooks. Speaking of the possessive attitude of the peasants of the Mezzogiorno, Friedman states: "This possessive attitude cannot be satisfactorily explained in terms of economic need alone even in the field of material goods."²¹ Possession of wealth is important, but its importance seems to derive largely from its connection with (either as a means to, or as a sign of) power and honor.²² The connection between material advantage and familial honor is mostly clearly seen in the conception of the patrimony -- that stake which all members of the family share in, and which is passed on from generation

²¹ F. G. Friedmann, "The World of La Miseria" op. cit., p. 327.

²² Calogero, a Sicilian interviewed by Danilo Dolci, made the following statement: "If man has a good name, a good reputation in the circles he moves in, then there's a chance that that man will not perish. A good reputation brings trust, power, money." It is interesting to note the causal chain drawn by Calogero (a good reputation brings money), in that it is often assumed that all peasants see it the other way around, i.e., money brings a good reputation, power, etc. Calogero's statements can be found in Dolci's The Man Who Plays Alone, translated by Antonia Cowan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1968), p. 28.

to generation. A threat to the material assets which comprise part of the patrimony is seen not so much as a mere economic threat, as much as a threat to the honor of the family through jeopardizing its patrimony. Once the family ceases to be a viable economic and political unit, much of its patrimony is destroyed and the family is dishonored. Jane Schneider deals with this concept in her excellent article, "Of Vigilance and Virgins":

Mediterranean people have quarrelled over encroachments on boundaries, usurpation of water rights, abusive pasturing, animal theft, the destruction of crops, adultery, and murder. They consider such violations as challenges to the property holding group. Thus, honor can be thought of as the ideology of a property holding group which struggles to define, enlarge, and protect its patrimony in a competitive arena.²³

Status, when viewed through the image of the limited good, yields the existing rigid hierarchy which forms an integral part of la miseria. It is beyond the scope of this paper to say definitively whether or not the rigid hierarchy came about through viewing status through the image of the limited good, but it does appear that the status hierarchy exhibits the same aspects of the image of the limited good that do, say, land or wealth.

While there is a definite status hierarchy, it is important to realize that the recognition of one's proper place in the hierarchy is not strictly connected with submissiveness on the part of the poor to the rich. Each position or function is regarded as having value within the priority of things. Status is not solely derivative of wealth,

²³ Jane Schneider, "Of Vigilance and Virgins: Honor, Shame and Access to Resources in Mediterranean Societies", in Ethnology, Vol. X:1, January 1971, p. 2.

although it may be partially based upon wealth. Ann Cornelisen describes Luca Montefalcone as a "nomad doctor famous all over Italy as the man who understands the South." As a native of Torregreca, "...He is respected and...envied by every man in Torregreca for his wealth, his outstanding career as an epidemiologist, his beautiful wife and his powerful friends."²⁴ Chapman's study of Milocca, a Sicilian village, revealed that "High social standing is dependent either on education or property in land, but it is assured only in families which possess both."²⁵ Indeed, even Banfield notes the non-economic element of status and wealth: "Being a landed proprietor is more a matter of social than of economic status."²⁶ One of the most important aspects of the rigid hierarchy is that certain functions are viewed as being outside the realm of a particular status grouping. As Friedmann points out:

The delicate sense of the hierarchy of things, natural and human, is well expressed in the remark of a landless peasant who, in attempting to describe his daily routine had started by saying: 'We hoe the earth' -- then had interrupted himself with an apology to me (the gentleman) -- 'if you will forgive the expression, like beasts.' Someone who wants to explain a difficult question to a visitor often starts by saying: 'I am only a peasant' or 'I am only a carpenter -- but this is what I think about it'²⁷

Given this attitude, the peasant realizes that it is not his prerogative

²⁴ Cornelisen, op. cit., p. 41.

²⁵ C. G. Chapman, Milocca A Sicilian Village (London: Schenkman, 1970), p. 12.

²⁶ Banfield, op. cit., p. 49.

²⁷ Friedmann, op. cit., p. 326.

to govern, and limits his community participation to voting and the opposition of those individuals or groups immediately above him which he perceives as a threat to his claim on the available resources. This attitude also manifested itself in Almond and Verba's five nation study, where 54% of the respondents from the Mezzogiorno agreed with the statement "Politics is too complicated to understand", while only 24% disagreed with the statement. Clearly half of the people felt that the realm of politics was beyond their comprehension. When questioned as to the likeliness of their success if they attempted to change what they considered to be a harmful regulation, 53% answered that success was "somewhat unlikely" or "impossible". The same question was asked regarding what they considered to be harmful legislation -- the respective categories went up to 68%.

The peasant's attitude toward his station in life may be seen in Ignazio Silone's Fontamara. The peasant replied to a question about the status hierarchy as follows:

God is at the head of everything, commanding the heaven
 Everybody knows this.
 Then comes Prince Torlonia, ruler of the earth.
 Then comes the guard of the prince.
 Then comes the prince's guard's dogs.
 Then nothing.
 Then more nothing.
 Then still more nothing.
 Then come the peasants.
 One can say that is all.²⁸

²⁸ Quoted in N.S. Peabody, "Toward an Understanding of Backwardness and Change: A Critique of the Banfield Hypothesis", in Journal of the Developing Areas, April 1970 (his translation).

One realizes that this is the way things are arranged in the world, and it does not do to "make waves". The terms braccianti, artigiani, proprietari, signori, professore, and studenti all connote relative degrees of respect and prestige in relation to one another. One must not overstep the prerogatives of one's stratum. Indeed, respondents in the Almond and Verba sample were asked to choose a personal quality they thought most admirable from a list of nine possible choices. The two categories "keeps to himself" and "respectful -- doesn't overstep his place" were rated at the top by 18% and 14% of the respondents respectively. The trait "does his job well" was rated as most admirable by 26% of the respondents. From these preferences for the most admirable traits, it is possible to draw a composite picture of an individual who "does his job well, keeps to himself and doesn't overstep his place" which would, presumably be rated as most admirable by a relatively large segment of the population.²⁹

Aside from the fact that the rigidity of the social hierarchy is culturally sanctioned in terms of the norm "don't overstep your place or intermeddle into the affairs of others", the rigidity is furthered strengthened by a sense of fatalism which runs through the culture of the Mezzogiorno. The sense of fatalism is to be expected in that the lack of fatalism implies the ability to control one's environment to a great extent. The peasant has always been unable to control those factors which govern his environment and lot in life -- the weather, natural catastrophes, disease, the government, and the landowners. Further the possibility of

²⁹ As a point of contrast, it is interesting to note that the trait "active in social and public life" was deemed most admirable by only 5% of the respondents.

control of these factors does not exist -- "Peasants see themselves as subject to the working of history but scarcely as makers of it."³⁰

The fatalism of la miseria can be partially mitigated by the individual through his personal contacts, which often exhibit the characteristics of an "insurance" arrangement -- much like the desire of the peasant to work separate plots of land. The cultivation of friendship with those who do have the power to intercede on one's behalf is the most prevalent form of human initiative taken toward the end of overcoming the fury of the Fates. A personal friend in the government can speed loan applications on their way, the priest can be influential on behalf of the individual in any number of ways, the shopkeeper can grant credit and innumerable extensions of that credit, or the landowner can see to it that one's family does not go hungry while waiting for the new harvest -- and all of this because the individual has kept his friendship up.

Beyond this patron-client arrangement though, there is little in the world of la miseria that the individual can do to assure his own success, as well as that of his children. Success is seen as the product of luck or divine intervention,³¹ and personal initiative is deemed as not only useless, but also potentially harmful. Italians from all areas love the lottery, which has become a national pastime. In the Mezzogiorno

³⁰ Friedmann, op. cit., p. 324.

³¹ It must be noted that even the concept of divine intervention is not free from the patron-client syndrome. Indeed, divine intervention is the intercession of a patron saint, who is the more powerful figure in a dyadic relationship. The intervention of the saint has been "earned" via his continued propitiation by the individual.

the lottery is viewed as one of those avenues which offer the phenomenal stroke of luck which will remove the peasant from his fate.

Banfield found this fatalism in Montegrano: "In the Montegrano view, action is the result more of forces playing upon the individual than of motivations arising within him."³² The fatalism of la miseria, then, provides a further sanction against participation in government and community affairs. Besides being beyond the scope of the ordinary peasant, government and its improvement are more due to luck and other outside forces.

Moss and Cappannari also found the element of fatalism as it relates to the social hierarchy in their study of Cortina d'Aglio (a pseudonym for a Molisan village meaning "the garlic curtain"). They state:

Upward social mobility is possible but difficult. If the son of a peasant were to become a physician (unlikely but within the realm of possibility), he would not be admitted to membership in the upper class. He still remains the son of a contadino (peasant). While he is considered as above his class of origin, he is not a member of the class to which he aspires. All of our informants shook their heads over this hypothetical case and indicated that he would be neither one nor the other, and, furthermore, such a case of mobility was termed unlikely.³³

The peasant, then, does not view his chances for improvement of his lot in life as being very great. He has resigned himself to that which he has always known, and that which was known to his forefathers before him.

³² Banfield, op. cit., p. 131.

³³ Leonard W. Moss and Stephen Cappannari, "Estate and Class in a South Italian Hill Village" in American Anthropologist, Vol. 64, No. 2, April, 1962, p. 293.

The poverty of the area, and its translation into the philosophic outlook of la miseria, is at least partially derived from the land tenure system of the Mezzogiorno. Unlike central Italy, which is characterized by a predominance of the mezzadria contract where the landowner and the peasant share expenses and product equally, the agricultural lands of the South are worked under a patchwork of different arrangements. There is often a reluctance on the part of the landowner to become involved in the agricultural enterprise because of the negative value placed on this type of work -- consequently he most often rents his lands to the peasants. The rents are not proportionate to the harvest; they may be advantageous one year and disadvantageous the next. Furthermore, because plots are unintegrated -- a product of bilateral kinship patterns and a legal tradition of partible inheritance -- a peasant may rent from more than one landlord at a time, or he may be a renter, sharecropper, owner, and wage-laborer concurrently. The tradition of dividing inherited lands equally among offspring has resulted in progressively smaller plots with concomitant increasingly small yields. The peasant's relationship to both the land and landowner are typically unstable over time. Lacking any long term commitments or leases, the peasant has learned to exploit his plots of land rather than care for them on a long term basis. In the Mezzogiorno, there is no tradition of the happy peasant closely tied to his land, working its soil with affective ties to "his land".

The cultivator of the South is necessarily, more self-reliant than his counterpart in the North or Central Italy. Under the terms of tenancy, the cultivator must assume all responsibility for success or

failure of the harvest. He must take the entrepreneurial decisions as well as provide the necessary manual labor. He must seek credit, make decisions regarding investment, and hire extra labor when necessary. Continually living on the brink of economic ruin, and in perennial need of loans, credit, and food supplies to tide the family over until the next harvest, leaves the peasant in constant need of friends who can perform these functions and provide him and his family with sustenance. He is continually at least a potential client in a patron-client relationship, who is generally willing to give his respect and vote to whom-ever will provide for his and his family's needs and make sure that they won't perish in troubled times.³⁴

There is one way out of the poverty and la miseria of the Mezzogiorno which has been used quite extensively in the past twenty years -- emigration. Over 5 million people -- mostly young men -- have emigrated from the Mezzogiorno over the last twenty years, mostly to America or the northern industrial centres of Milan and Turin. Some have gone to Germany and Switzerland to work, returning to spend their two weeks holiday with their families left behind. Emigration is viewed as a viable escape from la miseria of poverty because it involved usually occupational, as well as locational change. Given the preference for an urban way of life characteristic of most preindustrial towns, "civilized" becomes equated with "urbanized". The mere prevalence of agricultural activity in the Mezzogiorno does not necessitate a rural orientation. Lopreato

³⁴ See Sydel Silverman's "Agricultural Organization, Social Structure and Values in Italy: Amoral Familism Reconsidered" in American Anthropologist, Vol. 70, February 1968.

sums up emigration as follows:

In his case, this basic wish can only mean a cessation of agricultural activities. Emigration is patently suited to achieve this goal; barring few exceptions it involves also occupational mobility and social betterment.

In short, the peasants are leaving the land they have worked on for many reasons, but foremost among them seems to be a desire to regain, or to earn, their self-esteem, their dignity, and their personal integrity.³⁵

The difference between rural and urban cultures is profound in the eyes of the people of the Mezzogiorno. Giuseppe Z., one of Dolci's informants, speaks of himself and other peasants:

They're not quick-witted like city folks; if you're in a city you're more alive, you learn how to use your head, but when you see nothing but mountains and sky day in, day out, you're just like the sheep, and when there are wolves about....³⁶

Emigration is not the solution that it seems though. Almond and Verba's study showed that 67% of the people interviewed definitely planned on staying in their town of residence, while only 6% definitely planned on moving from the town. Furthermore, 83% of those interviewed had lived in their towns of residence for "20 years or more -- 'all my life'." Many of the emigrants return to the South to enjoy their hard-earned wealth, which seems to last a little longer in the Mezzogiorno. Here

³⁶ Quoted in Danilo Dolci's To Feed the Hungry, op. cit., p. 247. Banfield also notes the same attitude in Montegrano: "Importance is (emphasis his) attached to the difference between town and country manners. The country-dwelling peasant, although he is generally much better off than the town dwelling peasant, is often regarded as a 'rube' (cafone). His speech, dress, and country ways are ridiculed by those who themselves have no land or livestock and sometimes not even a mouthful of bread" (Banfield, op. cit., p. 71).

they set examples with their acquired urban ways and styles, and tell inflated stories of the opportunities awaiting those who decide to follow their example.

