INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL STUDIES

'SOCIAL CAPITAL? FROM PIZZA CONNECTION TO COLLECTIVE ACTION' AN INQUIRY INTO POWER, CULTURE AND CIVIL SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the theoretical analysis of the concept of social capital. It warns against the uncritical use of such a concept which seems to be at the core of current socio-economic and political analysis.

It stresses the need to distinguish between different forms of social capital and to rethink the mainstream approach considering it as the product of an historical accumulation due to fortunate cultural anthropological features of certain regions and as something to be created where it is lacking. It further proposes to look at the actual existence of different relational models and at their articulation with top-down, exogenously induced processes of development, which might prevent the constructive deployment of endogenous social capital. Building social capital means first of all recognizing the different models and implementing policies to mediate the tension between technological innovation, political and institutional modernization and cultural resistance, by addressing concepts such as modernity and tradition in a non-dichotomic, mutually exclusive way.

The paper also discusses a well known book using social capital as the key to explain the different socio-economic performances of regional governments in Italy and proposes a different interpretation of the same story.

One must oppose tyranny in the name of the people while at the same time one opposes the people in the name of reason. This formula holds the secret of how hegemony works.
M. Barbero, 1993.

INTRODUCTION

The latest trends in the study of socio-economic conditions in Southern Italy and regional development in general, are more and more concerned with the notion of "social capital" or "relational goods", as a "combination of cultures, relations, interconnections and synergy that enable an average social productivity higher than that obtainable by individuals with the same level of human and physical capital operating in isolation or in a different relational system". (Brunetta 1995). Though the first conceptualisations of 'social capital' can be traced back at least to the seventies, it is only in the very recent past that this approach has become part of an intense theoretical and political debate. One of the starting points of this debate is considered to be the conceptualisation of social capital as expressed by Robert Putnam. In his book on the Civic Traditions in Modern Italy (1993), he defines social capital as: the features of social organization such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated actions. For him "voluntary co-operation is easier in a community that has inherited a substantial stock of social capital in the forms of reciprocity and networks of Civil engagement"(ibid:167). The role of Civil Society is at stake, particularly the legacy of horizontal co-operation in the northern regions, as opposed to the vertical hierarchization of society in the South of the Country. Nevertheless, this kind of approach does not seem to consider sufficiently some major problems. First, the notion of trust and its relevance in relation to efficiency and to the capacity of networking cannot be taken for granted: where does the line run between a 'positive', inclusive form of social networking and a 'negative', exclusive one, such as that of the familistic structure of Mafia (not only in Italy but world-wide)? Probably one of the most economically successful forms of networking. (a line that seems very thin and with a dangerous tendency towards disappearance).

Moreover by stressing the attention on the 'historical accumulation' of social capital two other questions are not properly addressed:

a) If social capital is a fundamental ingredient for a strong Civil Society and ultimately for a better economic performance, what kind of policies could be relevant in those areas that do

not seem to have had a historical accumulation of it?

b) Does only exist one form of social capital or can we think about it in plural?

To acknowledge the existence of different forms of social capitals, in different cultural and geographical contexts, can shed some light on the first question. By this token one can conceive a policy that tends to valorize the potential of a given societal environment, thus rendering constructive <u>endogenous</u> forms of social capital, rather than trying once again to implement an exogenous model. The argument of this paper is, that social capital is not simply 'lacking' in the South of Italy but that its potential has not been constructively used in the process of modernisation and acculturation, as part of the wider project of nation-building in contemporary Italy.

An alternative approach to development stressing the relevance of social capital, should to go together with a valorisation of diversities and a non elitist approach to popular cultures and traditions. This may result in a greater level of self-confidence in 'one's own way of doing things', thus reinforcing the level of reliability and trust among the people and reworking in a positive way the web of social relations fragmented by modernisation. Moreover, only the awareness and confidence in one's own knowledge, capacities and rights, can provide a shift from a relational logic of subordination to one of co-operation and mutual respect, increasing also the sense of responsibility among people.

A policy of recognition, could easily slip into a romantic or even conservative chauvinistic discourse. Popular traditional cultures cannot be addressed in a museum like attitude, rather they have to be understood as open and dynamic, taking into account the role of contemporaneity and the dynamics between endogenous and exogenous elements.

The main theoretical problem is that of bridging together different fields, traditionally separated in academia, in order to provide analytical tools enabling to investigate and problematize interactional dynamics among human beings, their relational position (of cause and effect) to the level of democratisation and economic performance and the implications they carry for development studies and practices. Development by itself is not a naive and given for granted concept. Actually the node of its theoretical analysis resides precisely in the tensions and dynamics between individual agency, in the form of political participation, and the possibility of choosing one's own life style (i.e. to develop oneself), and its interconnectedness with an ever globalizing world, in which, continuous adaptations and re-

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adaptations are required to individuals in order to 'survive' economically, emotionally and culturally.

Both, historical and policy oriented analysis of economically highly developed regions, also characterised by a certain level of political and civic participation, and of "less developed countries" (according to the same standards), are more and more concerned with the interplay between the market and the civil society. This does not mean to say that the role of the state is not at stake any more, rather than the focus of the analysis is turning rapidly from the structural functioning of state institutions and macro economic policies towards the consequences of human interactions in their informal manifestations, such as kinship relations, personal contacts, networks of reciprocity, and the way they can affect political and economic performances.

Given the informal character and the fluidity of such relations, whose structures can go beyond those of local, regional or national institutions, the analysis of their dynamics and of the conditions that might foster their development in the form of synergy among groups or individuals, can have local and global implications. Focusing on such forms of informal structures, immediately recalls theoretical and empirical problems, given their janus faced character. Associationism and migrant networks, lobbies of hidden power and 'pizza connections' are the two sides of the same coin. A coin that, some times too unproblematically (Putnam 1993), in the academic language has been given the name of 'social capital'. The aim of this paper is not to theoretically discuss the overall concept, on which relevant and extensive literature has been produced (Bourdieu:1980, Loury:1977,1987 in Coleman:1990; Putnam:1992; Brunetta:1995), rather to operationalize it in relation to trust and to the different conceptualisations of the latter.

To problematize trust, as a fundamental element of social capital, can help in distinguishing different functions and effects of social capital (not necessarily always desirable). Moreover, to question whether trust (or a certain kind of trust) is a constitutive element of every form of social capital or not, may help in unveiling the ambiguity of the concept, such that one has the impression, when dealing with it, of coming to terms with the Mafia.

Paradoxically social capital can be based on trust, as well as be the last resort in an environment where there is a lack of it. In his essay on the Mafia as the "Price of Distrust", Diego Gambetta (1988) shows how the mafioso acts as a broker between the seller and the

buyer, thus replacing mutual trust (understood as a way to reduce transaction costs). The mafioso provides a guarantee: without his help the probability of being cheated or buying a 'lemon' are very high. Nonetheless, this guarantee cannot occur without a certain degree of social capital, without having a connection with the right person, i.e. the mafioso who can provide his protection as well as the assurance that those who do not seek for it are cheated. "The mafioso himself has an interest in *regulated injections of distrust* into the market, to increase the demand of the product he sells, that is protection" (Gambetta,1988:173). In such a situation, social capital, in the form of connections with the broker/mafioso, becomes the only viable way for the transaction to be carried out. This example can highlight the ambiguity of the concept and the care it has to be dealt with.

The research will be structured as follows. In chapter one and the first part of chapter two, the objective will be to shed some light, from a theoretical point of view, on the problematic concept of social capital and its relation with the notion of trust. The janus face character of such concept will be highlighted to warn the reader against an unproblematic appreciation of it, as a yardstick of an immanent democratic morality, characterising the ethos of the population of particular regions. The possibility of using it as a tool of comparative analysis of institutional efficiency and economic development will be objected. On the contrary, the different functions that social capital can display in relation to different kinds of trust will be pointed out, suggesting a pluralization of the concept and claiming the attention to be focused on specific socio-political constraints. This may results in an argument that strongly advocates the endogenous character of development, if this has to be understood not only as an obsession with economic growth but as a process of transformation that widens the range of individual choices, ultimately resulting in a better quality of life. A quality that cannot be defined a priori, but whose measurement resides in subjective definitions.

In the last part of chapter two and throughout chapter three, a historical analysis of a specific case, that of the Italian Mezzogiorno, will be carried out. This analysis will help to unfold the interplay between structural and cultural determinants. It will focus on the process of 'institutionalisation' of clientelism as a form of political exchange, within a modern political discourse, whose perverse effects are to be found mainly in the devastating power of organized crime in these regions. A power, based precisely on a particular form of social capital, which, as it will be argued, is not a folkloric feature rather the product of a particular cultural and institutional hybridisation, resulting from a top-down modernisation.

In the final chapter, the theoretical discussion will be recalled, focusing on the meaning of notions such as tradition, modernity, authenticity. A dynamic understanding of these terms will be proposed, as precondition for a political discourse that does not inhibit a constructive rearticulation of social relations in processes of transformation, thus mitigating the tension between innovation and preservation

1. THEORETICAL FRAME

1.1 The re-convergence of economics and sociology and the relevance of trust

Before going into the analysis of trust and its relation with social capital, some analytical tools have to be provided. Starting from the key propositions of economic sociology, that is: a) economic action is a form of social action; b) economic action is socially situated; c) economic institutions are social constructions, and borrowing from Polanyi's and later on Granovetter's concept of 'embeddedness' (1985) the ways and the extent to which, a given cultural context[1] influences our motivations and strategies of action, are to be explored in detail. Such a theoretical exercise may clarify what does it mean to be trustworthy beyond a purely rationalist approach, and how this relates to different forms of social capital, pointing out the relevance of culture in such a discussion.

The first step is to spend a few words on the intellectual process through which the traditionally distinct disciplines of economics and sociology have come to be seen not only as complementary but as interwoven explanatory tools of the same reality: that of the interaction of human beings among each other and with the environment they live in.