Besides relieving population pressure on the land, (which is a relatively recent phenomenon in the Mezzogiorno), emigration contributes to the welfare of those who stay behind, in the form of gifts and money sent back to help relatives. The continued reliance upon the good will and gifts sent from emigrants though, condemns the peasantry of the Mezzogiorno to continually living in relative, if not absolute, poverty. There are, however, other adverse effects of emigration which serve to perpetuate the poverty and la miseria of the region. A great bulk of emigrants from the Mezzogiorno are the more ambitious young men who seek something better than the life of their fathers. The cost of raising these people falls upon the Mezzogiorno, but the fruits of their productivity are drained off either to the government,³⁷ or to northern industrial regions where they work, rent an apartment, buy their clothes, and raise their families. Emigration can also be detrimental to the development of the South, in that the very individuals who emigrate are the more ambitious and mobile, and therefore, probably the most capable to effecting change within the region. The stability of the status quo is enhanced by draining off these 'dissatisfied' elements, who are fatalistic with regard to their chances for a better life in the

³⁷ One of the more popular occupations for young male emigrants is that of the carabinieri or police, a position which is, for some reason (possibly the power involved) very prestigious in the eyes of young men in the South.

Mezzogiorno, yet are able to muster enough initiative to break many of their old ties to the region of their birth and move to the larger industrial centres in the hope of new found wealth and ease.

Chapman's study of Milocca, although made forty years ago, displays essentially the same attitude which prevails today, except that the northern cities of Italy have become more attractive to the would-be emigrant. She says:

Life and its interests center in Milocca, and in those far away outposts of Milocca in Pennsylvania and Alabama from which come letters telling of the birth of grandchildren, the illness of a brother, or the marriage of a nephew to a fine girl, though a Turk (the term applied to all non-Catholics regardless of nationality or creed). The lure of America is strong, especially to the younger peasants who dream of riches gained by labor lighter than that which they know, riches with which they could return, buy land, and settle down as respected proprietors....But, failing America, they feel no urge to go to other parts of their country....³⁸

The unfortunates, those who do not emigrate, are condemned to live the life of poverty and la miseria. They are the ones who must keep a close watch on their neighbors, try to formulate intricate networks of friendship, and stand alone against the forces of nature and evil; and throughout all this, try to maintain their self-respect as well as the respect of the community. Two of Dolci's informants speak for these people:

They (the regional authorities) issue me an E.C.A. card every month, and I draw 1,000 lire relief money, I want work -- what do they think I can do with the

³⁸ Chapman, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

miserable little bits they dole me out? I'm looking for a job. Every time I take 50 lire from my son to buy a crust of bread with, I feel sick with shame. The moment he's gone I begin to blubber....

I can't bring myself to ask the passers-by for charity. I've been a worker all my life, and I'm only fifty years old.

I'm beginning to go queer in the head. I used to try and puzzle out how I'd come to such a pass. But I've stopped thinking -- I can't think anymore. Work, work, work, -- how can I find work -- that's all that's left in my mind.³⁹

...my wife fell ill, and had to go to the hospital. I couldn't find a job, and things went from bad to worse for me; often and often, I went hungry to bed. But what I minded most was having to go empty-handed to the hospital to visit my wife. It made me bitterly ashamed of myself -- I felt I wasn't a real man, a proper husband. What a red-letter day it was for me when I was able to take her an orange. An orange -- what's an orange, you'll say. To me it was everything.⁴⁰

The component of poverty and la miseria felt most deeply by the peasant of the Mezzogiorno is not the lack of food or clothing -- it is the disgrazia which poverty so often brings in its wake. Banfield notes this, yet fails to take it into account in the formulation of his hypothesis.

He (the peasant of the Mezzogiorno) lives in a culture in which it is very important to be admired, and he sees that by its standards he cannot be admired in the least; by these standards he and everything about him are contemptible and ridiculous. Knowing this, he is filled with loathing for his lot and with anger for the fates which assigned him to it....

La Miseria, it seems safe to conclude, arises as much

³⁹ Dolci, To Feed the Hungry, op. cit., p. 103.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 37.

or more from social as from biological deprivations. This being the case, there is no reason to expect that a moderate increase in income would make the atmosphere of the village any less heavy with melancholy.⁴¹

Banfield's assertion that the peasant acts as if he were following the rule "Maximize the material short-run advantage of the nuclear family...", then, rests upon the assumption of irrationality on the part of the peasant, in that the peasant is pursuing something of only secondary importance, i.e., material advantage. The alternative interpretation is that Banfield has noted behavioral patterns but ascribed it to the wrong set of incentives. If, as this chapter has argued (and Banfield has noted), the disgrazia and relative deprivation are among the most deeply felt components of la miseria, it appears incorrect to argue that the peasant is acting in a manner solely to increase his short-run material advantage. It would appear more logical to assume that he pursues those "social goods" upon which he, himself places a high value. We cannot argue that the peasant places a high value upon honor and prestige and that he acts solely for short-run material advantage if we understand that 1) the peasant is rational; and 2) the route to "honor and prestige" is different than "short-run material advantage". This question will be further pursued later.

The peasant sees two basic ways out of la miseria, either through luck or divine intervention on the one hand, or emigration on the other. Barring these alternatives, the most expedient thing to do is to find a "friend".

⁴¹ Banfield, op. cit., pp. 64-65.

CHAPTER III

Patron-Client Relationships

It is the nature of men to be
as much bound by the benefits
that they confer as by those
they receive.

Machiavelli

Patron-client relationships form an integral part of the political culture throughout Italy, but our interest here is the manner in which the concept of patron-client relationships is the manifestation of the moral code of the Mezzogiorno peasant, and the effect that these patron-client relationships have upon the peasant's moral outlook.

The patron-client relationship is a dyadic relationship between two parties of unequal status, wealth, and influence, who bind themselves together on the basis of reciprocity in the exchange of non-comparable goods and services, and affective ties. For a number of reasons, the relationship usually rests heavily on face-to-face contact. The patron -- that member of dyad with the greater status, wealth, and influence -- has, by definition, the greater bargaining power. His needs are generally minimal, while those of the client are generally critical. While the friendship existing between the two parties may be said to be instrumental in that each member of the dyad acts as a potential connecting link to other persons outside the dyad, the relationship must, nevertheless, contain at least a minimal amount of affect. If this affective tie is not present, it must be feigned or the relationship will cease. Powell notes that, in the Mezzogiorno, these patron-client relationships tend

to be enduring over time; extensive with regard to the number and type of needs covered by the relationship; and intensive with regard to the affective feelings involved in the relationship.¹

Patron-client ties, unlike those of kinship ties, are not ascribed, but rather achieved; and one must "keep his friendships up", so to speak. The relationship may be broken in the event of non-fulfillment of the informal, unwritten, and often unspoken "contract". In return for the services of the patron -- which may include such things as letters of recommendation for a job, entrance to school, or the receiving of government services; a loan in the form of cash or food to last until the new harvest; outright gifts of money to provide for a needed dowry, schooling or some other financial outlay which the client is incapable of meeting; or any other services he might render -- the client generally gives esteem (in the form of demonstrating that esteem before others); loyalty; promises for political support; small offerings such as eggs, cheeses and other small gifts; and information on the movements and activities of others. (This last is also indirectly advantageous to the client, in that since various patrons are seen to be competing with one another at every level, it is advantageous to the client to have a powerful patron.)

Most people in a patronage system occupy patron and client roles simultaneously. In this sense, the patron-client relationships are not

¹ See John D. Powell's "Peasant Society and Clientelist Politics" in American Political Science Review, Vol. LXIV (June 1970) for a discussion of the patron-client relationship.

strictly dyadic, but rather great systems of patronage are formed. These patronage systems are not simply patronage "chains" or a series of dyadic relationships; rather, a more apt depiction would be that of a number of pyramidal structures, not directly related. Occupation of the patron role is prestigious, in that social prestige is often measured in terms of the resources a person can command to protect and advance the position of his family and friends. The patron is often addressed as "Don" -- a general recognition of his status and power. In this sense the patron, and those connected with him, enjoy the freedom from anonymity and the benefits of personal relationships in providing the individual with a meaningful place in society.²

The efficacy of the patron-client relationship is enhanced by the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the institutionalized bureaucracy and civil service. The government is often viewed as the peasant's worst enemy in that it has, for centuries, legitimized his exploitation. In the words of the poet-priest Vincenzo Padula, the peasant "has been educated to consider the government as his worst enemy while expecting that it do everything for him"³ The state bureaucracy tends to be pre-industrial in nature. "Each ministry resembles a feudal hierarchy,

² The very concept of freedom from anonymity and the enjoyment of a sense of self-worth as an individual may be one of the prime factors in perpetuating the patronage system. For a discussion of this sense of "community", see Sheldon Wolin's Politics and Vision, Chapter 10, where he identifies the search for a sense of self-worth as an individual within the community as one of the prime agents in the development of Fascism.

³ Quoted in Friedmann, op. cit., p. 330.

jealous of its own prerogatives."⁴ The general illegitimacy of the government and the civil service is further exacerbated in that, to the southern Italian, "justice" and the "rule of law" are often two different and contradictory concepts. The ancient laws handed down through the generations are often far removed from the legislation passed at Montecitorio in Rome. Those who fight against the government on the basis of a more autochthonous system of laws are often considered heroes, not only by the poor of the Mezzogiorno, but often by people throughout Italy. Witness the popularity of the Sicilian bandit Salvatore Giuliano, who played the role of a modern day Robin Hood, and consistently out-maneuvered the carabinieri until his death. A Palermitan street-sweeper talked to Danilo Dolci of Giuliano:

Giuliano had the whole of Sicily intimidated. He (emphasis his) could have put everything right. He should have been king of Sicily and put everything in order. But they killed him: here anyone who wants to do something for the poor is killed.⁵

In a hostile world one needs friends, and it pays to "keep the fences of friendship" mended. The granting of a favor must be met with reciprocity in order that one's friendship can be called upon in times of adversity. The peasant of the Mezzogiorno needs protection from his neighbors, who are trying to outdo him in one way or another; he needs

⁴ H.S. Kartadjoemena, "Economic Development in Southern Italy: The Problems of Policy and the Search for Instruments" in Canadian Public Administration, Vol. XII:2, Summer 1969. p. 292.

⁵ Dolci, The Man Who Plays Alone, op. cit., p. 108.

protection from what is often viewed as an alien legal system; and, in some parts of the Mezzogiorno, he needs protection from the violence and exploitation by the various mafiosi, which is part of the everyday life. There are natural calamities also, which he must protect himself against through the use of friendship -- a bad harvest, drought, hailstorms, and rock slides which may suddenly carry away his house or fields. Boissevain sums up the problem and its resolution as carried out in Sicily, a pattern which seems applicable to the rest of the Mezzogiorno:

Thus the basic problem the Sicilian faces in dealing with the world of non-kin is how to protect himself from his enemies, both known and unknown; and how to influence the remote, impersonal, if not hostile, authorities who make the decisions which control his well-being and that of his family, with whom his honor and standing in the community is so intimately bound. Most resolve these problems by seeking out strategically placed protectors and friends, who together with kinsmen, make up the personal network of contacts through whom the average Sicilian attempts to protect and advance the fortunes of his family.⁶

The well-placed patron can be of immeasurable benefit, particularly if he is connected with the greatest of all spoilage systems -- the government. Southerners are increasingly taking over the reins of the government bureaucracy, and have used their new found resources to pay their debts of friendship through the rewarding of jobs, licenses, contracts, and grants.⁷ The Italian public administration system being

⁶ Boissevain, op. cit., p. 21.

⁷ See Dolci's The Man Who Plays Alone, op. cit.; also ff 8 and 9 (this chapter) loc. cit.

what it is, it lends itself to the implementation of patron-client patterns. Bureaucratic red-tape affords the opportunity to some enterprising individual to speed up an application in return for the proper payment. The semi-autonomous agencies and offices are left without supervision, and again individuals use their resources in a profitable "game".

The game is Sottogoverno. It basically consists of the manipulation of patronage on a vast scale to provide money, jobs and votes for political parties and their allies. Parties and politicians need money....Political leaders, to retain the allegiance of their best men, need access to a 'Stanza bei Bottoni,' a room where you can push the right buttons....The best players are the Christian Democrats....⁸

Things have not improved much with regard to the efficiency of the government. Five years earlier The Economist reported essentially the same thing:

Administrators operate an overcentralized system which is not sufficiently in touch with local needs. The inefficiency of such a system, operating in its own labyrinth of red-tape tends to favor the strong and alienate the weak without imposing central direction on affairs. The result is the innumerable autonomous centers of power which live their partly separate lives, from governmental agencies that have gone into orbit, to large industries, landowners, guilds, professions or even, in Sicily, the Mafia.⁹

It is interesting to note that the picture of the bureaucracy

⁸ The Economist, "Italy: The incomplete miracle" (Vol. 243: 6712), 15-21 April, 1972.

⁹ The Economist, "The Emerging State" (Vol. 222: 6447), 18-21 March, 1967.

portrayed by The Economist fits very nearly perfectly with the ideal system of patronage portrayed at the beginning of this chapter; i.e., a number of pyramidal structures not directly connected. The public administration system, with its semi-autonomous centres of power leaves the office holder free to use his office as a personal sinecure, and to build his own pyramidal structure from above. He is able to use the funds at his disposal, and more importantly, his influence, in taking care of those who have demonstrated their loyalty in an attempt to gain the loyalty of others for future confrontation with those who would relieve him of his office. Moss and Cappannari note this attitude on the part of office holders in Cortina d'Aglio where those who held legitimate power positions retain feudal attitudes of authority with respect to the prerogatives of their office. The feudal outlook of these office holders, they note, is supported by the rigidity of the governmental bureaucracy and its orientation toward maintenance of the status quo.¹⁰ The degree to which political office has come to be viewed as a personal sinecure for the improvement of individual positions is stated flatly by Kartadjoemena. Speaking of the public administration system in Italy, he says: "More than an instrument for governmental intervention and action, it is a system of patronage."¹¹ Political power has come to be used for the building of personal patronage systems, and

¹⁰ See Moss and Cappannari, "Estate and Class in a South Italian Hill Village" op. cit., p. 299.