Though at the time when Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nation" was published there was not a clear distinction between economic and social topics, by the end of the nineteenth century they acquired two distinct positions in the disciplinary division of labour. This was mainly the product of a theoretical battle between the two main schools of thought at the time: the historical school in Germany and the abstract-deductive one in England. The latter's approach, whose major contribution is to be found in the work of Ricardo, soon acquired a dominant position to the extent that the former was not considered part of economics anymore, thus confined to the field of sociology or economic history (Swedberg & Granovetter 1992). Still today, what is generally recognised as mainstream or neo-classical economics is a direct derivation of the English School.

On a general level there are some points in which the differences between the two approaches come out sharply. In mainstream economics the "analytic starting point is the individual", perceived as a unit per se, separated from other individuals or the environment

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[1] By itself this is a contested concept, "culture as values" culture as a "tool kit" providing strategies of action but not our goals, culture as continuously forming and formed by the agents at the same time...

he lives in, an atomised conception of the actor; in economic sociology, the analytic starting point "are groups, institutions and society" (Smelser and Swedberg eds.1994:5). Another major line of separation runs through the different conceptions of economic actions and of rationality. Economics assumes that individual action is motivated only by maximisation of utilities within scarcity of means, the latter being the only constraints on decision making, which is assumed to be 'rational' and expressed in quantitative terms as 'formal rationality'.

However, sociology has a broader view. In addition to 'formal rationality', Max Weber identified 'substantive rationality', "which refers to allocation within the guidelines of other principles, such as communal loyalties or sacred values", "therefore economist's regard rationality as an *assumption* , whereas sociologists regard it as a *variable* ". Moreover, "economists tend to regard the meaning of economic action as derivable from the relation between given tastes on the one hand and the prices and quantity of goods on the other", while sociologists asserts that "meanings are historically constructed and must be investigated empirically, and are not simply to be derived from assumptions and external circumstances."(ibid:5).

Despite the official distinction between the two disciplines, the legacy of the historical School was kept alive mainly through the work of Weber who is often regarded as the father of economic sociology, though what nowadays is labelled as 'new economic sociology' has several points of departure from his work[2]. The process of re-convergence of economics and sociology has occurred in different ways; in a very broad categorisation, they could be identified in two heterogeneous positions. Namely the economic approach to society and the sociological approach to the economy, the latter being the most relevant in this context.

One of the main contribution to this theoretical re convergence, has been given by the work of the anthropologists Karl Polanyi, who "spent a large part of his intellectual career formulating a 'substantivist' alternative to (the) formalistic economic anthropologists" (Swedberg & Granovetter; 1992:9-10). According to Polanyi, in relation to human activities the term economic is compound of two meanings that have independent roots.

> The substantive meaning of economics derives from man's dependence for his living
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> upon nature and his fellows. It refers to the interchange with his natural and social
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> environment, in so far as this results in supplying him with the means of material want

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[2] For a detailed account of the tradition of enonomic sociology and its development throughout the last century see: "The Handbook of Economic Sociology" 1994; Smelser and Swedberg (eds)

satisfaction.

...The formal meaning of economics derives from the logical character of the means-ends relationship, as apparent in such words as economical or economizing . It refers to a definite situation of choice, namely, that between the different uses of means induced by an insufficiency of those means. If we call the rules governing choice of means the rules of rational action, then we may denote this variant logic,...., as formal economics. The latter meaning derives from logic, the former from facts.

(Polanyi:1957; in ibid. p.29)

Polanyi's critique of formal economics was based on what he saw as a lack of empiricism, considering as natural and universal a particular logic, without taking into account how much that was based on a specific institutional system: that of price-making markets. "The relation between formal economics and the human Economy is, in effect, contingent.... The fount of the substantive concept is the empirical economy. It can be briefly defined as an instituted process of interaction between man and his environment" (ibid. p.33). A substantivist approach therefore has to start from the assumption that economy is an instituted process: i.e. 'embedded' in a particular institutional and cultural set. Arguing in favour of the substantivist, empirical economy, Polanyi has offered a distinction between what he sees as the three main 'patterns of integration' in which the economic process can be instituted. Those of reciprocity, redistribution and exchange, each of them assuming different forms of relation within particular groups or societal contexts. "Reciprocity denotes movements between correlative points of symmetrical groupings; redistribution designates appropriational movements toward a centre and out of it again; exchange refers here to vice versa movements taking place as between 'hands' under a market system...It is apparent that the different patterns of integration assume definite institutional supports" (ibid.).

Polanyi stresses two main points in illustrating this distinctions. First he argues that each of these patterns is not merely the sum of personal behavioural attitudes of the groups members, rather that the societal effect of individual behaviour depend on the presence of definite institutional conditions, so that for example "only where allocative centres have been set up can individual acts of sharing produce redistributive economy" (ibid:36)[3]. Moreover, he shows how the three patterns can coexist with each other, though one of the three always

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[3]The question of an 'institutional allocative centre' will be a relevant point of discussion in chapter three when the peripheral position of southern Italy will be tackled. The role of a particular kind of 'mediator' between the 'traditional', 'backward' south and the modern centre will be analyzed as a figure capable of allocating trust and 'real services'.

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acquires a dominant position, and by any mean represents stages of development. On the contrary, he gives the example of the welfare system, where exchange and redistribution coexist and shows how the lapse of the gold standard, imposing a step 'backward' with respect to the nineteenth century glorification of markets role, "set in a turn of the trend which, incidentally, takes us back to our starting point, namely, the inadequacy of our limited marketing definitions for the purposes of the social scientist's study of the economic life" (ibid:39).

Despite the importance of his argument, as a critique of the rational atomistic viewpoint of mainstream economics, according to Swedberg and Granovetter (1992) Polanyi's substantivist theory suffer some limitations. In fact, even though acknowledging the possibility of coexistence of the different patterns of integration, his analysis of different forms of trade seems too radically dichotomic, by stating the 'embeddedness' of economic life in pre-industrial societies and its total 'disembeddedness' in modern, industrial ones. "The economy in pre-industrial societies, he argued, was embedded in social, religious, and political institutions. This meant that such phenomena as trade, money, and markets were inspired by motives other than profit making; (while) economy (in modern societies is) directed by market prices and nothing but market prices".(Swedberg and Granovetter 1992:10). Polanyi's theory nonetheless, can definitively be seen as a seminal and ground breaking work. Further elaboration of the concept of embeddedness, going beyond the dichotomy between traditional and modern societies and problematizing the relation between the individual and the environment has been the contribution of Mark Granovetter some thirty years later, to which I will come back during the discussion of the relation between trust and culture.

On a different strand, there has been a growing interest on behalf of economists towards institutions, which began to be seen as the missing element of their analysis, as in the work of Oliver Williamson and other members of the New Institutional Economics[4]

Nonetheless, the fundamental assumptions of formal economics where not abandoned, rather they where applied to the analysis of social phenomena. "The general story told by members of this school is that social institutions and arrangements previously thought to be adventitious result of legal, historical, social, or political forces are better viewed as the efficient solution to certain economic problem". Their tone resembles that of

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[4]On the New Institutional Economics see: Swedberg & Granovetter (eds), "The Sociology of Economic Life" and Smelser and Swedberg "The Handbook of Economic Sociology"

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structural-functional sociology of the 1940's and 1960's. (Granovetter;1985:59)

Despite persisting divergence's, one could argue that the re convergence of economics and sociology has lowered the level of abstraction in economic analysis, thus creating new spaces of reflection and speculation in which the element of trust, as one of the features of daily human interactions, has acquired a relevant position.

1.2 Trust and efficiency

A good deal of current socio-economic literature is concerned with the analysis of industrial districts.(Harrison 1992; Pyke & Sengenberger -eds- 1992; Dei Ottati 1994). They have been defined as "spatially concentrated networks of mostly small and medium sized enterprises, often using flexible production technology and extensive local interfirm linkages" (Dei Ottati 1994). As a unit of analysis, they trace their roots in what neo-classical economics, particularly in the work of Alfred Marshall, called 'economic agglomeration'. As Dei Ottati clearly shows, the analytical approach of the current industrial districts theory differs sharply from that of neo-classical economics. The latter conceptualises local economies as "a collection of atomistic competitors, formally aware of one another solely through the inter mediation of price/cost signals (while) contemporary industrial districts theory emphasises the contextual significance of communal non economic institutions and the importance of relation of trust in reproducing sustained collaboration among economic actors within the districts" (ibid.). Flexibility and adaptability of the work force are seen as keys for the successful performances of the districts, and they are thought to be generated by "the breaking of rigid divisions between managers and workforce, and the pervasiveness of an atmosphere of trust" (Sengenberger & Pyke; 1992:5). In the same light, "if trust is absent, no one will risk moving first, and all will sacrifice the gains of co-operation to the safe, if less remunerative, autonomous pursuit of self-interest.

The analytic starting point of this approach, clearly derives from the process of re-convergence which has been illustrated before. The relevance given to interfirm linkages, in the form of networking and informal relations of trust leads to think that, though not always spelled out, the concept of social capital provides the background of their approach. This leads to some questions that have to be addressed, if this kind of analysis are to be useful beyond the appreciation of already existing successful districts, and if we don't want to make

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ourselves happy by discovering 'hot water'. One common point in the various definitions and conceptualisations of trust is that it is "a particular expectation we have with regard to the likely behaviour of others" (Gambetta 1988:217). What differ are the explanations given to its genesis, to the reason why one decides to trust somebody or, how somebody come to be seen as trustworthy. Our understanding of trust therefore, lies in the way we perceive the actor and his relation with the others and the environment[5].

Despite the socio-cultural nature of trust relations, often pointed at as the lubricant and the key ingredient of efficient performances, there appears to be a contradiction between the way trust is conceptualised and that in which it is operationalized. More precisely, I would argue that it is operationalized as a socio-cultural determinant of economic performances, in terms of productivity and growth, while often conceptualised as a 'commodity' that reduces transaction costs, (see for example Dasgupta 1988) and as the outcome of a rational calculation of the actor within a market logic (Coleman 1990). According to Coleman, the belief that (B) will be trustworthy "is increased by the fact that (A) holds a potential sanction over him, the threat of not being trustworthy himself" (1990:179). In this case, echoing Sabel, would be more appropriate to talk of *modus vivendi* than trust; in fact it seems that, "co-operation results from continuous calculation of self-interest rather than a mutually recognised suspension, however circumscribed, of such calculation" (1992:217). This kind of trust, unprobematically equated with social capital (as a positive asset), gives it too wide a range of operationalization that does not excludes the practices of networks of organized crime.[6]

By the same token, the cultural determinant of trust is not properly addressed and the very notion of interest is not problematized, assuming it to be only the satisfaction of material needs. Within this perspective, "the burden of experience and reflection is that trust can be found, but never created" (ibid:215); appearing only as the privilege of certain cultural and institutional settings deriving from particular historical and anthropological developments.

From a different viewpoint, Sabel argues that trust should be viewed as "a precondition of social life (so that) the proper question (should not be) how trust can be created from mistrust, but how and whether particular persons or relations come to be seen

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[5]For a comprehensive theoretical analysis of trust see: Gambetta (ed) "Trust: Making and Breaking Co-operative Relations" and as a source of references see: S, Shapiro "The Social Control of Impersonal Trust" in AJS vol 93 n.3 1987
[6]On Mafia-economics see: Gambetta, D "Fragments of an Economic Theory of the Mafia" in European Journal of Sociology, XXIX - 1988- n.1

as trustworthy" (ibid:218).

This observation provides a good insight in the discussion. By addressing the cultural problematic, one may overcome the contradiction according to which the socio-cultural determinant of efficient performances, can only be the outcome of a formalistic economic reasoning.

1.3 Cultures and Trust

Rationality and human motivations are at stake in the analysis of the relation between cultures and trust. The main problem, is to step out of the so called rational choice perspective, in order to overcome the contradiction previously illustrated. An oppositional categorisation of rationality versus irrationality would not help as an analytical tool. It would not find applicability in practice thus not enabling to unfold the complexity of human interactions, as the picture in which trust is framed. What from a particular viewpoint might be seen as 'irrational' could simply correspond to a different logic, or be the outcome of a combination between individual choices and particular social and cultural constraints, which are by themselves variable . Indeed "the idea of rational choice is an idea of culture, however thin that idea might be;... but it is culture misconceived as nature (Di Maggio 1994:29).

This statement by itself does not solve the problem but leads us in the right direction to address it, in which two main questions are to be confronted with. First, the possibility to identify different forms of rationality, lies in the acknowledgement of the existence of different motivations for human actions. Which vary according to different cultural, social and institutional sets and to the subjective interpretation of them. Moreover, and not of a minor relevance, we should investigate the dynamics through which human motivations are shaped and the extent to which they really determine actions. Two key related concepts can help in unfolding this problematique without loosing our focus, in the attempt to highlight the contextual relevance of the notion of trust and consequently, the different functions that social capital can display, let alone the possibility to recognise this functions and make them constructive. These are the concepts of 'embeddedness' and 'habitus', as elaborated respectively by Mark Granovetter and Pierre Bourdieu.

Already in the first section of this chapter we have dealt with the distinction between

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formalist and substantivist approaches and with Polanyi's theory of embeddedness. This theory has been partly criticised and further elaborated by Granovetter, who seems to address the kind of problems we are confronted with. Part of the critique, is concerned with the relation between modernisation and the development of the market system on the one hand and the level of embeddedness on the other: "I assert that the level of embeddedness of economic behaviour is lower in non-market societies than is claimed by substantivists and development theorists, and it has changed less with modernisation than they believe; but I argue also that this level has always been and continues to be more substantial than is allowed for by formalists and economists" (Granovetter 1992:54). This relates to the way we understand and co-relate the notions of 'tradition' and 'modernity', a question that will be addressed in the concluding chapter in a more detailed and operational elaboration.

Going beyond this opposition, Granovetter refines the understanding of the 'level of embeddedness' as such, by making a distinction between over- and under-socialised conceptions of human actions, in which, the embeddedness position is found somewhere in between. Granovetter calls oversocialized a "conception of people as overwhelmingly sensitive to the opinions of others and hence obedient to the dictates of consensually developed systems of norms and values, internalised through socialisation, so that obedience is not perceived as a burden" (ibid.). This kind of critique to modern sociology was already addressed by Dennis Wrong in 1961.

In addition to the over-socialised one, Granovetter talks of an under-socialised conception of men, corresponding to classical and neo-classical utilitaristic understanding of the actor, assuming choices to be determined only by individual calculation. "In classical and neo-classical economics, therefor, the fact that actors may have social relations with one another has been treated, if at all, as a frictional drag that impedes competitive markets" (ibid:56) This of course relates to the formalist assumption of an ideal self regulated market, in which the price making system is the only determinant of its functioning.

What makes Granovetter's point particularly interesting and useful in this context, is the assertion that both over- and under-socialised views end up with an atomised perception of the actor. If the latter position neglects the influences of the societal and cultural environment, the former, though acknowledging it, does not take into account the reciprocal influences between men and the environment. It assumes a unidirectional relation, so that once norms and values are internalised, they completely shape actions. By this token,

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ongoing relations are underrated, so that actors decisions become atomised and independent from one another. A good example of such over-socialised view, is given by Piore's theory of segmented labour markets, according to which "members of each labour market segment are characterised by different styles of decision making and that the making of decisions by rational choice, custom, or command in upper-primary, lower-primary, and secondary labour markets respectively correspond to the origin of workers in middle-, working-, and lower-class subculture[7]" (Piore:1975; in ibid.: 57). Such theory, based on an idea of class consciousness, suffers the same limitations of the hortodox Marxist perspective which does not really help in grasping "the unpredictable potency of human agency, so often anaesthetised and absorbed into the narrative of capital accumulation and class struggle" (Slater; 1992:310).

The in between character of the embeddednes position, represents a departure from Marxist's class categorisation[8] and from a Weberian conception of culture. The latter in fact, to use Granovetter's categories, could be seen as an over-socialised conception. It assumes that culture, through values, provides the ultimate ends toward which action is directed.[9] A good complement of the concept of embeddedness, in the specific field of the sociology of culture, is found in the work of Ann Swidler. She argues that

> the view that action is governed by 'interests' is inadequate in the same way as the view
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> that action is governed by non-rational values. Both models have a common explanatory
>
> logic, differing only in assuming different ends of action: either individualistic, arbitrary
>
> 'tastes' or consensual, cultural 'values'. Both views are flawed by an excessive emphasis
>
> on the 'unit act', the notion that people choose their actions one at a time according to
>
> their interest or values. But people do not, indeed cannot, build up a sequence of actions
>
> piece by piece, striving with each act to maximize a given outcome. Action is
>
> necessarily integrated into larger assemblages, called here 'strategies of action'.
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> (1986:276)[10]

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[7]For an interesting analysis of various understandings of sub-culture see: Gary Alan Fine & Sherryl Kleinman "Rethinking Subculture: An Interactionist Analysis" in American Journal of Sociology 1979 vol 85 n.1. In this article subculture is reconceptualized in terms of "an interlocking group network characterized by multiple group membership, weak ties, structural roles conducive to information spread between groups, and media diffusion".

[8]Though in the formalists substantivits debate, Marxist political economy is definitively closer to the Historical than to the Abstract school.

[9]For another interesting critique, focused on Weber's argument in "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" see: Jere Cohen 1980, "Rational Capitalism in Renaissance Italy", American Journal of Sociology vol.85 n.6. Cohen argues that capitalist rationality advanced under both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, and the religious factor had little effect on its early development.

[10]This article gives a clear and synthetic overview of various understanding of culture. It also provides an

Such an argument clearly draws on the work of Bourdieu. Grounding his work on the attempt to overcome such theoretical oppositions as subjective/objective, culture/society and structure/action he has become one of the most influential writers in contemporary social sciences. In his view, "social life must be understood in terms that do justice both to objective material, social, and cultural structures and to the constituting practices of individuals and groups" (Postone, Li Puma, Calhoun; 1993:3) He focuses his analysis on the dynamic intersection between structure and actions, society and individuals. The centre of this intersection is what he calls habitus, as the capacity for 'structured improvisation'. He "analyses the behaviour of agents as objectively co-ordinated and regular without being the product of rules, on the one hand, or conscious rationality, on the other. (The habitus) is meant to capture the practical mastery that people have of their social situation, while grounding that mastery itself socially" (ibid:4).

In this light, the concept of habitus recalls that of embeddedness. While the latter enables us to socially and culturally base the economic action, the former is meant to capture and synthesise the social and the cultural in which the action is embedded. "There is no conceivable point at which human beings could be perfect rational actors; since they always operate within various forms of bounded rationality it will always be necessary to consider the socially produced means of generating strategies which are open to them and which reflect the fields in which they act and their own trajectories through them".(Calhoun:1993:81)

The inter-sectoral position of the habitus, escapes the under- over-socialised opposition and addresses the cultural variable not only as contextually based but as permeable and dynamic, transcending fixed categories such as 'tradition' and 'modernity'. "As people succeed or fail, meet with approval or disapproval, in trying to carry out their manifold projects of daily life, they may adjust slightly the traditional information that they have received from various others in the course of previous interactions" (ibid:78) Tradition here derives its meaning from its etymological root: the Latin word 'traditio', "referring to the passing or handing down of information" (ibid.).

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interesting distinction between 'tradition', 'ideology' and 'common sense'. The interesting point in my view is the 'warning' that traditions - as taken for granted, articulated cultural beliefs and practices, so that they seem inevitable parts of life - may under certain circumstances become ideology.
Another useful overview of different conceptions of culture is given in Diane Crane (ed) 1994; "The Sociology of Culture".