¹¹ Kartadjoemena, op. cit., p. 291.

is most often used to control funds in a manner beneficial to the individual office holder and his associates.

The effects of the inefficient government bureaucracy upon the peasantry are manifest in their own words. Peppino, one of Dolci's informants: "It's the ones on top who hold the strings; you can't get anywhere without a friend at court. O l'amicizia o la soru bedda, as the saying goes." (You must either have an influential friend or a beautiful sister.)¹² Another informant, Giuseppe Z., speaks of the politicians:

You ought to see the Honorables who come here and talk to us just before the elections. 'Work on the State schemes will begin in June, and you'll all get jobs,' they tell us. Believe me, if God himself came down from Heaven and said the very same thing, we wouldn't believe it! Maybe by the time I'm old, there will be regular jobs for everybody, but it'll be too late, then -- I shan't care....¹³

It is generally recognized in the Mezzogiorno that "ci vuole raccomandazione per poter vivere" (one needs 'pull' in order to be able to live), and the raccomandazione is the only way in which the peasant has of gaining a part of the goods and services of the system that should be his. Friendship can alter the course of an impartial bureaucracy, and does. Since the bureaucracy operates on the basis of raccomandazione, the 'little man' cannot expect the efficient flow of

¹² Dolci, To Feed the Hungry, op. cit., p. 63.

¹³ Ibid., p. 248. This grievance is reported in much of the literature on the Mezzogiorno. The bags of pasta and other food, and the false promises of work seem to be the most common electioneering gimmicks. Unfortunately, the food runs out quickly and the jobs never materialize -- but then if this didn't happen, there would be no means of campaigning at the next round of elections. The attitude is reflected in Almond and Verba's study where 80% of the sample said "All candidates sound good in speeches, but..."

goods and services which would normally result in at least minimal incremental improvement of his lot. Since the bureaucracy operates on the basis of raccomandazione, he must play by the rules of that game and seek out the favor of various well-placed individuals. The cycle, then, is self-perpetuating; the peasant must play the game of sotto-governo, dealing in raccomandazione in order to get his fair share (or at least a part of it), and because he involves himself in this elaborate barter system, the positions of the various patrons are enhanced and others must participate in the same method of obtaining goods and services. There is created, therefore, a vicious circle in which the continued employment of the patronage system enhances the position of those involved in it, and forces others to play the same humiliating game if they are to receive anything at the hands of government officials.

Besides the government, there is another institutionalized system of patronage in the Mezzogiorno -- particularly in Sicily; this is the mafia. Although the mafia is different from the government, it is not altogether separate from it. As more and more southerners have moved in to fill the vacancies within the state bureaucracy, the better positions have gone to those southerners with the greatest raccomandazione, and many of these have been mafiosi. As a police officer in Partinico put it in describing how his job was much easier nowadays: "The strongest members of the Mafia are now in Rome serving the Government."¹⁴ The

¹⁴ Jerre Mangione, A Passion for Sicilians (New York: Morrow and Co., 1968), p. 268. See also Dolci's The Man Who Pays Alone for discussion of mafiosi in government.

statement is not surprising or shocking in any way; it is a bit discomfoting.

The patronage system of the mafia is based upon a dual appeal to the peasantry, combining the forces of "love" and "fear".¹⁵ Guercio portrays an example of the efficacy of the mafia in the "good old bad days": Suppose a peasant is the victim of a cattle theft. If he goes to the police to report the theft, statistics show that he has a 10% chance of regaining the total amount of the theft. Besides his low chances of recovery, the investigations and red-tape take months to complete. Also there is the danger of reprisals from either the thief or his family. On the other hand, if he goes to the local capo-mafia, he is almost certain (95% chance) to regain part of his property. For the various investigations and coercion that the capo-mafia must undertake, he charges the victim about one-third of the total loss. Therefore a 95% chance of regaining 70% of one's losses is weighed against a 10% chance of regaining the total loss (with the delays and dangers of reprisals thrown into the bargain).¹⁶ The prudent man will always opt

¹⁵ One cannot help but be impressed with the striking similarities between many of the behavioral patterns associated with the mafia and the norms set out by Machiavelli in The Prince. In chapter XVII, Machiavelli discusses the optimal balance between resting on love and/or fear. "Still a prince should make himself feared in such a way that if he does not gain love, he at any rate avoids hatred; for fear and the absence of hatred may well go together, and will be always attained by one who abstains from interfering with the property of his citizens and subjects or with their women."

¹⁶ Francis M. Guercio, Sicily (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1968), pp. 73-74.

for the personal patron pattern of recovery of his losses. One expects that the nature of "goods and services" distributed by the mafia to be slightly different as more and more mafiosi come into the government, but one suspects that the pattern is much the same.

Besides the efficiency of the mafia in dealing with the problems brought to various mafiosi by the "little man", there is much in an "operational code" of the mafia which appeals to the peasantry. The mafia, unlike the institutionalized legal system, recognizes justice as many of the peasants know it. Calogero Volpe, a Sicilian who occupied the position of Under-Secretary of State to the Ministry of Health in 1968, an ex-Under-Secretary to the Ministry of Transport, and referred to by the press as "Deputy for the Rural Mafia", has stated that "The mafia, in the sense of development of the human personality, is an expression of the Sicilian mentality."¹⁷ The codes of morality and honor are also very much intermeshed with those of the larger peasant culture from which it was born. "Omertà was the prime social duty of a mafiusu, but his private relations were governed rispiettu, a keeping of hands off one another's property, family, friends, etc."¹⁸ The behavioral norms evident in the mafia are not merely for the purposes of expediency. The behavioral norms of the mafia are much more than the behavioral norms established in modern day military machines for efficiency. They

¹⁷ Dolci, The Man Who Plays Alone, op. cit., p. 93.

¹⁸ Guercio, op. cit., p. 70. See ff. 14, to compare with Machiavelli's exhortation to the Prince to follow essentially the same pattern of rispiettu.

represent a code of ethics, morals, and honor. Guercio sums up this position: "...the ethics of omertà and rispettu is or has been a primitive, perverted chivalry, attaining in many individual cases to heroism."¹⁹

There is another element in the "appeal" of the mafia as a patron. Mafiosi retain their positions largely out of fear on the part of the common people.²⁰ The prudent man fears reprisals against himself and his family, should he decide to start denouncing various mafiosi publicly. An unidentified voice in Dolci's meeting of January 16, 1966, in Castellamare portrayed the situation graphically: "The question is this: us poor folks are slaves all over Sicily -- we're asses, because we don't speak up. And since no one else speaks up, the mafioso is cock of the whole dunghill."²¹

Of course the people don't really respect them, not a bit. Their respect is just submission. They are stronger. The mafia was here before the law. For them, it's their own law that counts. A real mafioso never moves alone. A real mafia crime is always decided by all of them: they meet, discuss, and decide....

And so? Best mind your own business. 'The man who plays alone never loses.' You must be on your best behavior with other people: speak well, speak clean; because as the saying goes, 'una parola mal detta, ne viene una vendetta' -- a careless word, and a vendetta will follow. We have to be on our guard against our tongues. For me, blessed is the man who minds his own business. The man who doesn't is asking for trouble."²²

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 70.

²⁰ See the proceeding of the public meetings held by Dolci on January 12, 13, 14, and 16, 1966, in Castellamare, in The Man Who Plays Alone, op. cit. (p. 250-295).

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., p. 69.

Although there is a denial of "respect" to the mafia, the fact is that the mafia operates with many of the same behavioral patterns which characterize the Mezzogiorno. L'omertà and rispetto are universal in the culture of the Mezzogiorno. Cornelisen recounts that the fondest memories of the Torresi are those of the time that they locked all of the civil servants in the post office. After authority had been reasserted by the state, l'omertà set in. In front of the police, no one knew anything. The whole town sat back to enjoy the spectacle of the state officials running around, completely frustrated in their attempt to establish "justice".²³ The mafia appears, then, to share the same set of cultural norms and behavioral patterns which characterize the larger society. They are, as it were, a microcosm within the cultural milieu of the Mezzogiorno, which can be seen as an elite in terms of fulfillment of many of those behavioral norms. The mafia appears to be the example, par excellence, of behavioral patterns which characterize most of southern Italy. The use of 'friendship' and 'raccomandazione' are the most efficacious manner in which to influence the impersonal working of a bureaucratic administration; and this procedure is used throughout the Mezzogiorno, by both the mafia and the common man, much to the detriment of the efficiency of the bureaucracy itself. The mafia, however, is much better at the procedure than is the common man. In this way, the mafia is the epitome of the wider behavioral patterns characterizing the Mezzogiorno.

²³ Cornelisen, op. cit., Chapter VI. See also Friedmann, op. cit., and Eric J. Hobsbawm's Primitive Rebels (Boston: Norton, 1965), Chapters I and II.

Before leaving the topic of the mafia as a patron, it would be well to note the direction which the mafia, with its abundance of power, generally takes with regard to situations of some political import. While the boundaries of the mafia, the Christian Democratic Party, and the Catholic Church are by no means co-terminus, they do overlap with regard to membership and ideology; and they form what one might call the "Triumvirate of Stagnation", being the three major institutionalized impediments to economic, and political growth. Speaking of the mafia, Guercio sums up the position:

The higher, more imponderable mafia had always been concerned with the protection of property, with the buttressing of the established order. It had been insular, conservative, and anti-revolutionary; and the end of Fascist rule in July 1943 brought danger to property and established interests of lawlessness, on the one hand, and of communism on the other. Thus the revived power of the mafia fitted admirably with the political trends which the Allied authorities were bound to find most congenial to their own duties and interests. The mafiusu, of course played their part in promoting or impeding electoral campaigns, and their influence was first pro-separatist, then monarchist, and finally Christian Democratic. They always opposed Left-wing platforms.²⁴

Guercio's description of the biases of the mafia would also fit the clergy of the South and the Christian Democratic Party quite aptly. The mafia can control quite extensive numbers of people in that, while what one might call "affiliated members" of the organization are a small minority, the number of persons who have occasional recourse to the mafia

²⁴ Guercio, op. cit., p. 85.

in Sicily for some grievance, etc., may represent as much as half the population of the island.²⁵ These people are, of course, expected to return the favor, particularly in terms of political support for the mafia's chosen candidate. The mafia, then, has considerable weight to influence electoral outcomes toward its chosen conservative path.

Attaining a position in the state bureaucracy affords one the opportunity of becoming a patron. Even those who have no land, and manage by some means or other to gain a position in the civil service, attain a "resource" of goods and services which may be put to work in a patron-client relationship. A civil servant can influence bureaucratic procedures to the benefit of himself and/or his friends. He is a man with power, influence, raccomandazione. Given his position, he is entitled to respect and prestige within the community -- he is a pezzo da novanta, capable of pulling the appropriate strings to manipulate the affairs of government to the benefit of his friends. In a culture which places so much emphasis on prestige and respect, a position in the state bureaucracy is highly sought after.²⁶

The use of political office to provide for oneself and one's friends is not at all incongruous with the moral code of the Mezzogiorno. Personal relationships are seen as more efficacious than the impersonal rule of law, and the legal-rationalist tradition. The distrust prevalent

²⁵ Ibid., p. 72.

²⁶ There are, of course, other reasons to account for the high degree of preference for a job in the state bureaucracy. In the South, there is a conspicuous lack of alternative job opportunities; a position in the state bureaucracy provides security of employment; and civil service affords one the opportunity to forego manual labor.

in the Mezzogiorno can be directed at persons who occupy positions of power, but it is difficult to direct that distrust, and decisively place it when one is faced with a maze of bureaucratic procedures and red-tape. The distrust is perhaps greater in the latter case, but the point of fault is often quite difficult to find. Baron di Longo, a landed proprietor in Banfield's study, discusses this preference for personal-type role:

A monarchy is the best form of government because the king is then the owner of the country. Like the owner of a house, when the wiring is wrong, he fixes it. He looks after his people like a fatherIn a republic, the country is like a house that is rented. If the lights go out, well, that's all right...it's not his house. If the wall chips, well, it's not his house. The renter does not fix it. So with the men who govern a republic. They are not interested in fixing things. If something is not quite right and if they are turned out for it, well, meanwhile they have filled their pocketbooks.²⁷

This preference for personalistic type rule greatly reinforces a pattern of patron-client relationships. While the men of the republic are "filling their pocketbooks" behind the great machinations of the state bureaucracy, the peasant does well to find a "friend" who will make sure that he and his family survive and enjoy at least a modicum of the benefits to be derived from the patron's position. Lorenzo Geraci, a trade unionist in the province of Palermo who is affiliated with CISNAL (Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Nazionali Liberi, an extreme right-wing, neo fascist organization headed by the Movimento Sociale Italiano, the neo-fascist party) states the role of personalism with regard to his position:

²⁷ Banfield, op. cit., p. 25

But people who join are my personal friends. They follow me because they trust me. If I go to the devil, they'll come too; if I go with the Communists, they'll come with the Communists; if I go with the Christian Democrats they'll come with the Christian Democrats. When I got a hundred membership cards Commandante Gullo wrote my praises in the newspaper.²⁸ Whichever way I go, the people follow me personally.