As distinct from Marx, Bourdieu does not see social categories in terms of classes, its distinctive element being economic capital and a particular position in the system of production. Rather, he sees society as composed of symbolic spaces, the access to which is determined by the interplay between the habitus on the one hand and a certain quantity of economic and symbolic capital on the other. The latter in the form of aesthetic taste, knowledge of recorded culture (cultural capital), or of a web of social relations (social capital). The economic capital is the most evident and easily transferable from one person to another. The various forms of capital are to a certain extent interchangeable. Economic capital can be transformed into symbolic capital and vice versa. Though the vice versa movement seem less obvious, it still is possible. Indeed this very possibility is the real insight that Bourdieu gives. A certain amount of cultural and social capital, can help in facilitating the 'game of social interactions'. Knowledge and taste become distinctive signs. A web of social relations, also influenced by the reciprocal reading of these signs, can provide new job opportunities or facilitate business relations, ultimately resulting in economic capital.

The habitus, could be read as a software that people dispose of to deal with daily life; its interplay with the various forms of capital determining their position in society, as a symbolic universe. Moreover this dynamics enable people to symbolically recognise themselves, thus working as forces of inclusion and exclusion at the same time.

I do not pretend to have given here an exhaustive analysis of conceptions of culture and of the different emphasis given to it in the social sciences, nonetheless I wish to have provided sufficiently clear analytical tools to address the questions of this research. In the following section, I will give some examples of various forms of trust and of how it can be influenced by elements other than a kind of 'natural' anthropological attitude which according to authors like Putnam (1993) can be found only in particular regions.

Moreover this tools enable us to conceive of trust relations beyond spatially and culturally closed contexts; a fundamental task, if this effort is to be of any use in a world where the speed of the globalizing forces is ever increasing.

1.4 Various forms of trust

Anthony Pagden's account (1988) of the destruction of trust in eighteenth century Naples, on behalf of the Spanish Crown, can provide interesting points of reflection and an opportunity to test the analytical tools so far provided. Drawing on two of the main Italian

political economists of the time, Paolo Mattia Doria and Antonio Genovesi, the author wishes to give an example of "the way trust was thought to operate in pre-industrial Europe" (Pagden;1989:127)

Interestingly, he reports that for Doria and Genovesi "the notion of trust as a dimension of social behaviour involved a crucial element of the incalculable, of the non rational" (ibid:127). Trust, they argued, is based on the availability of information on the object of one's trust. Nonetheless this information can never be sufficient to make others' actions completely predictable, so that the very act of trusting implies an element of 'belief' as the etymology of the word tell us. The Italian (as in most neo-Latin languages) word for trust is *fede* , which in English would be 'faith'. This derives directly from the Latin *fides*, which is antithetical to 'understanding' (cognitio).

Moreover in Doria's account there is a theoretical distinction which is worth looking at. *Fede Pubblica* (Public Trust), as a binding element in society, is distinguished from *fede privata* (private trust) "which is a purely familial association, where private interests rather than public interests are involved, since the family, the kin group, is merely an extension of the individual" (ibid:129). Though acknowledging that the latter is a necessary condition of the former, he asserts that "a society where only private trust was available would - since it would consist solely of small self-interested groups united by kin - be no society, no *societas*, at all" (ibid:130). From a rational choice perspective, we would not be able to grasp the two interconnected meanings of trust, thus reducing it only to 'fede privata' which as such cannot be idealised as a political virtue.

Normative values are, according to Doria, the elements on which public trust is based. It has been by replacing this values, that the Spanish Crown had managed to destroy the pre-existing bonds of trust within the society. This, is seen as a necessary operation to secure political control from a remote centre, and a regular fiscal flow guaranteed by local Barons. For these purposes, the Spaniards "had created large numbers of new nobles whose loyalty flowed, not between the members of the community, but directly from the individual to the king, and in whom the king could have complete (private) 'trust' " (ibid:132), thus reducing systemic trust, in a logic of *dividi et impera*.

In other words, Pagden argues that "what in effect this translation of cultural values achieved was the replacement of a virtuous society based upon the mutual trust of all its members by an aristocratic tyranny based on suspicion and self-regard, arrogance and self-

love. In other terms it replaced a society based on trust by one based on an equally slippery concept: honour". In this light, honour is seen as a private matter (according to the author typical of Spanish culture), transcending law in such a way that the man of honour is "his own legislator". That which is "content to have the wife who has dishonoured him murdered in private by a hired assassin" . Nonetheless, historically this is not the only meaning of honour. The other, deriving from Aristotele, is public. "It requires a witness, and thus implies a relationship between two or more parties and with persons outside the kin group. This understanding of honour -the sense in which the term is used in such phrases as 'honouring one's bond'- is of course a crucial component of trust.(ibid:133)

Though interesting and relevant, particularly in the need of a terminological precision, this argument cannot be fully accepted in the light of the preceding section's theoretical discussion. The distinction between public and private trust and that between two different conceptions of honour provides a testing ground for the theory. Nonetheless such an extreme dichotomy as that between the two types of society in the pre- and post-Spanish period and the corresponding normative values, trust and honour, does not match our theoretical frame. First, it assumes a direct opposition between 'old' and 'new' values which does not work in the light of the meaning given here to 'tradition' and runs the risk to over-romanticise it. Second, the relevance given to the normative values, whether old or new ones, has a Weberian flavour that does not fit in the non-fixed understanding of culture as expressed by the 'habitus'.

Still, the more convincing part of the argument, resides in the role assigned to the new Barons created by the Spanish Crown. Accepting a non static understanding of tradition and acknowledging the validity of the notion of 'habitus', there still is a problem concerned with the passing of information. In this light the Barons can be seen as social and cultural 'brokers' giving 'legitimacy' to individual behaviour, thus impeding mutual trust. In a geometrical metaphor, they function as points in which information is gathered and then unevenly distributed through radiants, rather than transmitted in regular flows.

The next chapter, will start by briefly clarifying the different functions that social capital can play and how they relate to processes of democratic growth. The line of argument will critically run parallel to that of one of the most influential works done using a social capital approach: Robert Putnam's book "Making Democracy Work - Civic Traditions in Modern Italy". In chapter three an alternative reading of the same question will be provided

by focusing on the process of nation-building in Italy, in order to have an empirical base of discussion.

2. APPLIED SOCIAL CAPITAL

2.1 From Instrumental Friendship to Participation

The previous chapter has mainly pursued two tasks. First, the reader has been warned against an over-generalised appreciation of the concept of social capital and the danger deriving from it. Second, it has provided a frame through which the theoretical roots and the relevance of the concept have been clarified. Nonetheless, a further discussion on the functions that social capital can display is still worth doing, enabling us to focus our lenses. That is, on the one hand, to select the kind of social capital that is implicitly applied in mainstream analysis such as those of Fukuyama (1995), Putnam (1993) and Coleman (1988;1990), testing their reliability in a democratic discourse. On the other, to narrow the range of applicability of the concept in order to avoid what has been called 'the discovery of hot water', by putting a new make-up on a neo-liberal, 'free market' theorisation, reinforced by a sympathetic attitude towards not well clarified 'norms of reciprocity'.

To start with, the notion of social capital mainly as a 'public good' (particularly in its rational choice / neoliberal understanding) and as such under invested in[11], will be demystified. Moreover a distinction will be proposed between 'participatory - constructive' and 'instrumental - exclusionary' social capital, with some in-between positions that are difficult to detect and isolate. On this line, it will be argued that only the former notion can have positive externalities in the civil society and as such be considered 'collective good', though its collective character is a by-product of particular relations between individuals and institutions and not some kind of immanent morality.

The rational choice perspective on social capital, of which James Coleman is one of the leading exponents, has already been discussed from a theoretical viewpoint. "If we begin with a theory of rational action, in which each actor has control over certain resources and interests in certain resources and events, then social capital constitutes a particular kind of resource available to an actor".(1988:98)

Introducing the concept of social capital, in the attempt "to import the principle of rational action for use in the analysis of social systems proper, including but not limited to

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[11]Coleman argues that social capital, being a public good, is not consciously invested in by 'rational actors' (1988).

economic systems, and to do so without discarding social organization in the process" (ibid:97), James Coleman argues that "it is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspects of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors (...) within the structure" (ibid:98). Moreover, he generally states that most forms of social capital are public goods, without further clarifying which of them are and which are not. In order to distinguish these entities, he provides some examples of social capital in function. Nonetheless, what strikes is the naivety (otherwise we should say the conscious avoidance of the main problem) of his argument, though at least he does not go as far as Putnam and Fukuyama arguing that such examples are those we should draw on, not only to improve our business but to 'make democracy work'.

The first example he gives, is the diamond merchant community and how trust relations stand at the basis of this market.

> In the process of negotiating a sale, a merchant will hand over to another merchant a bag of stones for the latter to examine in private at his leisure, with no formal insurance that the latter will not substitute one or more inferior stones or a paste replica. The merchandise may be worth thousands, or houndred of thousands, of dollars. Such free exchange of stones for inspection is important to the functioning of this market. In its absence, the market would operate in a much more cumbersome, much less efficient fashion. Inspection shows certain attributes of the social structure. A given merchant community is ordinarily very close, both in the frequency of interaction and in ethnic and family ties. The wholesale diamond market in New York City, for example, is Jewish, with high degree of intermarriage, living in the same community in Brooklyn, and going to the same synagogues. It is essentially a closed community.

(ibid.)

The conclusion of this passage entails its limitations: how do we conciliate such statement with the idea of an open competition in the market, and more precisely of a democratic competition on the supply side? How do we deal with the actual impossibility for a non Jewish to engage in such kind of business? We cannot ignore the highly exclusive character of this form of social capital, which, as such, cannot be considered a public good, unless the latter is identified with the private economic interest of that particular community.

Describing the functioning of the Kahn El Khalili market of Cairo he enthusiastically describes the way social capital is displayed in that particular setting and points out that "for some activities, such as bringing a customer to a friend's store, there are commissions; for

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others, such as money changing, merely the creation of obligations. Family relations are important in the market, as the stability of the proprietorship. The whole market is so infused with relations of the sort I have described that it can be seen as an organization, no less than a department store. Alternatively, one can see the market as consisting of a set of individual merchants, each having an extensive body of social capital on which to draw, through the relationships of the market " (ibid:100). One can understand the surprise with which he discovers the liveliness of a Mediterranean market, compared to the squalid impersonality of an American department store, though what disturbs is his paternalistic recognition of some form of organization 'even' in such kind of market. However, what he accounts for, is a system of brokerage which is strikingly similar to that described by Gambetta, to which it has been referred in the first chapter. What Coleman does not say, in fact, is that the commission is *the conditio sine qua non* for the transaction to be carried out, if not in most cases, to avoid a 'lemon'. Though contesting the idea that such kind of market is based on a mafia like system of brokerage, it still is quite difficult to categorise this form of social capital as a public good. Both examples clearly give an idea of social capital as having direct economic consequences and draw on an understanding of trust as a commodity.