Although one gets the distinct impression that Geraci may be over-stating his own position, the passage does point to the relatively strong element of personalism in the politics of the Mezzogiorno, and the concomitantly weak position of ideology in a patron-client system where benefits, performance, and allegiance are tied up in the face-to-face contacts between patron and client.²⁹ Dr. Gino, in Banfield's study, states the problem from the other side:

There is a lot of falsity in politics. You must make more friends than you want and you must act like a friend to many people you don't want to be friendly with. This is so because you must always be thinking of how to build up the party and win friends for it.³⁰

Gino's statement echoes part of the moral code set out at the beginning of this paper. One must rely on his friends, and therefore it is necessary to maintain those friendships as best one can.

The efficacy of the patron-client relationship to the peasant is enhanced by the hostile world which he faces. The peasant is powerless

28

Dolci, The Man Who Plays Alone, op. cit., p. 44.

29

The concept of "ideological erosion" is discussed in John D. Powell's "Peasant Societies and Clientelist Politics" in American Political Science Review, Vol. 64, June 1970, p. 424.

30

Banfield, op. cit., p. 25.

in the face of many threats, both natural (disease, death, drought, accident, etc.), and human (violence, injustice, and exploitation).

The patron-client relationship acts as an anxiety-reduction mechanism for the peasant. His worries are mitigated, in that, provided he has kept up his 'friendship', the patron will see to it that his family does not go hungry or unaided in their time of need.³¹ Given the view of the "limited good" and the view that results are obtained rather than achieved, it is natural to seek out those influential people who are, or have access to, the pezzi da novanta who pull the right strings. One follows the maxim "ci vuole la raccomandazione per poter vivere." The peasant knows what it takes to get the desired action in his community, and he has learned to live with it. Unfortunately, he is often unable to provide the necessary "costs" involved. The following conversation among a group of workers was recorded by Mangione:

The only time a worker has anything to say around here is at election time,...But what happens? Some mafioso comes along with a few lire and buys his vote. It happens in Partinico every election....

So what is wrong with that?

There's nothing wrong with that,...We who want to get our jobs back have our special techniques for trying to get what we want. (emphasis mine)

Senator Messeri has his own techniques. What if he does have friends who are willing to pay money for votes? It costs money to get anything you want. This strike would have ended long ago if we had been able to pour some money into the right pockets....

³¹ "The emergencies which occur in the life of the villager are normally of such a nature as to be remedied by the personal intervention of immediate superiors, friends or relatives. Rarely is the intervention of an outsider indispensable. In addition, the attitude of the outsider is rarely as sympathetic as that of someone with whom one has had long and frequent contact" (Maraschini, op. cit., p. 130).

Everyone should mind his own business.
(emphasis mine)³²

Or, again in Palermo:

If you have to go to the Council for anything
you want done, you won't get anywhere unless you
grease endless palms -- you'll get blocked all
the way unless you shell out.³³

One way of getting around this constant "shelling out" is through "friendship". Friendship can often accomplish more more, far less expensively, than the "normal" procedure of bribing state officials. While it may, indeed, be true that every man has his price, in the Mezzogiorno it is not always necessary to have the cash equivalent of this price. One of the best ways to attain the 'friendship' needed is through the tradition of comparaggio, or godparenthood. The contract thus established between patron and client is formalized in public and solemnized before God. It cannot be broken with impunity. Besides the security which this sort of relationship offers to the client, there is another benefit -- the relationship is made diffuse and multiplex; i.e., not 'role specific'. It is a method of bringing the patron into the 'moral community' of the family. In the choice of a godparent there are many factors to be considered. Ideally, the person should bring prestige and honor to the family, and the person should be in a financial position to provide financial assistance to the godchild for education or a dowry.

The element of self-interest is never lost sight of in the choice

³² Mangione, op. cit., p. 271.

³³ Dolci, To Feed the Hungry, op. cit., p. 67.

of a godparent, in that parents are anxious to assure their children of a good start in life. The element of self-interest appears only natural in a land where dire poverty is so prevalent. Speaking of this element of self-interest in the comparaggio relationship, Maroaspirini explains:

The marked element of self-interest is due to the prevailing poverty, and is merely an extension of the obligation kinsmen have to one another. Essentially, it is an accidental accretion, not a basic element of the relationship.³⁴

The benefits of the comparaggio relationship are not all one-sided. By asking one to stand as godparent at the baptism of the child (an honor only very rarely refused, if ever), the suppliant is making a public testimony to the patron's status, prestige, and position. Accepting the role of godparent can hardly be said to follow the Banfield hypothesis, but then the same is true of many behavioral patterns in the Mezzogiorno. Indeed, the acceptance of the role of godparent is, most probably, detrimental to the "short-run" material advantage of the nuclear family. There are other benefits, though, which account for the prominence of this position:

Hence, to be a godfather is an honor, and it confers prestige. Honor, esteem, prestige, status, are scarcely material qualities but their importance in the society is great; their value is high.³⁵

Given the pattern of personalism in the political orientation of the inhabitants of the Mezzogiorno portrayed thus far in the chapter, it

³⁴ The Italian Godparenthood Complex" in Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, Vol. 13, 1957.

³⁵ Maraspirini, op. cit., p. 201.

will be well to attempt to relate this preference which derives out of the moral code of the Mezzogiorno to the politics of the area. Any system of patronage is a system linking the governing to the governed. It can aptly be viewed as an alternative channel of communication through which needs are articulated and fulfilled. Where an institutional order is 'far flung' (as in the Italian bureaucracy which is, it seems, at times impossible to escape) the role of the patron should take on the position of a "connector" or "broker" between the state and individual. In this manner, legitimacy should accrue to the state, and the position of the patron cum broker should be correspondingly weakened.³⁶ This is not the pattern of patronage in the Mezzogiorno. For one thing, while the Italian state bureaucracy is "far flung", it is (and is viewed as) generally ineffective. State agencies become bogged down in a majority of their undertakings. There is little penetration of effective state bureaucracy in the Mezzogiorno. Another reason that the patron of the Mezzogiorno does not come to be viewed as a broker is that there exists the preconceived notion of governo ladro. Whatever benefits accrue to the client come in spite of, not from, the government. The legitimacy which would accrue to the government in a brokerage system accrues to the patron himself in the form of prestige. He has demonstrated his ability to get the right strings pulled to obtain results. Boissevain evaluates the effects of patronage: "...patronage weakens government. It leads to nepotism, corruption, influence-peddling, and above all it weakens the rule of law,"³⁷ but it

³⁶ See Powell's "Peasant Society and Clientelist Politics", op. cit.

³⁷ Boissevain, op. cit., p. 30.

appears that he has neglected one of the most important detrimental effects of a patronage system -- the fact that legitimacy accrues to the individual in the form of prestige, at the expense of the state. This last observation creates the vicious circle of patronage whereby the patronage system becomes more and more entrenched, and is viewed more and more as the most efficacious manner in proceeding to obtain results.

The implications of this pattern of obtaining results for the prospect of the formation of interest groups is not encouraging. Interest groups are viewed as ineffective (fifty people without money can grease no more palms than one person al verde); as well as potentially dangerous, in that they alienate those who hold power. Tarrow sums up the outlook of those who live and work in the Mezzogiorno:

...one reaches the apex of authority not by merging one's demands in a horizontal membership group, but by linking up to a hierarchical chain of personal acquaintance which may begin in the network of neighborly relations and reaches up to the state³⁸ bureaucracy with little adjustment in structure.

The peasants of the Mezzogiorno seem to be aware of the fact that the absence of an interest group orientation is detrimental to their own interests (even short-run!), yet there is still a conspicuous lack of

³⁸ Tarrow, Sydney G. "Political Dualism and Italian Communism" in American Political Science Review, Vol. LXI No. 1, March 1967, p. 44. For the foreigner, newly arrived and without the elaborate network of kin and friends, the method of dealing with authorities varies from the normal pattern. Luca Montefalcone advised Cornelisen on her arrival in Torregreca: "Everything is privilege and bluff here. The more supercilious you are, the more important you must be. It's the only way to deal with authorities" (Cornelisen, op. cit., p. 103).

such organizations. Dolci recounts one example of this in the province of Palermo, where the local mezzadri (sharecroppers) were trying to get their legal 60% of the crop, but the landowners insisted on taking the traditional 50% despite the new law. One peasant spoke to Dolci in his attempts to get the others to stand up for their legal rights: "It isn't that they're unaware of what's being done to help them. If you talk to one of them, he'll say: 'The trouble is there's no unity.'"³⁹ The preference for personalistic politics apparently contains elements which override the considerations of material advantage. Part of this preference is surely that it is the traditional way the peasant has gone about solving his problems.

The relative absence of interest groups is not merely due to the lack of initiative on the part of those who would lead such groups. History has taught the peasant how to proceed, and has given him his own "special techniques". Vincenzo Tusa, an archaeologist discussing the history of Palermo and Sicily:

Since there has never been a central power for the protection of the individual, the individual -- whether intellectual or starving poor -- has always had to try and solve his problems by direct recourse to those in power: this is the origin of the political tradition of the exercise of power through personal relationships.⁴⁰

Further, those people in positions of power have helped to maintain themselves by discouraging greater participation in public affairs of the

³⁹ Dolci, To Feed the Hungry, op. cit., p. 231.

⁴⁰ Dolci, The Man Who Plays Alone, op. cit., p. 103.

common man. Dr. Neri of Torregreca told Cornelisen:

As doctors we could do a lot to change their (the peasant's) faith in curses and spirits, but I wonder if we will. They're too convenient... they cover up all the things we don't understand. If your patient believes in the evil eye, you feel safer. Maybe I don't make myself clear. All of us in the South, not just doctors, but all the educated class, have encouraged⁴¹ ignorance in the peasants for our own protection.

The pattern of personalistic political orientations is also responsible, at least in part, for the great electoral fluctuations which are characteristic of Italian politics. Political affiliation is not ideologically based, but rather is formed on the bases of personal allegiance, and what one might call a "mutual friend-mutual enemy" dichotomy. Much of the allegiance to the Communist Party is based on the concept of the mutual enemy -- the status quo state. Alternatively, much of the allegiance to the Christian Democratic Party is based upon its sanction by the Church. The ideologies of each party are only vaguely understood by the supporters of each. They vote DC because the priest tells them to, or they vote PCI because they know vaguely that it is against the state. While these generalizations do not apply universally, it is evident that in many cases, in the North as well as the South, political allegiance to one party or another is based upon no more than these seemingly shallow considerations.⁴² LaPalombara evaluates electoral fluctuations as follows:

⁴¹ Cornelisen, op. cit., p. 251.

⁴² Seemingly the non-ideological basis of party affiliation is greater in the South than in the North. See Dolci's The Man Who Plays Alone, op. cit.

...the voters were motivated by strictly local and personal issues,...ideology and national issues played little part in determining their voting behavior, and...many shifts were simply the result of clientelismo, voters following a personal leader from one party to another.⁴³

General distrust, an image of the "limited good", tradition, self-interest on the part of those in power -- all are elements of the culture of the Mezzogiorno which tend to reinforce and perpetuate the prevalence of the patron-client type of association. Added to this is the fact that this type of relationship is generally much more efficient than the legitimate channels of the state bureaucracy. There is, also much within the Catholic tradition itself to legitimize this type of association. The concept of "patron saints" gives an ideological bias toward a political system of patronage. (After all, people don't band together and go on strike to assure salvation!) The concept implies that the "good life" is beyond the reach of the individual. He must seek the help of intermediaries who will go to God on his behalf. Analogously, the individual is seen to need the help of intermediaries who can go to

⁴³ Joseph LaPalombara. Interest Groups in Italian Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 65. It must be noted though, that this is not taken too seriously at the local level, because the elected officials at the municipal level (the mayor and his giunta) are limited in their exercise of power by their limited funds. Most of the administrative bureaucracy is appointed by the state, and it is the secretary of the town council, together with the Prefecture officials who make the more important decisions governing the local commune. The mayor and giunta, then are mere figureheads to be blamed when things are bad -- which is most often. The mayor and giunta are generally turned out in the next election -- hence the great fluctuations. See also, Cornelisen, op. cit., p. 23.

the men who occupy those "stanze dei bottoni" who, in turn, can push the right buttons. The role of the patron, thereby, receives constant validation from the religious biases of the culture.

A concluding paragraph from Dolci's work is apropos. He speaks of the mafia-clientship form of association, a cross between the secret violence of the mafia, and the system of clientship which tries to disguise itself under the cloak of representative democracy:

As long as the normal form of collaboration is the mafia-clientship type, and as long as people lack any sound and positive experience of other forms, it is quite understandable that the group should generally seem to them risky and impossible, and that they should keep repeating, 'The man who plays alone never loses.'⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Dolci, The Man Who Plays Alone, op. cit., p. 246.

CHAPTER IV

The Church

A priest in Torregreca:

"This civilization flourished a thousand years before Christ, our Savior. Our ways are rooted in the past and you, who come from a new world, may find some of them strange. You cannot have known the glories of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies as we have. You cannot be expected to yearn for the riches and fame of those centuries, but accept my word for it -- this is a glorious people engaged in a death struggle with the forces of evil. We shall win, we shall, I say! We shall return to the days of sanity, order and Christianity. We shall!"¹

Children in the Capo district of Palermo to priests who came to teach Catechism, but then left because of the dirt and stench: "You give us a pain in the balls, you shits! Stinkers. You only come here when there's an election! Bugger off!"²

If the Catholic Church were a "universal"; that is, if it were anywhere and everywhere, the same in outlook, ideology, and practice, there would be no need for this chapter. It is precisely because the Church as an institution, and the people who fill its various organizational roles are different that a further discussion of its impact on the Mezzogiorno is needed here. A proper frame of reference is provided by Robert Redfield's conception of the "great and little traditions."³

¹ Quoted in Cornelisen, op. cit., p. 94.