However, Coleman's argument seems more coherent when giving the example of voluntary associations, such as those among parents of children from a particular school, though not explaining exactly what kind of benefits derive from the participation in such associations (we can assume that this could be the exchange of information, the participation in shaping teaching programmes with the teachers, or some forms of shifts in looking after the children). This is certainly a constructive form of social capital, and it is a collective good in as much as the redraw of one parent from the association represents a loss for all the members. Nonetheless, the creation and maintenance of this form of capital, cannot be alienated from a particular institutional frame. How can it be displayed in conditions where, for example, public transports do not work properly, thus reducing waste of time in transportation, a fact that could physically impede this form of participation? Especially if both parents have to work to sustain the family and don't have much free time. Without addressing this kind of questions, such form of social capital becomes a privilege of those who can afford to have a part-time job or of those families where only one member works.

Finally the unsustainability of Coleman's approach, sharply comes out in the way he makes one big salad of all these different forms through another example:

It is not merely voluntary associations,..., in which underinvestiment of this sort occurs. When an individual asks for a favour from another, thus incurring in an obligation, he does so

because it brings him a needed benefit; he does not consider that it does the other a benefit as well by adding to a drawing fund of social capital available in a time of need. If the first individual can satisfy his need through self-sufficiency, or through aid from some official source without incurring an obligation, he will do so - and thus fail to add the social capital outstanding in the community.

Similar statement can be made with respect to trustworthiness as social capital. An actor choosing to keep trust or not is doing so on the basis of costs and benefits he himself will experience. That his trustworthiness will facilitate others' actions or that his lack of trustworthiness will inhibit others' actions does not enter into his decision.

(ibid:117)

Particular attention to Coleman's argument, has been given in as much as he seems to be the only one who has made an effort to shed some light on such slippery concept and he is taken as 'the' main theoretical reference both by Putnam (1993) and by Fukuyama (1995). Particularly the arrogance of the latter in dividing the world in 'high' and 'low' trust countries, such as for example Germany and USA on one hand and South Italy[12] and China on the other is astonishing, to say the least.

It probably helps, in this context, to compare his statement with what Raimondo Catanzaro has to say about the two main codes of mafia culture. The 'code of honour' and 'instrumental friendship', which still today constitute its main strength. What concerns us here is the second, whose function is characterised as follows:

It serves essentially to create non-corporate groups, networks of informal relationship that compete with one another for economic and political resources. In the networks of instrumental friendship, solidarity is based on trust in the fulfilment of obligations on the principle of balanced reciprocity. It is trust, then, which characterises these non-corporate groups and not the stable network of relationships and impersonal obligations typical of modern corporate groups. Networks of instrumental friendships based on informal relationships of trust played a crucial economic role in pre-unification Sicily. In fact, they made the principle economic and commercial transaction possible.

(1985:38)

A few pages later he argues: "To obtain authorisation, licenses, concessions, and administrative passes, one needed to have entry to the right offices.......Instrumental

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[12]Needless to say, South Italy is not a country in itself and, as such, cannot be looked at as an atomized entity, without taking into account the power dynamics of the Nation-State it is part of.

friendship was served for this too...."

These comparisons clearly show how the current literature on social capital is very confusing, lacking both terminological precision and theoretical rigour. No clear distinction is made between instrumental friendship, exclusive lobbying and participatory social capital. In this light, analysis such as those of Putnam and Fukuyama do not hold from a methodological point of view. Evidence shows that social capital, so vaguely defined, is not lacking in the south of Italy, rather seems to be over-present.

At the current level of theorisation, therefor, the concept cannot be used neither as an explanatory tool for democratic effectiveness, nor as a defining anthropological feature of particular communities, in its participatory form, without taking into account the relation with institutional settings.

By participatory social capital, is meant here that particular feature of social relations characterised by people's belief and confidence in what they are doing, thus enabling a) to act synergetically at individual and group level, the more people participate in the synergy the better it works; b) to engage in collective actions that give them a bargaining power towards Governmental institutions, thus increasing the level of democracy; the economic effects of this form of social capital are not direct but <u>indirect</u>, being the outcome of a higher level of redistribution on the one hand, and of the potential for dynamism and innovation deriving from synergy on the other. This view point is not merely a utopian statement, rather it forces us to reflect upon the constraints that affect interpersonal relations in particular contexts.

Social capital, as such, is not to be found historically in particular communities, rather it is a potential of every human agglomerate. The possibility to display such potential in a constructive way is highly influenced both by institutional structures and by the hegemonic discourse through which they are implemented. The form of trust necessary for synergetic action, in fact, is not simply the outcome of a rational calculation and not merely a commodity. Rather it is a "projection, as developed particularly in the work of Robin Dowes and John Orbell, is the psychological mechanism by which a trustworthy person projects her trustworthiness onto other; thus, the more trustworthy one is, the more likely one is to trust." (Levi; 1996:47).

However, the problem remains partly unsolved. Repressive authoritarian Governments, such as the Indonesian one, can involuntarily stimulate the deployment of

social capital in the form of underground networks of resistance, against political domination and cultural subjugation. Naturally those who are directly involved in this movements strongly believe in their task; a belief, that gives them the strength to go on and the capacity to organise themselves through non-corporate networks. From a strategic point of view, there can be no difference between a movement struggling for human rights in an authoritarian, non-democratic state and a lobby aiming at controlling political and economic power, or even overthrowing democratic institutions in a formally democratic State.

Ultimately, it seems very difficult to strictly categorise the different functions of social capital, without constantly having to deal with a slippery relation between form and content. This means that, though a major distinction could be made on the basis of logic (inclusive-participatory / exclusive-instrumental), the strategies through which social capital is displayed, do no tell much about the aim of the actions thus engaged in, and even less about their social, democratic sustainability.

What seems to be missing in the current debate, and definitively needs further analysis, is the recognition that the concept of social capital clashes with the "modern" notion of power, as structured, and achievable through individual merit, the main constraint being that of formal democratic institutions. It wakes all us up from the liberal American dream. The concept of social capital, from a political point of view, has to be looked at and analytically used in the frame of the post-modern problematisation of power; and its use in a politically democratic discourse cannot escape such problematisation.

For this reason, the next chapter will look at the process of political incorporation in Italy and particularly at the process of nation building and its effects on the South of the country, to see whether it has functioned as a subjugating force, in the Foucauldian understanding of that notion.

2.2 Putnam and the Civic Traditions in Italy

One of the most influential research using social capital as an analytical tool has been done by Robert Putnam. By looking at the institutionalisation of regional Governments in Italy, he evaluates the level of efficiency of such institutions in the various regions of the country. Using a widely contested methodology, he gets to the conclusion that the regions

with the higher level of institutional and economic performance, the more 'civic' regions, are precisely those areas in which the medieval city states flourished. By this token, the historical legacy of civic traditions[13] is given as the main explanation of their present institutional performance. In opposition to these areas, he puts the uncivicness of the southern regions, whose legacy is that of a feudal system, characterised by a vertichal hierarchization of society[14], exploitation and a certain incapacity to engage in collective action on behalf of the civil society.

It is not my intention to go into the details of his argument, neither to provide a systematic critique of it. Already several reviews and articles have been published focusing on the conceptual frame of the book (Mutti, 1994; Ramella 1995; Levi 1996), on the methodology, and on its historiographic coherence and credibility (Bagnasco, 1994; Lupo, 1993; Sabetti, 1996). The first cluster of critiques is mainly focused on discarding, from a theoretical point of view, Putnam's notion of *civism* as an analytical tool and provides a fierce attack against the notion of *Amoral Familism* [15] on which the author largely draws his line of argument. Despite some of these critiques (Mutti & Levi) mention the possibility of identifying different forms of trust and hence different kinds of social capital, none of them engage in a systematic deconstruction of such concept.

It is argued that Putnam mainly recycles an old stereotype, somehow close to the colonial idea of the *lazy native* . Interestingly enough, I would argue, he does so while proudly pretending to break another widely sedimented image, that of the Russeaunian *Bon Sauvage* and more precisely challenging the idealised vision of traditional communities by stating that "the least civic areas of Italy are precisely the traditional southern villages" (1993:114). His apocalyptic tone, seems slightly exaggerated in statements such as: "it is not surprising, therefore, that citizens in civic regions are happier with life in general than are their counterparts in less civic regions.... Happiness is living in a civic community" (ibid.: 113).

From a historical point of view, Putnam, though at a lower level of sophistication, is

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[13]Read: The historical accumulation of social capital whose nature and functions, as stressed in the previous section, Putnam does not care to sufficiently problematize.

[14]As a matter of fact, as Lupo argues, not the whole central-northern part of Italy can be historically identified as 'municipal' and not the whole southern part as 'feudal'. It cannot be argued, as Putnam does, that at the beginning of the millenium the northern people where 'citizens' and the southern 'subjects'.

For further points of critique on this line see: Lupo, S. "Usi e Abusi del Passato; Le Radici dell'Italia di Putnam", in Meridian 18, Donzelli ed. 1993 Roma.

[15]This concept derives from Edward Banfield's book (1958) "The Moral Basis of a Backward Society" (published in Italy as "Le Basi Morali di Una Società Arretrata", Bologna, Il Mulino, 1976)

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in line with the classics of Italian scholarship and public discourse. Already in 1858 Carlo Cattaneo, one of the best known practitioners of this tradition, used the legacy of medieval Italy to place in sharp relief the Italian civic tradition, to argue against the creation of a unitary, monarchical regime, and to press for a federal, republican solution to the making of modern Italy in 1860. Cattaneo goes back to ancient times - to the civic traditions of *Magna Grecia* in the South, and of the Etruscan communities in the Centre and North; unlike Putnam he identifies characteristics of civic traditions throughout Italy.

A serious historical analysis, cannot disagree with Sabetti when, with an unveiled irony, states that "Putnam's model reminds us that history matters and then proceeds to mess it up" (1996:40). Both Sabetti and Lupo, provide in their reviews, substantial evidence of the unsustainability of Putnam's historical argument. Successful forms of civic organisations and collective struggles, such as workers and regional movements, are accounted for throughout the centuries, from the XVI, XVII and XVIII century Apulia (the heel of Italy, in the south-east of the country) to the twentieth century Sicily and Sardinia, where the 'Statuto Speciale' (Special Statute; as a particular form of regional Government) was implemented much before the institutionalisation of regional governments in the rest of the country.
Last but not least, the dichotomic opposition between North and South as two homogenous entities goes against both the complexity of reality and the efforts made so far, from an analytical and political perspective, to meet this complexity in order to provide more viable solutions to local, regional and national problems[16].

This points of critique are relevant not only in as much as they rightly claim for a certain rigour, thus denouncing lack of attention and respect for the subject of analysis; they also clearly invalidate the cultural anthropological determinism underlying Putnam's idea of 'civicness', supported by such rough, unprecise historical analysis.
If we were to buy Putnam's argument on the different capacity, from a cultural anthropological point of view, in the different parts of the country to 'catch the train of democratisation'[17] , then the right question could be, as Lupo ironically argues: "why the

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[16]For an account of some of the latest trends in the meridionalist debate in Italy, see: Raimondo Catanzaro (ed) "Società Politica e Cultura nel Mezzogiorno", Franco Angeli 1989 Milano; and Franceso Paolo Cerase (ed) Dopo il Familismo, Cosa? Tesi a confronto sulla questione meridionale negli anni novanta" Franco Angeli 1992 Milano.
[17]Though he does not prove that this train has reached its final destination in any part of Italy; the judiciari investigations of the ninenties under the heading of "mani pulite" (clean hands) have shown how much social capital, in the form of instrumental friendship, minly aimed at illegal financial transactions and private allocation of public contracts (by influencing calls for tenders with criterias other than quality or efficiency of the supply), has been 'the name of the game' in the north as well a in the south.

corruption of politicians, in the North, has not inhibited the functioning of the *res pubblica*, while in the South one steal *and* things do not work ? Such question would be misleading in as much as it could bring us to paradoxical chategrisations, such as 'civic' and 'uncivic' thieves, not to mention 'civic racist communities' such as those of the territory of the Northern League, unproblematically included in Putnam's map of the most civic regions.

However, it is true that certain forms of instrumental social capital are more pervasive and inform more daily life in the southern society than in the northern one[18], thus negatively affecting the performance of public institutions and the economic potential. If such phenomena cannot be explained simply in terms of path dependency and civic culture, then different arguments have to be brought in. This does not mean to say that culture and history do not matter, rather, that they have to be addressed in a different way. The problem, is not to support with historical evidence general statements on particular cultural attitudes of certain regions. Rather, to critically look at the articulation between endogenous and exogenous, economic, political and cultural elements. This approach allows to go beyond classic dichotomies such as tradition and modernity and escapes simplistic explanations focusing exclusively on exogenous or endogenous elements. Ultimately it seems to me more appropriate and 'realistic' in a world ever more characterised by the compression of time and space, as Harvey would have it (1987), in such a way that the relation between culture and territoriality becomes increasingly complex.

A more viable historical frame, for the purpose of this analysis, is that of the post-unification Italy, and particularly the post-world war II period in which the 'great transformation' (i.e. the massive modernisation) of the south of Italy has occurred. The attention will be focused on the process of political and economic incorporation, let alone on the attempt of cultural homogenisation as part of the process of nation building. As De Souza Santos has argued, nation-states "while externally they have been the champions of cultural diversity, of the authenticity of the national culture, internally they have been the champions of homogenisation and uniformity, crushing the rich variety of local cultures coexisting in the national territory" (1995:257)

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[18]Considering the reality of the northern league which characterizes quite a substantial area of the north, and taking 'rational logic' to the extreme, it could be argued, in a provocative way, that instrumental friendship as such (i.e. instrumental to the achievement of an immediate goal) is more open than the racist and narrow minded 'civicness' of the Northern League.

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CULTURE AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN POWER GAMES[1][9]

3.1 Introduction

From a socio-cultural point of view, some light will have to be shed on the notion of clientelism, and the way this form of social relations has articulated with the political and economic system of the newly formed nation state. It will be argued that the current socio-economic situation of most southern Italian regions, largely characterised by a high level of unemployment, low level of income redistribution[20], lack of efficiency and accountability of public institutions, could be explained in terms of a social transformation that has not had the character of a transformation (modernisation) from within. Rather it has mainly assumed the form of 'incorporation'; thus inhibiting the possibility of an autonomous, self sustained development.

This process of top-down modernisation, has highly affected the local structure of social relations. The cultural modernisation carried out through the national media, has proposed 'new' values that became 'familiar' without being experienced. The subjugation of local identities to such hyper-real model, has fostered an attitude of suspicion and lack of confidence, at inter-personal and public level.

Moreover, as Barbero has argued, "the processes of *vertical integration* underlying centralisation were constituted by new patterns of social relations through which each individual was disconnected from the hold of the group solidarity and reconnected to the central authority. By breaking the hold of the group, each individual became a free agent on the labour market" (1993:88)

Local relational structures and values, have articulated with the market and with the new institutional setting in such a way so as to become mere instruments in an individualistic social climbing. Moreover, despite the rational, universalistic, non-personal, non-emotional character of the relational model proposed, as part of the modern national identity, patronage and the familistic structure of the southern societies have been used to create political

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[1][9]The Italian Authors quoted in this chapter are translated by the Researcher (except: Catanzaro;1985)

[20]Despite the present anti-mafia movements are not class based and as such tend to be described by social scientists as 'new social movements' their concern with social justice make such definition disputable. Indeed, "their primary reformist objective - the clientelar structure of the Italian State - is deeply connected to the question of resources redistribution" (p.49). For an interesting and detailed analysis of the current anti-mmafia movement in Sicily see: Jane & Peter Schneider; "Dalle Guerre Contadine alle Guerre Urbane: Il Movimento Anti-mafia a Palermo" in Meridiana 25, 1996 pp. 47-75

consensus on behalf of the central government. Indeed, "the absence of a 'culture' of services or that of a modern welfare state seem (...) to be the consequence of the implementation of the clientelar system as the predominant form of social structuration in the post-world war II South"... The logic of such structure has a genesis and a relevance that go beyond 'the region', it represents "the fundamental axis around which the Italian political-institutional system, with its 'backstage' stability and apparent instability, has hold its strength (Mingione; 1989:70, 73)

The striking contradiction between a 'national discourse' addressing 'traditional' values as backward, as obstacles to the development of the region and of the nation as one, on the one hand, and the actual reality of political practices on the other, has widened the gap between the 'real' and the 'legal' country, resulting in a low level of internalisation of norms, thus providing fertile ground for the flourishing of organized crime, which, as a matter of fact, 'controls' most of these territories. On the same line, it has been argued that the mafia is not a relic of the past, rather it is the product of a particular form of cultural and institutional hybridisation. (Catanzaro:1985)

The political, socio-economic and cultural aspects, cannot be separated without contradicting the theoretical frame proposed. A problem is posed by the implicit use of these terms as distinct categories, as it has been done at the beginning of this paragraph. Nonetheless, to acknowledge the fictious character of such categories, can lead us out of the impasse, without engaging in a semantic dispute, which would be misleading and far out of the constraints of this paper.

Bringing the discussion to the ground, issues such as those of language, migration, aid policy and a particular industrial policy are to be tackled. The peripheral position of these regions to the national centre and to the world economic system have to be borne in mind. Moreover, though a detailed analysis would not be feasible in the context of this research, at least a reference has to be made to the position of Italy in the geopolitics of the cold war.

3.2 The "Questione Meridionale" as "Backwardness"

The mainstream discourse on the Italian 'Questione Meridionale' has been for long time characterised by the so called 'backwardness' theories. A common point in the various approaches, is the focus on the negative role played by the clientelar structure on the

development of a modern democratic state. The lack of political participation and of effective collective actions on behalf interest's categories, are assumed to be characteristic features of the southern society.

In the range of theoretical approaches and analytical interpretations, two major thesis can be identified. One is that of the 'amoral familism', as a particular ethos, typical of these regions. Deriving from the studies of Edward Banfield in a village of the Calabria region, the concept of 'amoral familism' expresses the incapacity of people to act in such a way so as to go beyond the immediate interest of the nuclear family. This thesis has been very influential from the early sixties onwards, and it stands at the background of Putnam's idea of 'civicness'

The other major thesis has a more structural character. According to Graziano , the market has been one of the essential factors of fragmentation of particularistic relations. The impact of the market, in the period of state formation, he argues, has occurred in such a way so as to prevent a complete capitalist rationalisation. This relates to the incomplete character of the transformation of the patterns of land ownership and the feudal methods of agricultural production. "The development of the southern middle class and of bourgeois land ownership did not occur at the expenses of the aristocratic landlords, rather it occurred through the commercialisation of the ecclesiastic properties. This prevented the creation of a class of peasant landowners, and social relations in the Mezzogiorno preserved semi-feudal characteristics." (in Catanzaro;1983:274).
The impact of the national state is also assumed to have a crucial role. Particularly the introduction of local autonomies (on such semi-feudal relational structure) has favoured the concentration of political resources in the hands of local administrators, determining in the first place an intensification of the competition for the conquest of local power; thus preventing the possibility of an effective collective action.