² Quoted in Dolci, To Feed the Hungry, op. cit., p. 94.

³ Robert Redfield, Peasant Society and Peasant Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956). Chapter III.

Basically stated, his conception is that the peasant society is the "little tradition" which is part of the "great tradition" characterizing the larger society. The "little tradition" is never identical with the "great tradition" of the larger society -- seemingly due to lower levels of educational opportunities, lower levels of access to foreign influence, and lower levels of communication between the sectors of society. Hence one often gets the vestiges of the modernization characteristic of the "great tradition" resting upon the traditional ways and values of the "little tradition". In the case of the Mezzogiorno, the peasant culture of the area can be properly viewed as a "little tradition", of an Italian culture. Analogously, the Church of the Mezzogiorno can best be viewed as a "little tradition" which is part of, but not equivalent to, the "great tradition" of Roman Catholicism.

The beliefs and practices held by Catholics in the South vary quite widely from the official Church dogma. Religion in the South is a curious mixture of Catholicism, mysticism, paganism and magic. Much has been held over from the ancient practices and beliefs of earlier inhabitants of the Mezzogiorno, and has been delicately blended with the practices of Catholicism -- much like the blending of fine wines. Various saints are considered dominant, according to locale, the function desired on the part of the suppliant, or the particular festa being celebrated. Besides the relative importance of a plethora of saints (some of which have never been canonized, and others de-canonized), there is a tenacious clinging to traditional magic in the hope for better crops and harvests. To improve the olive harvest in Sicily,

various objects are hung from the branches of trees to drive away evil spirits. The "cult of the olive" varies from district to district and hence, so do the objects hung from the trees -- sacred cords (passed on from generation to generation), dead snakes, animal horns, horseshoes, etc. Certainly these practices, and the attitudes and beliefs behind them, are not part of the dominant mainstream traditions of Catholicism. The mal' occhio discussed earlier, as well as the various amulets available to ward off the "evil eye" are also not part of mainstream Catholicism.

The Catholic element of the religion of the Mezzogiorni is weak, although the influence of the Church organization is strong. "Church sources report that less than 30 per cent of the people attend church as often as twice a month. By and large, church-going is defined as woman's work."⁴ What is even more important, though, than this relatively low level of Church attendance in a Catholic country, is the fact that the Church is viewed (with respect to its connection with religion) much as an extension of the traditional ways of magic and mysticism. The attitude of the peasant toward the religious aspect appears much like that of Agrippa in his decision to build the Pantheon in Rome:

The supernatural powers that threaten or protect are as earnestly believed in and placated or supplicated as in the past, but their names and their nature have been subtly altered so as to make them

⁴ Leonard W. Moss and Walter Thompson, "The South Italian Family: Literature and Observation" in *Human Organization*, Vol. 18.1, 1959, p. 226.

fit into the pattern of Catholic Christianity. The saints have replaced the familiar demons and country spirits of the past; the paraphernalia of magic has been replaced by candles, holy water, crucifixes and medals; and as far as possible the age-old superstitions have been given a veneer of Christianity.⁵

Luca Montefalcone offers an explanation for the persistence of ancient religious traditions: "it's easier to believe in spirits here, you know, than in any other part of the world. We need them to share our misery."⁶ Whatever the reason, the fact remains that the religious element of the Church is shallow, and ancient beliefs and practice persist. Church dogma is effectively altered or circumvented to allow for traditional practices and personal interest. Sister Clemente, the nun who met Cornelisen at the bus station with her jeep (stolen from the Allied forces during World War II by some enterprising peasant and then hidden for 20 years because he considered it "hot"), is perhaps the most beautiful example of self-interest winding its way into service to the Church. She explains her "choice" of a vocation, and then her intrigue with the jeep:

By the time I was courting age he'd (my father) decided. He said the land went to my brothers and they'd have to take care of Mamma. There was enough for two of us three girls to have dowries. In other words, someone had to go! The three of us had to work out which would be a nun. Let's face it -- the other two were pretty. I knew more about farming but that didn't count.⁷

Well, the Mother Superior's pretty peeved about the jeep

⁵ Maraspini, op. cit., p. 226.

⁶ Quoted in Cornelisen, op. cit., p. 84.

⁷ Cornelisen, op. cit., p. 49.

but I figure Divine Providence brought it, so we have to accept....She's already mad at me. I failed my driving test last week for the third time, and she says Divine Providence or no Divine Providence, God didn't mean me to drive. He may not, but the highway police do. We've made a deal. They turn around and pretend not to see me and all I have to do is stay in second gear -- dangerous to drive faster than that anyway. If I do, I wobble all over the place. The hills get up on their hind legs and walk right out of my way. Now don't get scared. You don't have to hang on like that.

All of the examples of self-interest and tradition in the realm of religion and the Church are by no means so humorous as that of Sister Clemente of Torregrecca. In a culture of distrust and competition, the Christian ideal of love for one's fellow man is an anomaly. It is absurd to insist that one love his neighbor when he sees himself caught up in a life and death struggle with that very neighbor for a claim on the limited resources which constitute the good life. Duty to family comes before any nebular rule which goes against the sanctity and integrity of that family. Friedmann sums it up well in one line: "The fact is that in these regions the Church is no more than a superstructure upon an essentially pagan civilization."⁹

Although the Church has little religious effect upon the lives and outlook of the people in the Mezzogiorno, it is extremely powerful in modifying their outlook and behavior in the temporal realm. The Church is important to the individual with regard to performing the necessary

⁸ Ibid., p. 46-47.

⁹ Friedmann, op. cit., p. 332.

sacraments for salvation (particularly at birth, marriage, and death), and because of the various non-religious functions of the priest. While the government can impose only temporal sanctions, the Church wields the weapon of excommunication, in addition to the temporal sanctions which often equal those of the government. The government may incarcerate an individual, the worst part of the sentence being that the family may starve without its breadwinner; but the Church can make people starve in order to gain compliance also -- and the evidence seems to point to the fact that this tactic has, indeed, been used.

Witness a shepherd's account:

Father Giacomo is rich and earns a lot, because for saying a Mass he wants 700 lire, and then every month he gets help from America -- clothes, pasta, flour, tinned milk, and he divides it among the poor. To us he gives a kilo of flour and some milk -- but to the Communists he gives nothing because although they're really poor he says they have another God.¹⁰

This power of the Church in the region is, in part, due to an abrogation of integrity on the part of the Church hierarchy. The deviations from Catholic dogma and practice are tolerated and encouraged by the hierarchy because it places the local priest in a pre-eminent position. He is the representative of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the performer of necessary sacred rites, the sole dispenser of much of the paraphernalia needed to

¹⁰ Quoted in Gavin Maxwell's The Ten Pains of Death (London: Longman's, 1959), p. 52. Again, this is an oft-repeated complaint. Another witness: "The high-ups keep us like this -- they like the pleasure of seeing the people suffer. Now there's going to be elections -- they'll open the work centres and the priests and big-shots say they'll give us work and help the poor -- they give us pasta, and want us to promise our votes. That lasts two months and then it's finished" (p. 58).

perform other sacred rites (holy water, sacred candles, etc.), and he is the intercessor between the suppliant and the saints.¹¹ His prestige is enhanced by being so powerful in his own domain (as performer and dispenser), and by his connection with the greater powers of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the saints, and God himself. Maraspini evaluates the position of the priest:

What is more, behind the power of the Church is hidden the almighty hand of God, of whom the Church is only the instrument. The individual peasant may or may not like the priests; he may or may not respect the Church itself as a social institution; indeed, he may feel little respect towards priests as individuals. But his belief in God is unshakeable, and he accepts absolutely the claim of the priest to be God's representative in the village. Consequently, the priest's status is extremely high, and is correlated with the tremendous power he is believed to have as God's deputy.¹²

...the prestige of the priest, and his generally recognized superior education, give great weight to his work. Consequently, to query the priest's statements, or to disobey his commands, is felt to verge on sacrilege.

For all these reasons, the priest is definitely the most powerful person in the village.¹³

Although the priest occupies this position of pre-eminence in the culture of the area, many people have come to recognize the power that the priest wields, as well as the direction in which that power is used, and strong sentiments of anti-clericalism exist within the

¹¹ See Maraspini, op. cit., p. 227.

¹² Maraspini, op. cit., p. 127

¹³ Ibid., p. 229.

Mezzogiorno. Like the mafia, however, the Church has developed that Machiavellian capability of making itself feared, but not hated. The peasant cannot afford to hate either priests or mafiosi, they are too powerful. One cannot afford to alienate those pezzi da novanta who are capable of manipulating either the strings of life and death, or salvation and excommunication. Priests can be feared, but not hated, with impunity. Part of the anti-clericalism of the Mezzogiorno is due to superstition. The priest occupies an anomalous sexual position because of his vows of celibacy. Masculinity tends to be equated with virility in the Mezzogiorno, and the priest has mutatis mutandis denied his masculinity. (The priest, figuratively speaking, is the only neuter object in Italian.) Superstitions exist that define the seeing of a priest unexpectedly as an omen of bad luck to come, and that priests are generally unlucky to have around.

The anti-clericalism of the Mezzogiorno is not all superstition, though. A great share of anti-clericalism appears to be reaction to various actions of the priests, and their connection with the Christian Democratic Party when the actions of the party go against the interests of the people of the Mezzogiorno. The Christian Democratic Party is viewed as being synonymous with the 'party of the priests'. Through their association with the party, the priests are often viewed as merely being another "big-shot" representing another political party. The priests are active political agents for the DC, and are able to use their influence and position very effectively. They are able to combine the "power of the pulpit" with the "sanctity of the ballot box" to the

benefit of their party.¹⁴ The curious intermingling of religion and politics has been accomplished in a most efficient manner.

Virtually only one party has been in power in Italy since the war; The Christian Democrats. This party, wholly linked to the Vatican, adopted the cross as its party sign, and there are many western Sicilian peasants who will cross themselves when they see it; at election time, they will automatically vote for it both because it is variously known as the Party of God, the Party of the Madonna, and the Party of the Cross, and because the priests are, by instruction and conviction, active political agents. The two crosses of Christ and Government are by now inextricably mixed.

A peasant who does not belong to this party is treated as a moral leper by all in authority. A slogan that I have seen carried at election time 'Vote Christian Democrat or starve' seemed not so much a prophecy as a threat all too often put into action.¹⁵

The picture portrayed to the peasant is summed up by one of Dolci's informants; "Most people vote C.D., because if they vote C.D. they're voting for Our Lord...."¹⁶

Affiliation with the Christian Democratic Party, in and of itself, is not enough to account for the anti-clericalism of the Mezzogiorno -- other links are needed. The Christian Democratic Party is known to be the party of the government. Given the general illegitimacy of the government portrayed by the concept of governo ladro, there is a certain amount of "guilt by association" which accrues to

¹⁴ A common anecdote in Italy concerns the reply given by the priests to those who come to ask advice concerning the question of who to vote for. The reply given by the priest is "I can't tell you who to vote for; all I can do is advise you to vote for someone who is a Christian and a democrat."

¹⁵ Maxwell, op. cit., p. 5. Banfield also notes the connection of the DC and the "party of the priests" in his study of Montegrano (p. 26).

¹⁶ Dolci, To Feed the Hungry, op. cit., p. 143.

the priests through the party. Also, particularly in Sicily, the DC is known to be supported by the mafiosi, and here too a certain amount of "guilt by association" rubs off onto the cloth.

There are yet more tangible factors to indict the clergy as part of a vast patronage system which is involved in stealing from the peasant his integrity and legal rights, and denying him the opportunity to join in associations of common interest. The peasant's experience with interest groups is limited to those groups sanctioned by the Church, mainly the Christian Democratic Party and Catholic Action. Ignazio P., a junk dealer whose family had been in the junk business for 110 years in the poorest section of Palermo:

Religion? there is no such thing here. I put myself down as a Christian Democrat, not because I wanted to vote D.C., but so as I'd be allowed to carry on my trade. At election times, a few priests and some ladies and some gents come along and hand us packets of pasta to make us vote for them...Most people vote as they're told to vote; they're scared blue at the thought of what would happen to them if it came out that they'd voted against the party."¹⁷

Or, again, a nun at a convent which operated an orphanage:

We take in orphans at the convent--there's forty of them with us and they come from all sorts of towns. We adopt them after making the necessary enquiries, because we never take in children of Communists, for example, as they're excommunicated.¹⁸

The Catholic Church, then, aided by high levels of illiteracy, poverty

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Ibid., p. 93.

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Maxwell, op. cit., p. 176.

and attitudes of fatalism, has served to close off any alternative forms of association which do not strictly serve the interest of the Church. Not only is the family unit viewed as a highly moral type of association, but most forms of extra-familial association are viewed as highly immoral -- sanctions reaching as high as starvation and ex-communication.

The Church, like the Christian Democratic Party, is further aided in its attempt to discourage political association outside of their own confines, by the carabinieri or police. Although it is outside of the written rules concerning the duties of the carabinieri they often, at least in the South, function as political spies. Ledgers are meticulously kept in which the names of those men whose ideas are not Christian Democrat are recorded. These evaluations as to DC or non-DC are made by ordinary carabinieri who are, in fact, lay spies. A flippant remark made over coffee at the local bar may serve to brand one for life.¹⁹ The prudent man must keep his political views and affairs to himself, lest he unwittingly close off some of his options by alienating the powerful of the community. The words of one priest ring all too true; "Fascism is finished, but its wisdom remains -- whoever has Demochristian paper works, and whoever hasn't...well its up to him, or he'll be poor!"²⁰ One might expand the statement given by the priest to include more than the "wisdom" of fascism.

¹⁹ See testimony of carabinieri in Maxwell, op. cit., p. 226.

²⁰ Quoted in Maxwell, op. cit., p. 176.

The Church views itself as besieged by heresy. Society is viewed as lying in a state of damnation, owing to the denial of Christ. Liberalism, Socialism, and Communism are direct emanations from the greatest of all heresies -- Protestantism. The Church has, therefore, attempted to protect itself from the encroaching evils of human nature. The Church opposed the creation of the unified Italy, and promulgated the famous Non Expedit when temporal power was taken away from the Vatican. The Non Expedit proved dysfunctional to the interests of the Church, and the Church has found it more expedient to pursue its tradition-bound policies through the system.²¹ LaPalombara gives the following example of one way in which the Church has used its connection with the government to foster the values which it deems most worthy. Italy's school system is highly centralized under the Ministry of Education and "serves to instill values closely attuned to conservative Catholicism."²² The following passages are from textbooks officially chosen for use throughout Italy:

The fourth commandment -- honor thy father and mother -- orders us to respect and love our parents and all who have authority over us, that is, our superiors: the Pope, the bishops, the priests, the civil authorities, and our teachers....

There is much social change because parents often fall prey to stupid ambitions for their children. The shoemaker wants his son to become an accountant; the sausage vendor wants his son to become a physician. Just imagine such foolishness.²³

²¹ See LaPalombara, "Italy: Fragmentation, Isolation and Alienation" op. cit.

²² Ibid., p. 320.

²³ Dolci, The Man Who Plays Alone, op. cit., p. 248.

At minimum, this sort of training encourages a sort of fatalism regarding one's chances for self-improvement given his family background.

In its crusade against the heretical evils of the modern world, the Church has allied itself with other forces of conservatism. Dolci sums up his finding regarding the Church and its orientation:

Religious organizations here, apart from some rare exceptions tend towards closedness and conservatism rather than openness and innovation: in many cases mafiosi and politicians are regarded by 'men of religion' simply as open-minded crusaders effectively opposing change.²⁴

LaPalombara found the same orientation of the clergy with respect to politics and political institutions. The clergy, he says, serves "primarily to intensify isolative, negative, and alienative views."²⁵ Besides the "isolative, negative, and alienative views", however, there is another aspect of Catholicism which tends to foster conservatism and stagnation with regard to the improvement of the material standards of life. The "other-worldly" orientation of the Church and the Roman Catholic mentality tends to mitigate the emphasis placed on improvement of the temporal sphere of life, and, hence, gives strong support to the maintenance of the status quo.

Many of the attributes of the Church discussed above which can be viewed as impediments to change and support for the status quo, are also characteristic of the Church in other parts of Italy. The difference, I believe, is due to the peculiar way in which all of this is

²⁴ Dolci, The Man Who Plays Alone, op. cit., p. 248.

²⁵ LaPalombara, "Italy: Fragmentation, Isolation and Alienation" op. cit., p. 322.

received in the South by the native of the area (partially from his moral code), and the poverty of the region which closes off many of the alternatives which would otherwise be open to the individual.

A carabiniere states:

Where I come from in the north the priests aren't all that important; they're in command at the moment even over there, but they haven't a fraction of the power they show here in Sicily. In a Sicilian town the priests are everything....

It's them, too, that are responsible for all the misery down here. After all these centuries they haven't known how to direct the Sicilian people into a new, fuller, more modern life for the common good. But people keep a blind veneration for the clerical authorities, even while realising that they suffer from them constant outrage and betrayal in every field. But that's the Sicilian way -- to hate and to love at the same time.²⁶

Whatever the reasons, it is clear that the Church and its representatives in the South are not the same as the Church and clergy in the North.

Priests are more powerful in the Mezzogiorno for a number of reasons -- the relatively high degree of importance given to status and prestige in that culture; his ability to control what may be relatively small amounts of funds and food, but which may be the margin between starvation and sustenance for many families; and the general lack of alternative associations open to the individual. In the words of one priest: "...what a wonderful satisfaction it is when one is a priest -- one is no longer a man like all others, one has become an authority, respected -- and feared."²⁷ The other side of the coin, though not

²⁶ Quoted in Maxwell, op. cit., p. 228.

²⁷ Quoted in Maxwell, op. cit., p. 183.

necessarily contradictory, is portrayed by a fisherman from Castellamare, who discussed the statement that one man in three in Castellamare had committed a murder: "One in three....Perhaps it is true. If it is then it is still the work of the Church, because the Church is behind all the unjust laws that govern us and drive us to desperation."²⁸

Given the portrait of the Church portrayed thus far, it may be helpful to go back and review the manner in which it relates to the moral code of the Mezzogiorno set forth in the introduction to this paper. First of all, the Church enhances the morality and sanctity of the family unit. The tradition of a tight nuclear family, seemingly born out of the exigencies of earlier pastoral and agricultural communities without the benefit of central authority, is enhanced with a moral quality deriving from religion. The tradition of the pre-eminence of the familial type of association is also maintained through sanctions inveighed against other types of association which are not connected with the ecclesiastical realm.

The tradition of a rigid hierarchy is also exacerbated by the Church -- witness the quotations from school textbooks cited on page 82. The ecclesiastical hierarchy has seemingly become a pattern which is transferred to all of society. The priest, because of his position in

²⁸ Ibid., p. 16. Buonaventura's statement is qualified later in the book, though he does not decrease the amount of "blame" laid on the Church: "There is a difference between murder and killing, Gavin. Most men that are killed here -- not all, but most -- are killed because they deserve to die. Men kill here when it is just to do so" (p. 67).

this hierarchy, is the controller or "gatekeeper" of many functions which are viewed as necessary to the individual. He is the necessary intermediary between the peasant and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, both saints and mortals. Indeed, even when the supplicant goes around the priest, Catholic dogma dictates that he again link up to an hierarchical arrangement of authority through the realm of various saints. The hierarchical arrangement, necessitating that the peasant tie himself, at least superficially, to the priest is also carried over into the temporal realm, where the Church, through its connection with the Christian Democratic Party (and hence the Government), is able to control patronage on a vast scale, dealing in jobs, contracts, and food supplies.

By participation in the vast patronage system of the government bureaucracy, the Church has reinforced the efficacy of the patronage system. Because a personalistic tie to the pezzi da novanta is rewarded, the pattern is increased as others come to view this as the most efficacious way of providing themselves and their families with their share of the "good life". Thus, the Church has reinforced the patterns of personalistic power politics and the notion that "friendship" is the one fence which stands between the peasant and his annihilation by the forces of evil and nature.

The Church has, to a limited extent, nurtured the element of distrust and secretiveness in the Mezzogiorno. Because of the sanctions inveighed against certain actions, the Church has fostered the element of "closedness". One does not openly proclaim agreement with, say, the

Communist Party unless one is willing to have his family starve, as well as be excommunicated into the bargain.

The Church also has aided the maintenance of a prestige system based on the values of conspicuous leisure and the denigration of manual labor -- this for two reasons. First, because of its complicity in the vast patronage system characteristic of the area, the Church can be identified as "co-conspirator" (a popular term these days) in maintaining the view that personal initiative and industry are not rewarding. It is true in the Mezzogiorno -- one does not "achieve", rather one "obtains" from his powerful friends. Secondly, because of the honor and prestige given to the priesthood, a classical education is considered more honorific than a technical career.

Finally, through its "other-wordly" orientation, and the denigration of personal achievement, the Church has helped to maintain the attitudes of fatalism and self-resignation.

All of this is not to identify the Church as the chief culprit of the Mezzogiorno with its tradition-bound ways which result in poverty and la miseria. Many elements have combined to form the culture of the Mezzogiorno, and it would be reductionistic to credit too much of that culture to any single institution or set of factors. It is obvious, though, that much of the moral code of the Mezzogiorno is influenced by the Church and its practices -- both religious and secular.

CHAPTER V

The Family

The central institution of Sicilian society is the nuclear family. The rights and obligations which derive from membership in it provide the individual with his basic moral code.

J. Boissevain

Perhaps no other phenomenon in Italian culture is as widely noted, described, and interpreted as the notion of "family" -- from the small nuclear family through the consanguineal family, even to the notorious conception of the "families" of the mafia. Much of the discussion of the concept of family is either superficial, or wild conjecture written with the proper dose of sensationalism to insure a writer's success and large royalties. Given the recent success of The Godfather (a good book but a poor movie), the theme of the mafia has become popularized, thereby adding to the amount of less than satisfactory literature on the subject of the mafia and the personalistic, family-like ties which hold the "organization" together. This chapter will attempt a closer look at the familism of the Mezzogiorno, in seeking to explain and further explore the moral code set out at the beginning of this paper.

There are, in the Mezzogiorno, two conceptions of family which are held simultaneously without the perception of contradiction. The conception is one of a continuum of allegiance beginning at the level of the nuclear family, and stretching out to include the consanguineal

family. As relations become more distant, the rights and obligations connected with these relations become less pronounced. Evidence does exist which would seem to indicate that the tie to the consanguineal family has steadily decreased over the years, and allegiance to the nuclear family more often supersedes the interests of the consanguineal family than was evident in the past.¹ Corporate kinship organizations tend to occur where groups have a patrimony to defend. They become less important as land and labor become "free commodities", i.e., as land and labor enter the market economy. As land and labor become subject to a market economy, the individual is freed to fend for himself by selling his labor or buying land. To an extent this is the case in the Mezzogiorno, due to overpopulation. Labor has recently become subject to the market economy as young people seek alternative employment. Many enter the market system as laborers because they want a life better than that which they have known; many others enter the floating labor force because the family lands will not support all of the sons. Land is not a "free commodity"; there is a scarcity of good agricultural lands in the Mezzogiorno, and the norm is to pass these lands on to offspring in the hope of giving them a good start in life. The entrance of labor into the market economy has tended to mitigate the economic importance of the consanguineal family, but the relative scarcity of land has tended

¹ See Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 37. See also Donald Pitkin's "Land Tenure and Family Organization in an Italian Village" in Human Organization, Vol. 18.4, 1959-60, for a discussion of the decline of the extended family system in the Mezzogiorno.

to enhance that importance. Economically, the consanguineal family is of marginal importance, but does provide a valuable supply of labor which can be called upon at harvest time, and aid in troubled times.

As the economic importance of the consanguineal family has decreased, the relative importance of the nuclear family as an economic and political unit has increased. The nuclear family becomes a multi-purpose organization which can unite a variety of functions to meet familial demands. The demands of the family are varied and small-scale, and tend to come in quick succession. The family as an organization is "maximally adaptive"; it can shift "production" or "output" to meet these varied demands. Given the prevalence of distrust in la miseria of the Mezzogiorno,² the importance of the nuclear family is enhanced since it represents a social unit which can be trusted as an economic and political association. "Deeply rooted traditions plus a pattern of economic self-sufficiency help sustain the monolithic structure of the family."³ The nuclear family thus operates as an anxiety-reduction mechanism providing security for the individual.

The economic aspects of family structure, though, appear to be overshadowed by less tangible considerations of honor and status.

² Almond and Verba asked the people of the Mezzogiorno "Can most people be trusted? Responses were as follows:

"Most people can be trusted" ----	4%
"It depends" -----	7%
"You can't be too careful" -----	86%

³ Moss and Cappanari, "Patterns of Kinship, Comparaggio and Community in a South Italian Village", op. cit.

Schneider points out that "Mediterranean societies are ideological about the family."⁴ Seemingly, this "ideological" orientation to the family is derivative from many sources--economic considerations, the concepts of power, honour, and prestige, and finally manpower considerations. I shall first explore this "ideological orientation" as it relates to the nuclear family in conjunction with the consanguineal family and latterly the nuclear family as a social unit in the Mezzogiorno which differs from the nuclear family of much of the modern world in terms of values, orientation, and outlook.

The individual of the Mezzogiorno is a member of both a nuclear family and a consanguineal family. The consanguineal family serves as a unit of orientation for the individual, but his primary focus is his own nuclear family. The interests of one group seldom conflict with those of the other. As members of the consanguineal group share much of the patrimony, there is a common interest in maintaining and enhancing that patrimony. One of the most prominent elements of that patrimony is the honour of the family (onore di famiglia) which each member must help to protect. The protection of the patrimony then, is of mutual interest to all members of the consanguineal family. Moss and Thompson note the relevance of honour and its importance:

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Schneider, op. cit., p. 10.

If there can be said to be a basic value which underlies the southern family, it is probably the value of onore di famiglia. Shame reflected on the family exposes every member to ridicule.⁵

Violations to the honour of the family can come in many forms--illegitimacy, adultery, murder of a family member, sterility, impotence, theft, or exploitation.⁶ Often such violations to the honour of the family necessitate concerted action on the part of members of the affronted family to revenge that violation. The reprisal often provokes another retaliation, and so on until the vendetta is a miniature war with outcomes just as deadly as the full-scale model.⁷

⁵ Moss and Thompson, op. cit., p. 39.

⁶ It is interesting to note that all of these violations to the honour of a family seemingly have their roots in actions or conditions which mitigate the economic and political viability of the family in a stateless society. In a society where sons are important as both producers (economic) and protectors or soldiers (political), those conditions which impair procreation (sterility and impotence) are noted as violations of honour. Similarly deviant sexual behaviour on the part of the women cast doubt on the masculinity of the male, in that he cannot properly run his family. Murder takes away usually a son, thereby impairing the political viability of the group; and theft removes some of the resources of the group.