In the light of a rigorous analysis, the argument of a 'historical' absence of collective action on behalf of the southern Civil society does not hold. Some examples on this line have already been given or referred to in the previous chapter. In addition to that, Catanzaro mentions the peasants movements of the twentieth century Apulia and the collective mobilisation in this region for land occupation in the first decade after the second world war. In this light, "it cannot be argued that the Mezzogiorno has been characterised by the absence of any form of manifestation of collective action." What we should try to understand

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therefor, is the "reason why during 'the great transformation' which the Mezzogiorno has gone through in the last four decades, pre-existing traditions of collective action have not developed or (in same cases) even disappeared"(ibid:276).

However, the first of the two analytical trends is not considered as a valid approach anymore in the current Italian debate (reference to its critiques has already been made in the previous chapter). The second, on the other hand, holds some relevant points, particularly concerning the structural analysis of land distribution. Nonetheless, the argument of an 'incomplete modernisation' suffers several limitations. It is embedded in a unilinear understanding of development, assuming 'tradition' and 'modernity' to be mutually exclusive. Actually, it tends to explains the 'backwardness' of these regions in terms of the persistence of 'traditional' elements such as familial structures and patron-client relations. In this light, it seems quite a 'formalistic' approach, lacking in empirism from a socio-cultural perspective. The very faith in the possibility of a 'complete' transformation is a contradiction in terms, when applied to human settings. It would assume an *optimum* to be reached, clashing with the imperfect nature of human beings, let alone the possibility of a total substitution of an 'old' socio-cultural system with a new one. By this line of reasoning one should discuss the very nature of such systems and questions related to essentialism, authenticity, openness, hyibridity, to which I will refer in the next chapter.

Ultimately, it seems that a certain form of mass bureaucratic clientelism, is assumed as the explanation, rather than that which needs to be explained. More precisely what should be explored is how 'traditional' clientelism, based on personal relations of kinship[21], has become a form of political and social control and in which way it has affected the 'un-mediated' bargaining power of civil society. Once the genesis of this process is clarified, the attention should be focused on the last four decades during which the cultural massification has worked as a 'legitimisation' of the national identity; whereby consumerism has been the common denominator and the hallmark of Italian modernity.
This is not to say, within a Marxist frame, that structural condition determine cultural transformation, rather it applies the theoretical frame proposed in chapter one, and particularly it focuses on the intersection between options and choices, as expressed by the 'habitus', as the capacity for 'structured improvisation'.

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[21]To understand from a cultural anthropological viewpoint the roots of such kind of 'tribal' social structuration, a possible line of exploration could be the interplay between the roman 'familia' the catholic influence and the Turkish and North African influences. In this line the geographical location of the South of Italy, at the centre of the Mediterranean has to be beard in mind.

3.3 On the genesis of clientelism as a form of political exchange: From 'Broker Capitalism' to 'Broker Politics'

Clientelar structures have been defined as: "based on the concession of individual incentives in the form of services, which, whether materially provided to a single person, or to a multiplicity of individual subjects, (Catanzaro;1983:278)" "do not generate group expectations, claimed by its members as common rights to be defended, if necessary, with collective actions".(Graziano; 1980:51-51; in Catanzaro;1983:279).[22] By this token, clientelism might be seen as a particular form of political mediation which is both cause and consequence of the weakening of Civil society.

To understand the process of 'institutionalisation' of such system, and its effect on democratic participation, we should refer to the notion of 'broker capitalism',[23] which arouses as a particular economic and political system in Sicily, during the Spanish domination, when the impact of the world economic system on the Sicilian periphery occurred. Such system, based on 'ad hoc' temporary coalitions, in the form of networks of instrumental friendship, represents the 'traditional' base for the establishment of clientelar relations.[24] At the same time, Catanzaro (1985) argues, clientelism represents a necessary foundation for the survivor and reorganisation of such tradition in a new vest, when, the impact of the National State generated social tensions difficult to control from the centre.

Blok identifies one of the conditions for the rise of the mafia in the fact that, to the liberalisation of land commerce and the commercialisation of ecclesiastic properties, did not follow the creation of a class of peasant landowners. On the contrary there was the creation of a class of rural entrepreneurs (the *gabellotti*), which got close to the aristocracy, from the point of view of ownership as well as in the imitation of behavioural codes (Blok in Catanzaro; 1985:288). It is among this group that the mafiosi arouse as power brokers.

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[22]Free translation

[23]The notion of 'broker capitalism' derives from the anthropological research of J & P Schneider (1976) on Western Sicily. Despite some differences in the configuration of clientelism in various regions, and the existence of different kinds of 'mafia' (Sicilian Mafia; N'drangheda Calabrese; Camorra in Campania; Sacra Corona Unita - Unified Holy Crown- in Apulia), instrumental friendship and broker capitalism are accepted as common denominators of these phenomenon, as well as valid analytical explanation of clientelism as an 'institutionalized' system in Italy and particularly in the South of the Country.

[24]On broker capitalism and Instrumental friendship see: Catanzaro, R. "Enforces, entrepreneurs and survivors: how the mafia has adapted to change" in The British Journal of Sociology, vol XXXVI n.1 March 1985 p35-54. Reference to the work of Schneider & Schneider is made in this article.

The liberal ideology, imported with the unification of the country, brought in 'new' social and political expectations, which naturally generated social tensions and conflicts, but were not followed by an effective institutional presence of the modern state. It is in the kind of social conflicts generated by the impact of the Nation State, that the genesis of clientelism has to be found. The latter, becoming the solution for the mediation of such conflicts, through the articulation of 'traditional' and 'modern' strategies, whereby the distribution of 'favours', once based on direct personal relations, became mediated through party's organization. Modern political institutions were implemented, but their functioning was granted by a logic of private trust, in the form of personal contacts rather than on the principle of interest's categories representation. By this token, the emotional character of clientelar relations tends to disappear, to be substituted by an instrumental relation of exchange. (Tarrow, 1972; in Catanzaro, 1983:281)

The lack of a proper agrarian reform[25] created a situation whereby, despite the land commercialisation had formally abolished the feudal system, the market was still very restricted, and the land only sold in big plots, so as to prevent its purchasing on behalf of the peasants. The absence of a class of small farmers, in opposition to the aristocratic landowners, generated, within the struggle for land, a particular kind of social conflict. This, did not assume a vertical structuration but an horizontal one. The conflict was not between classes, in a relation of over and sub-ordination, rather between groups horizontally related to each other, competing for land ownership (Blok; in Catanzaro;1983). This groups were precisely the peasant families, which, in such a situation, perceived each other as potential enemies rather than members of the same interest category, thus unlikely to act collectively for the acquisition of rights. Rather, more inclined to rely on the benevolence of the local patron. The figure of the mafioso, as 'power broker', becomes a key element in this articulation: the mediator between the interests of the central Government, supported by the northern capital[26], those of the local elite's and those of the lower strata of the population.

At this point of the discussion, it might be useful to recall Amalia Signorelli's distinction between two level of clientelism. The first, in the local market, as a web of

[25] This only occurred in the fifties. Nonetheless the land was redistributed in such small plots, that most peasants where forced to re-sell it in order to survive, either to the old landlords or to new rampant rural entrepreneurs.

[26] It has been argued that: "mainly for the egoism of the uprising capitalism of the north and the blindness of the southern elites, the unification was considered as a colonial business, with the explicit collaboration between the capital of the invaders and the property of the colonized landowners (Brunetta 1995:8).

regular, predictable, habitual relations, which did not allow for the creation of big profits, ruled by custom and sustained by relations of residence, friendship and family ties. The second, related to the national and international market, in which big merchants, inspired by the principle of competition, profit and reinvestment, tried to eliminate the customary rules of the local market, thus discarding traditional principle of economic behaviour. At this second level, the mafia intervened as an element of control and regulation, by the appropriation and utilitaristic use of ancient cultural codes (1992)

Moreover, the function of brokerage is displayed in a particular kind of exchange, that of economic capital for political capital, providing, at the same time, the opportunity for social control, without addressing the nature of the tensions, and granting the stability of the central Government. The favour, whether in the form of the allocation of public subsides, the destruction of possible competitors or simply as behavioural advices, how to act 'honourably', becomes an open credit, which can be solved by following political 'advices' for the next elections.

The purpose of this section, has been the attempt to give an answer to two related questions. On the one hand, the genesis of clientelism as an 'institutionalised' form of political-economic incorporation and social control. On the other, the structural, historical conditions through which the family, as the fundamental unit of the southern Civil society, has gone through a process of inward looking radicalisation, relying more on its networks of instrumental friendship, than on the possibility of a democratic political representation, for the 'acquisition of rights' and the protection of interests.

Ultimately, it has been shown how the 'traditional' clientelar relations, have been co-opted by the modern political system, in a logic of 'real politque'. This process, has occurred through two opposite forces, which ended up complementing each other in quite a peculiar way. On one hand, the central government and the national-international market, have discarded local relational structures in an aggressive way. On the other, mass beaurocratic clientelism, through the mediation of local mafiosi, have allowed for the survivor of such structures within the new political and economic system; whereby, the tensions deriving from the claim for social justice, and the competition, typical of the capitalist market, have been regulated more by the mafia than by public institutions, to the extent that the former, rather than the latter, has exercised the monopoly of physical violence. "The Italian cientelar system could easily be defined as a system of mass socialisation to the active and passive

practice of illegality".(Signorelli, 1992:57)

This system, has survived up to the present days. Moreover, the mass-modernisation of the southern regions, occurred after the second world war, has strengthened it. Consumerism, as the secular religion of modern Italy, has been the principal value 'experienced' in this process, thus fostering the social and institutional hybridisation in a violent, antagonistic way. It is therefore to this phase that we should look, focusing on that which one of the leading Italian intellectual of this century, Pier Paolo Pasolini[27], has called the 'anthropological mutation of the Italians'.