⁷ If one views breaches of familial honour in terms of threats to the economic and political viability of the family (and therefore threats to the patrimony), and if one views these affronts through the image of the limited good, the vendetta can be seen as the maintenance of an energy budget. For example, if two families live in an area and view resources as the stakes in a "zero-sum game", the elimination (through murder) of one of the members of one family, will give the second family a decided advantage. The maintenance of equilibrium in access to

Contd...

The concept of honour as it relates to the consanguineal family is a means whereby the individual is offered a place in a hostile world, and offers a set of kin relationships from which he can draw aid. Further, the concept of onore di famiglia makes the family into more than the sum of its individual parts. It provides an outlook on life, and a set of social orientations. It places the individual within the social hierarchy of the Mezzogiorno and gives him a sense of position, whether it be of high position or low. Schneider sums up the concept:

Honor as ideology helps shore up the identity of a group (a family or lineage) and commit to it the loyalties of otherwise doubtful members. Honor defines the social boundaries, contributing to its defense against the claims of equivalent competing groups.⁸

Because the family (both nuclear and consanguineal) is viewed as a moral good and honourable entity, a premium is placed on large families--again possibly derivative of maintaining the family as a viable economic and political unit. The preference for large families places a great deal of focus on the women of the family. Although the family is essentially authoritarian in nature--following a somewhat

resources can only be maintained if one of the members of the other family is eliminated. The vendetta, then, becomes a means of maintaining equilibrium of access to a limited amount of "goods".

⁸ Schneider, op. cit., p. 17.

modified version of the old pater familias of Roman times--the family is said to be mother centred. The mother sees to it that the household operates on a budget, blesses the efforts and undertakings of her sons, and instructs her daughters in the evils of which she must beware. The attention given to women, however, is not limited solely to the mother. Women, whatever their role, are considered part of the patrimony, and hence a focal point of common interest among all members of the family. The family reputation is tied to its potentially weakest link, the sexual behavior of its women.

The repository of family and lineage honour, the focus of common interest among men of the family or lineage is its women. A woman's status defines the status of all the men who are related to her in determinate ways. These men share the consequences of what happens to her, and share therefore the commitment to protect her virtue. She is part of their patrimony.⁹

Concern with virginity and the fidelity of females is supreme. While this joint concern of the fathers and sons in the bearing of the daughters may tend to reduce conflict which might otherwise arise over anticipatory inheritance, it appears to be detrimental to a healthy psychological and social development of the female. The distrust of males outside the family leads to an unhealthy separation of the sexes. Girls are kept at home where they can be closely watched, and go out only under escort. Even church-going, which is defined as "women's

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Schneider, op. cit., p. 18.

work", is often escorted lest the girl meet some male at Church or along the way, and become involved in an amorous affair. The girls, then, are prevented from leading an active community social life, due to the anxiety surrounding her potential sexual behaviour. The concern with virginity is also detrimental to the parents, in that it is a source of constant anxiety. The family's honour may be completely lost for generations to come if they are not vigilant.

The result is that a girl is liable to be considered a problem by her family to a far greater extent than her brother: unless she is a paragon, as soon as she reaches the age of twelve or thirteen, she becomes a source of worry and anxiety to her parents. If she is plain or frigid, they are anxious over her probable failure to find a husband; on the contrary, should she be attractive or flirtatious, the possibility that she will be seduced becomes a terrifying nightmare...Indeed so strict is this moral code that the appearance of fault is as bad as the fault itself...¹⁰

The concern with honour linked to female sexual behaviour is not limited to the virginity of daughters, but also includes the fidelity of the wife. The wife generally goes nowhere unescorted, except possibly to Church. At other times she joins with neighbours or friends to do her shopping, laundry, or other household errands which necessitate her venturing into society at large. The practice of avoiding unescorted forays into society is not so much to maintain

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Maraspini, op. cit., p. 179-80.

familial fidelity as it is to avoid the appearance of infidelity. In a society where gossip is "the only show in town", it is more important to avoid the appearance of evil than evil itself. The loss of honour comes about when a transgression of mores or values is made public--not through commission of the act itself. Contact between the sexes outside the family is, therefore, limited, and community participation must conform to the sexual mores set out in the culture. Banfield notes the preoccupazione with other than material advantage: "Aside from the need to protect his family from envy and from claims on its resources, the Montegraneese has a strong reason to avoid close attachments. He is afraid that his women may be seduced."¹¹ Again, Banfield has noted an element of crucial interest to the Montegraneesi, but has failed to allow for this element in the formulation of his hypothesis.

Honour, like other resources which go into making the family a viable economic and political unit, is viewed through the image of the limited good.¹² One gains honour in relation to other individuals and groups--much like the game of "one-upmanship". The competitiveness

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Banfield, op. cit., p. 117.

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That this is so, tends to reinforce my suspicion that the rigid social hierarchy has come about through viewing status, prestige, and power through the image of the limited good.

in the seeking of honour is noted by Eric Wolf:

The concept of honor, in its horizontal aspect implies a fixed amount of reputation for each contestant in the game of honor, an amount which can be lessened or increased in competitive interaction with others. Such interaction establishes one's social credit rating...Moreover; past familial behavior has important bearing on present and future evaluation.¹³

Thus far discussion has been directed at both the consanguineal and the nuclear family in the Mezzogiorno. This is, I believe, appropriate, in that the nuclear family derives much of its importance and significance through its connection of the consanguineal family; and it appears that much of the emphasis upon the nuclear family has come about through the inability of the region to sustain the traditional consanguineal ties. Much of the traditional importance of the consanguineal family has been mitigated as labour has become a "free commodity", and as land has become divided and subdivided through many generations of inheritance. The consanguineal family is no longer a sine qua non for the family to operate as a viable economic and political unit. Indeed, the consanguineal family is now an impediment to this operation. There simply is not enough land left in the patrimony to support the consanguineal unit. The consanguineal family,

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Wolf, Eric. "Kinship, Friendship, and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies" in The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies, edited by Michael Banton (London: Tavistock, 1966), p. 8-9.

of necessity has tended to break up as offspring are forced to seek their living elsewhere.¹⁴ It may be expedient to pursue the concept of the nuclear family of the Mezzogiorno further at this point, though, to see in what manner it is unique as a family pattern in the western world. The following discussion cannot be entirely free from consideration of the consanguineal family though, in that connection is one of the elements which give the nuclear family of the Mezzogiorno its uniqueness.

The nuclear family in the Mezzogiorno, strictly speaking, is composed of the same roles or members as the nuclear family in other areas of the world, i.e., man, wife, and their children. What is different, and therefore salient in the nuclear family of Mezzogiorno is its primacy in terms of individual orientation. It is by far the most important group to which an individual belongs, and therefore commends his constant attention to assure its continued existence and enhancement. The over-riding concern for the welfare and enhancement of this group (in terms of the prevalent social values) demands that involvement and activity outside of the nuclear family be severely restricted. The nuclear family is not viewed in contemporary western

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See Donald Pitkin's study, "Land Tenure and Family Organization in an Italian Village", *op. cit.*, where he discusses the reinstitution of the extended family in those areas affected by the 1932 land reforms. In those areas where enough land was gained to support the extended family, the family has, in fact, tended to extend itself.

terms of a mere "home-base" so to speak, from which the offspring get their start on their way into the world. Rather the nuclear family in the Mezzogiorno is viewed as an end in itself, a moral good to be maintained, revered, and honoured. It can be viewed as a "product" or "end", rather than a "tool" or "means" as in much of the western industrialized world. It is moral in and of itself (as well as through its connection with the consanguineal family), and this not merely because it may be able to provide offspring with the necessary education and resources to make their way into the world and gain independence. If the nuclear family of the Mezzogiorno is able to provide these latter functions, it is indeed considered fortunate; but more important is the fact that the importance of the nuclear family to the individual is paramount whether or not the family is able to provide them. Family ties remain paramount throughout the life of the individual--a phenomenon absent in more industrialized societies where familial allegiance must compete with allegiance to other groups, organizations, and associations. The nuclear family in the Mezzogiorno, then, refers to more than the mere conjugal unit of man, wife, and their children. Accompanying this group is a set of attitudes about themselves which makes the "sum" more than the mere total of the parts. The nuclear family is characterized by a sense of internal cohesion closely tied to a sense of honour, reverence, and morality. Maraschini sums up this feeling for the family as a "united whole" which is more

than the sum of its parts:

The uninhibited embraces and kisses on the railway platforms and at bus stops are not just instances of Latin exuberance, but expressions of deep and genuine emotional involvement, which merely express in an obvious physical gesture the strong attachment which links in a unite whole the various members of a family.¹⁵

Banfield maintains that the interesse of the nuclear family is it's short-run material advantage.¹⁶ This is, I believe, superficial. We have already noted the element of anxiety with sexual honour in the preoccupazione of the peasant of the Mezzogiorno. There is yet another element of the preoccupazione which is only partially material. This is the anxiety over the probability that the family will fall in status, wealth and honour. There is, in the Mezzogiorno, a preoccupation with setting one's children on the "right road" in life. There is a desire to give them both the material assets to assure them a good life and, possibly more important, the right spiritual and social upbringing to allow them to carry their heads high in society. Girls, especially, are sources of anxiety. The young women must be taught the proper behavioural norms that she will not bring disgrace to her family and her future husband. Sons must be brought up to desire the type of girl who will run her household properly. Since honour and prestige are

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Marspini, op. cit., p. 196.

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Banfield, op. cit., p. 110.

parceled out on the basis of many things other than material wealth; and given the relative importance of prestige and honour; it is only natural that much of the preoccupazione and interesse of the nuclear family is concerned with qualities other than material wealth. Gino O., another of Dolci's informants, was denied by his own sister because he was illegitimate (strangely enough by her own two parents). He evaluates the situation: "...people are so anxious to keep up appearances, to be thought 'respectable' that they'll hide their natural feelings, deny their own flesh and blood, as well I know."¹⁷ It is difficult for any given family to maintain its status over several generations, and the failing of the family is a cause of constant anxiety.

The anxiety over the possible loss of family status in the future also manifests itself in the differential preference generally accorded to male children over female children. A female child is often viewed as a deficit in that she necessitates constant vigilance because of her precarious sexual position; she must be provided with a dowry; and she represents a loss of the family name. Male children, on the other hand, assure continuance of the family name, and provide manpower

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Dolci, To Feed the Hungry, op. cit., p. 110. While it may be asserted that this instance reflects a relatively weak kinship bond, this does not appear to be the case. Whereas the girls parents were married to other partners at the time of the boys birth, the boy could not be properly called "family". What is important is that the girl would admit to one one that the boy was in fact, her brother. His illegitimacy would have reflected shame onto her and her future husband.

for both economic and political purposes. Without male-children, one cannot retaliate for violations to property and person in order to maintain family honour.¹⁸ Further, sons act as guardians to their sisters' honour. The differential value placed on male and female is, of course, mitigated at the time of marriage. The woman then becomes a valuable resource in her capacity to bear children--again, preferably sons. As a mother she shares an almost ethereal connection with the Virgin Mary.

Besides the inherent morality of the nuclear family, there are other elements in the culture which enhance its importance as a social institution. Other forms of association are often denied to the peasant of the Mezzogiorno or are seen as useless by him, to the extent that he neither joins nor supports them. An example of this latter instance would be that of interest groups. Because the government is viewed as corrupt and often alien, the peasant is aware of the importance of raccomandazione and sees this as the most effective way to pursue

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Generally the sole male of a family will not become involved in a vendetta, in that should he be killed, his family would be left without a breadwinner. Similarly, the last male son is often refused permission to marry until all of his sisters have been married. The reason for this is that in the event of some violation is done to the girl's honour, he must be free from obligations to a wife and children, so that he can retaliate for that violation. For example, if all sons were married, the honour of an unmarried sister were violated, and one of the brothers retaliated for the dishonour; the chances are that his nuclear family would, in the end, be without a man to provide for them.

his interests. Interest groups are seen as useless, since the government operates on the basis of raccomandazione. Indeed, interest group association is often viewed as potentially harmful in that it is sure to alienate some power holders. Joining a peasant farmers' association to push for larger shares of the crop or guaranteed leases, may alienate the landlord of one or another of the peasants, and he may be forced off the land.

Other orientations and associations are often denied to the peasant by those who hold a prestigious position and wish to remain "above the crowd". The educational system, and the Catholic Church through its influence on the educational system, tend to re-inforce the rigid hierarchy of society and the element of authoritarianism which is implanted through the socialization process in the family. The Italian student is not integrated into an academic system to the extent that prevails in North America. An unbridgeable gap is often maintained between student and teacher. During the most formative years of socialization, the student is constantly reminded that he has no legitimate claim to entrance within this new institutional community. Rather, effective ties are still limited to his family and a few friends.¹⁹

The authoritarian, and essentially uni-directional, dimension of the classroom widens at the secondary and university levels. Class

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See LaPalombara's "Italy" Fragmentation, Isolation and Alienation", op. cit., for a discussion of the influence of education in maintaining the "closed" aspect of society in Italy.

discussion and contact between students and teachers are minimal or non-existent. Assignments, and often lectures, are delivered by secretaries or assistants. The student, being denied an active and legitimate place in this hierarchy, is forced to rely upon the family as a basis of focus. The family represents the only social unit which gives him respect as an individual in that unit. It offers him a sense of security and self-worth.

The agricultural organization of the Mezzogiorno also acts as an external variable which serves to enhance the importance and centrality of the nuclear family in terms of individual orientation. Given the fact that labour connected with the land is negatively valued, there is a relative absence of the mezzadria contract. Also there is no tradition of noblesse oblige on the part of the landowner toward "his peasants". These factors all combine to produce a conspicuous lack of involvement on the part of the landowner in the agricultural enterprise. The nuclear family, therefore, must operate as a viable economic unit if it is to survive with dignity. The family generally must make all decisions relating to the agricultural enterprise as well as provide the manual labour. It must be self-sufficient. The lack of co-operation and involvement on the part of the landowner reinforces the need for large families and ties of kinship and friendship which can be used in time of need. The peasant is left to fend for himself in the agricultural enterprise; and in a hostile world he naturally enough turns to his family for support. It is the one form of

association which can be trusted.

Further, the small unintegrated plots of land which have resulted from dividing agricultural lands among offspring for generations, make the nuclear family the most efficient unit of production. The lands are most often too small to support any form of extended family or co-operative farming. (Besides the small size of agricultural plots, the whole idea of "co-operative farming" would be an anomaly within the Mezzogiorno. If one's neighbour is trying to beat one in the race for a limited supply of resources, it is to one's disadvantage to help the neighbour in any way.) The nuclear family also represents a unit of production which can accommodate the high degree of circulation of ownership of real property. The traditional neo-local rule of residence accommodates these shifts because the change in residence generally comes at the same time as the change in property ownership--a result of a legal tradition of partible inheritance.²⁰

There is another element in the culture of the Mezzogiorno which

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For a discussion of agricultural organization as it relates to family organization and orientation, see Sydel Silverman's "Agricultural Organization, Social Structure and Values in Italy: Amoral Familism Reconsidered", op. cit., and Donald Pitkin's "Land Tenure and Family Organization in an Italian Village", op. cit.

serves to enhance the "family" as a social unit at the expense of other forms of social unit at the expense of other forms of social and human interaction. It is not entirely an external element to the family as, say, the educational system or the land tenure system; but neither is it an inherent element of the conception of "family". This is the element of fictive kinship ties, in this case the tradition of godparenthood (comparaggio). The tradition stems from the Roman Catholic practice whereby the godparent undertakes to guarantee the welfare and proper religious instruction of the child in the event of the death of the natural parents. The tradition of comparaggio in the Mezzogiorno has been enlarged somewhat to cover functions other than those specified in Catholic dogma. The godparent is expected to be a "friend" to the child--one to whom the child can always turn for a "friendly ear" and other assistance in times of need. The bonds of friendship established between the godparent and child are more than mere friendship, and more closely resemble filial bonds. Because the honour of each party is connected with that of the other, each is constantly concerned with maintaining the honour of the other. The godparent, therefore, can be expected to listen to the problems of the godchild and provide whatever assistance possible without spreading the unfortunate circumstances throughout the community, and thereby causing a loss of honour and prestige. The relationship is much like a familial relationship, and one can be confident of the discretion exercised by the godparent.

In such a social setting there is no need for such community services as "counseling centres" or "youth centres" to which young people experiencing family problems may go. The function is handled by the godparent, and the troubles are less likely to be known to the public.

Besides the "friendly ear" function, the godparent is also expected to contribute financial assistance for education, a dowry, or other purposes--either in the form of loans or an outright gift. Again, there is no need for the individual to transcend the "family" and avail himself of the public services of banks, etc.--provided of course that the godparent is financially able to provide the assistance. The financial position of the prospective godparent is an important criterion in choosing a godparent, and most often someone is chosen who can provide the necessary financial assistance as well as a proper moral example for the youngster.

Many of the needs of the individual which would necessitate going beyond the nuclear family, then, are filled by the role of the godparent. Those needs to go beyond the nuclear family carry with them a potential for wider participation in the community, but this potential is truncated when the individual goes to the godparent. The tradition of comparaggio, then, sets limitations to social and community participation of the individual. There is no need for groups of individual young people to band together on the basis of a shared problem. Each goes to his individual godparent who normally does all within his power

to alleviate the problem without exposing the problem to the community through gossip.

In conclusion, in order to properly understand the moral code of the Mezzogiorno and interpret much of the behavior related to that moral code, the family must be viewed as it is viewed in the eye of the people of the Mezzogiorno, i.e., as a moral good in and of itself, as an "end" rather than a "means", and as an honourable institution. The importance of the bearing of the family in the community as it relates to honour must be understood, and lastly, the importance of the family to the individual must be understood.

Besides the inherent moral and honourable qualities connected with the family as a social unit, the importance of the family is enhanced by external elements--some of which derive from the peasants perception of his external world, and some of which derive from attitudes and structures of institutions and customs beyond his control. Given the world of la miseria with its distrust, competition and struggle, the family is an ark of security to weather the storm of social action which is often perceived of very much like the fury of the Harpies. The peasant sees much of the society drawn up in battle against him and his family. The family represents that which one must protect, as well as his allies in that battle. These are the people whom he does not have to intrigue against and who can always be counted on for support as the battle begins.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusions

It is of paramount importance in dealing with the political culture of the Mezzogiorno, to attempt to overcome one's own view of the "way things should be" and the concomitant colouring that these preconceived attitudes will necessarily impart to one's observations and interpretations of the behaviour and attitudes of the people of that culture. Like any research done from afar and by those of a different culture, this one undoubtedly falls far short of the ideal mark in overcoming ethnocentrism and effecting a cross-cultural transition. It does, however, provide a meaningful background, against which the behaviour of the people can be seen to be not only logical, but also both rational and moral, given the conditions which exist in the Mezzogiorno and the interpretation given to those conditions by the people who live there. This is, I believe, a sign that one has at least made a beginning in overcoming the ethnocentrism which tends to "sneak up" on one and catch him unaware.

Banfield's hypothesis of "amoral familism" is, I believe, inadequate both in terms of explaining or interpreting behaviour, and in terms of predicting behaviour. Further the label "amoral" is particularly inaccurate. The label "amoral" derives from Banfield's assertion that there is no sense of moral "goodness" or "badness" which

relates to those outside the family.¹ Standards, he maintains relate to those within the family unit, and those which affect the family unit. Given the concept of the "limited good" which characterizes the peasant culture of the Mezzogiorno, it is difficult to conceive of but a few actions which could be classed as "amoral" by these individuals. Given the intense struggle, competition, and distrust which the peasant sees his world made up of, most actions are directly related to the bearing of the family, and therefore will be classed as good or bad, moral or immoral, as they affect the family. The peasant cannot be viewed as "amoral" with regard to the community, because whatever time, effort and energies he devotes to the community he views as coming through the deprivation of his family--a most moral and honourable social unit. It is not that he is "amoral" with respect to the community that he does not participate at the community level; rather he often avoids participation at the community level because that action would be viewed as immoral since it "takes away" from his family. The concept of the limited good, which Banfield notes, is an important variable, many of the important implications of which he seems to have overlooked.

Behaviour in the Mezzogiorno, I believe, can be better understood in terms of a moral code which attempts to note the values of

¹Banfield, op. cit., p. 83.

the people in the Mezzogiorno, their interpretation of those values, and present a picture of the world-view of those peasants. The behaviour of the south Italian peasant appears both moral and rational given this code, and his view of the world around him. To maintain to the contrary is to class behaviour as "irrational" without looking at the goals motivating that behaviour, and as "immoral" without looking at the standards of morality which guide that behaviour. A proper understanding and explanation of behaviour cannot be made without at least an implicit understanding of this moral code. Likewise, the prediction of behaviour cannot be made without a view to the morals and values which will motivate this behaviour. The following moral code of the Mezzogiorno is, I believe, more accurate in terms of both explaining and predicting behaviour than is the Banfield hypothesis:

- I. The family is a moral end, in and of itself. The family gives you a place of honour in a hostile world; honour your family, and protect its honour.
- II. Don't overstep your place. There are those above you and below you. Don't intermeddle into the affairs of those over you, don't criticize others, and don't gossip about others.
- III. Make no enemies; one must have friends in the world to whom he can turn. Commitments alienate people; do not commit yourself needlessly. Return favours to those who help you.
- IV. Honour God and the saints.

Banfield's hypothesis that the South Italian peasant will act as if he were following the rule "Maximize the material, short-run advantage of the nuclear family; assume that others will do likewise"

is inadequate in explaining much of the behaviour of the peasantry. Likewise, it is inadequate in predicting behaviour, and leads those who would modify the behaviour of the peasant of the Mezzogiorno to posit goals and incentives which do not, in fact, appeal to the peasant to the extent expected. The moral code of the Mezzogiorno is, I believe, more accurate on both counts.

The derivation of the moral code can best be seen in terms of a counter hypothesis to Banfield. My hypothesis would be that the peasant will act as if he were following the rule; "Maximize the viability of the family as an economic and political unit". The implementation of this rule, in the context of the conditions of the Mezzogiorno has yielded the moral code. The rule of maximizing the viability of the family as an economic and political unit is, at least partially, the outcome of a "stateless society". The state has never penetrated the Mezzogiorno effectively, with the possible exception of the Fascist era. The state has been ineffective in providing law and order, and more importantly, justice. To be sure, there are evidences of the state in the agro-towns of the Mezzogiorno, in the form of endless bureaucratic procedures and red-tape. There are carabinieri who are, by law, from a different region of the country. The presence of the state, though serves to exacerbate the conception of a "stateless society". The state is viewed as corrupt, ineffective, alien, and exploitive. It provides neither "justice" nor security. In such a stateless society, the alternative is to make the

family into a viable political unit as well as an economic and social unit. The family must be capable of providing retribution and justice for wrongs done to it by others. In a stateless society honour, prestige, and most of all, power, are essentially political attributes which act as deterrents to encroachment upon one's patrimony, as well as weapons to be used in the event that encroachment does occur. With honour, prestige, and power one can gain allies to obtain "justice". The vendetta is an example of this use of the family to provide essentially political functions. In the absence of the state the family must provide its own political services, and honour, prestige, and power are important political resources. The importance of these political attributes remains high in the value system of the Mezzogiorno because of the lack of effective, just, and efficient penetration of the state bureaucracy. The conception of the realm of "public" as opposed to "private" is non-existent precisely because there is no organ of the "public" which is viewed as such. The conception is that the government is an organ of private interest which is used by a few to fill their pockets and those of their friends. The term governo ladro portrays this view of government held by the peasant. For all effective purposes, the Mezzogiorno is a "stateless society".

The moral code, which has evolved out of this "stateless society" and the concomitant attempt to transform the family into a viable economic and political unit, has many implications for the politics in

the Mezzogiorno. Many political functions are carried on through kinship units, and through patron-client ties which can be seen as an attempt to enlarge the moral community of the individual. There is then, a continued usage of those methods, attitudes and values which are characteristic of an earlier stateless society. The general inefficacy of the state bureaucracy has tended to enhance and maintain these essentially pre-state behavioural patterns and attitudes. The nepotism and graft which characterize the civil service tend to enhance the position of the civil servant who indulges in such practices. The patriarchal element of the civil service is enhanced by 1) a general view of illegitimacy of the government system as a whole; and 2) the relatively small amount of penetration of the effective government bureaucracy into fulfilling local needs. The gratitude and legitimacy which would normally accrue to the government public administration system then accrues to the individual office holder who is viewed as having helped the peasant in spite of, rather than as a representative of, the government. In the Mezzogiorno, the patron does not come to be viewed as a "broker" but rather retains his position as a patron; and the patriarchal patterns of praetorian politics persist.²

2

Huntington, *op. cit.*, develops the term in contrast to what he calls "civic" patterns of political activity. See Chapter I for a discussion of the contrasts between the two ideal-types.

The moral code of the Mezzogiorno can most effectively be seen to relate to politics through its effect on the attitudes, values, and behaviour of the people related to the elements of 1) poverty and its translation into an outlook of la miseria; 2) patron-client relations; 3) the Church; and 4) the family. These four phenomena are crucial points in the political culture of the Mezzogiorno, in that they are cultural elements which are in some way related to a moral code of the Mezzogiorno, and relate that moral code to the view given to politics within that culture. The poverty of the region has been translated into a philosophic outlook of competition, struggle, fatalism and despair. The peasant sees the world in competition with him, and seeks to "outdo" others since it is seen as the only way to keep alive. The peasant's struggle is greatly mitigated if he can ally himself with a strong patron. A patron can provide economic as well as political aid--the peasant can be seen as attempting to maximize the viability of the family as an economic and political unit through the recruitment of powerful allies. The Church, through various means, has enhanced the pre-praetorian political patterns of orientation. Christian Democrats, through the sanction of the Church, have managed to retain power since the departure of Umberto from Ciampino Airport, and have created one of the grandest patronage systems of the 20th century. The Church has maintained an overlapping system of patronage, particularly strong in the Messogiorno. Further, the Church has tended to maintain the importance of the

humanistic values of prestige and status to the detriment of values more attuned to the functioning of a western democracy, the path chosen by (some would maintain "for") Italy after the Second World War. Throughout all of this, the family remains of supreme importance; not only because of the inherent morality that the family is viewed to represent, but also because it is often the most efficient economic and political unit.³ It provides an ark of security against the dual forces of nature and competitors, which are pitted against it in a death struggle for existence.

The moral code that I have posited for the Mezzogiorno, is, I believe, both more useful in explaining, interpreting, and predicting behaviour, and, allows for a more just evaluation of the political behaviour of the peasant of the Mezzogiorno, than does the Banfield hypothesis. It represents an attempt to get behind the curtain of ethnocentrism which often clouds a cross-cultural study in political behaviour. It is an attempt to look at the concept of political morality through the eyes of those who live that morality.

3

The lack of delineation between "public" and "private", the lack of a viable conception of government and state is demonstrated by the responses to an Almond and Verba question which asked the respondent to state the most important problem facing the people of the country. They were then asked to rate the second most important problem. Of the respondents, 69% ranked "Improving conditions for your family" among the two most important problems facing the people of Italy. The result is reminiscent of Italo Bambolini's conception of politics cited at the beginning of this paper.

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