3.4 The 'Great Transformation' and the Mirage of Modernity

For a better understanding of the process we are trying to describe, at least an introductory reference should be made to the position of Italy in the geopolitics of the cold war, to highlight the influence of some external variables on its internal politic. After the turmoil of the second world war, Italy found itself in a very weak position. The 'Imperial' aspirations of the fascist regime, which brought the country into war as an allied of Germany, had disastrous effects on the internal economy and on the international credibility of the country[28]

Moreover, after the armistice of September 8th 1943, Italy was actually divided into two parts. North of Cassino, where the front line run, the Nazi occupation; south of that line, the Allied forces displaying their armies for the liberation of the country. This part of Italian history, entails some elements which should be borne in mind with respect to the development of Civil society, at national and regional level. In the north, in fact, the armed

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[27]Among other writings, see: "Lettere Luterane - Il Progresso Come Falso Progresso- " Einaudi, Torino 1976; and: "Scritti Corsari" Garzanti, 1990. Intersting reflections on Italian modernization can also be found in his narrative writings, such as "Ragazzi di Vita", Garzanti 1955.

[28]The Fascist regime is not discussed in this paper, which focuses on the genesis of 'institutionalized' clientelism and its strengthening during the mass-modernization occurred after the Second World War. Suffice to say in this context that, as Gramsci has argued "the Risorgimento had played itself out as a'reform-revolution' or 'passive revolution' by these classes (an alliance between the bourgeoisies and the southern landowners) from above, whose contradictions and whose inability to contain popular pressure after the First World War had led to the successive 'reform revolution' of fascism" (Forgas & Nowell-Smith -eds-; 1985:165. 'Antonio Gramsci, Selections from Cultural Writings)

Some Italian nostalgics argue that only fascism defeated mafia and 'made trains arrive on time'; well it probably did, in as much as it was a stronger and greater 'national' mafia.

However, the change of front, after 8 september 1943, following the collapse of the fascist regime in July of the same year, was an internal 'victory' for the anti-fascit part of the population; nonetheless, from an international point of view, it was the second time that Italy changed partners in the middle of a word conflict, thus compromising his credibility in the international political arena.

resistance against the Nazi's, mainly on behalf of communist activists and members of what was going to became the Christian Democratic party, played a crucial role, not only to liberate the country but to create a common *epos*, which reinforced the Civil and political identity of these regions, influencing the level of engagement and participation in the community.

In the south, liberation came from outside, and together with it, the dream of America as some kind of promised land. American forces, in fact, where very lavish with air bombs before their landing, as well as with 'cigarettes and chocolate' after that. Popular cultural production, has expressed this myth both in music and story telling. Rather than reinforcing the sense of belonging to a community, the liberation, coming as a gift from outside, had a destructive effect on it. It did not bring any emancipation, rather the subjugation to an external and distant model, which soon became 'familiar' through television, though not directly experienced.

However, at the end of the war, Italy found itself in quite a peculiar situation. Despite its friendly relations with the western allied, it had the strongest communist party in western Europe (together with France) with direct linkages to the Stalinist regime. Moreover, being at the centre of the Mediterranean, it had a relevant location for the American geopolitical strategy. These are the main reasons that brought Italy into the NATO agreement (which by definition - 'North Atlantic Treaty Organization' - should not include it) and that made it one of the beneficiaries of the Marshall Plan, as a result of the so called 'Truman Doctrine' and the 'Policy of Containment'. Italy had to be quickly and massively modernised to prevent a communist 'degeneration'.

With the help of the capital inflow, coming from the Marshall Plan, the 'economic boom' of the country took place in the late fifties and early sixties. The consumerist ideology took over communist aspirations, let alone, provided a common *ethos* for the Nation as one. In fact, despite the fascist rhetoric of the 'Italic population', heritage of the Roman Empire, a population of 'poets, navigators and heroes', the problem of nation building was not solved yet, the socio-economic and cultural diversities where much stronger than the sense of belonging to the nation. The level of illiteracy was still very high and the knowledge of the Italian language not very wide spread in rural areas. At the time of the unification, only around 2,5% of the population actually spoke 'Italian'. What is now the national language is a derivation of the dialect of medieval Florence, which acquired the status of written language

through the poets of the *Dolce Stil Novo* [29] in the thirteenth century, was adopted by educated minorities in the sixteenth century for reason of its cultural prestige and developed thereafter in differing forms in the various regions. (Forgas & Nowell-Smith; 1985:164)[30]

The discussion on the national language, has been taken up by Gramsci, who was well aware of the cultural fragmentation of the country and criticised the hegemonic aspirations of the liberal bourgeoisie. Commenting on the necessity of an Italian normative grammar to be thought in public schools[31] he argued:

> One need not consider this intervention as 'decisive' and imagine that the ends proposed will all be reached in detail, i.e. that one will obtain a *specific* unified language. One will obtain a *unified language*, if it is a necessity, and the organized intervention will speed up the already existing process. What this language will be, one cannot foresee or establish: in any case, if the intervention is 'rational', it will be organically tied to tradition, and this is of no small importance in the economy of culture.
>
> (Prison Notebooks;29:3; in Ibid:183)

Nonetheless, Gramsci's thoughts have not influenced the Italian educational system, local dialects have been addressed as 'sub-standard' and the alphabetisation of a great part of the population has occurred in much more recent times. In fact, as Signorelli has argued, looking at the statistics of alphabetisation in the Mezzogiorno, we have to recognise as characteristic feature of this region the contemporary diffusion of literacy and television (1989). As a consequence, television language is more easily de-codified, in daily life, for a much greater number of people than the written language is.

However, the predominance of television language, over written texts, is not only a phenomenon of the South. Nonetheless, the diffusion of television in the North, with its cultural significance, occurred when a certain degree of modernisation had already been experienced. The so-called 'industrial triangle' (Milano, Genova, Torino) had already started developing at the beginning of the century, and the manufactory industry of the north-east was in line with the North Western part of Europe. As opposed to the origins of broker capitalism in Sicily, it can be argued that, mainly for its geographical location and for different patterns of domination, the local market of this regions had a much more smoother impact with the world economic system, allowing for a gradual internal transformation of

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[29]Dante's *Divina Commedia* is thought in school as 'the' masterpiece of Italian literature. Alessandro Manzoni's historical novel of the nineteenth century, *I Promessi Sposi* , probably the only comparable piece of literature in this respect, uses a slightly modernized version of the same language.
[30]Commenting on Gramsci's writings on language, linguistic and folklore.
[31]This discussion goes back to Benedetto Croce's conception of language as 'creative self-expression'. In this light he argued, prescriptive or normative grammar is 'impossible' because a spiritual activity like language cannot be 'summed up' and transmitted by a prectical tecnique. This argument highly influenced the Education Act of 1923, in which no provision was made for the normative teaching of Italian. (ibid:166)

local productive capacities.

The modernisation of the backward South, in order to eliminate its 'traditional pathologies', became the primary concern in the national discourse. Here we come again, to the core of the argument of this thesis. Precisely the incongruence of a 'modern', national discourse, based on a consumerist ideology, addressing traditional cultures and diversity as obstacles to development, and a real politic, which, through the mediation of 'power brokers' has covertly made use of it, to grant the economic and political survivor of the country. Nonetheless, consumerism and the increasing globalization of financial capital in the last three decades, have added an element of unsustainability to the mafia, which, somehow emancipated from internal politics and went beyond its function of internal mediator, thus renewing in an aggravated way the question of social control. Paradoxically the mafia became an element of disturbance and stability at the same time[32].

By looking at the juxtaposition of the mass consumerist model (through the 'tele-acculturation' of the Southern regions), to the clientelar structure created after the unification, one could find an interpretative key to understand such paradoxical situation. The individualist rush for 'social recognition', by conforming to the 'new model', has reinforced the clientelar power and inhibit the deployment of those 'sane' forces of the Civil society, due to the increasing use of this power by violent means. Such statement, should not be equated to a pessimist cultural approach or to a post-modern view à la Beaudrillard, which do not seem to leave much space for critical interpretation. Rather it relates to the 'passive' character of modernisation as it occurred in these regions. This is to say that "the social and economic organization of most Southern provinces, has adapted to the exogenous elements, extraneous to the local context, resulting in a fossilisation and, giving way more to the destructive aspects (excessive consumerism) than to the assimilation of new behavioural models". (Di Gennaro; 1992:194)

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[32] This is not the context in which final judgment can be given on a question which is still open, as the ongoing trial against Giulio Andreotti (one of the historical leader of Christian Democracy, the party that dominated Italian politics in the last fourty years) showes. Nonetheless aboundant documentations show the connections between the political system (mainly the Christian Democracy - now Popular Party-) the business, financial world and the organized crime; in a complex system of exchange between political and economic capital. On this line see: Lupo, S "Andreotti, La Mafia, La Storia D'Italia" Donzelli, Roma1996. Satjano, C "Un Eroe Borghese. Il Caso Dell'Avvocato Giorgio Abrosoli" Einaudi, Torino 1991. This clear and well documented book, investigates on the history of the international broker Michele Sindona and the financial crack of the Banco Ambrosiano, showing the connections between Italo-American mafia, Christian Democracy and the Vatican.

This relates to both structural and cultural elements. The allocation of public resources, in the logic of the so called 'extraordinary intervention' has occurred through the clientelar web, leading mainly to two paradoxical effects. First, most of this resources have not been used to provide real services and the necessary infrastructures to stimulate the local productive potential, from agriculture to handicraft or manufactory activities. Rather they have been used for the creation of heavy industrial poles, such as the Italsider, a massive steelworks plant in the south eastern city of Taranto and a similar plant in Bagnoli (in the gulf of Napoli), which has recently been dismantled. Moreover, a policy of wild urbanisation, in a logic of private, often unauthorised, business, has created massive urban agglomerations completely lacking in even basic infrastructures. It is precisely in this urban and sub-urban areas that a 'reserve army' of cheap labour is available, for any kind of legal, semi-legal or illegal activity, particularly related to the drug market. The level of alienation is so high in these areas, that heroin seems the most easily available good. This of course is another paradoxical question. On one hand the illegal drug market fosters violence and criminality, thus posing serious problems to social control. On the other when you have heroin in your veins you are not willing to 'stand up for your rights' or engage in any kind of collective action. By this token, social tensions are anaesthetised, or misguided, rather than addressed at their roots.

Second, the clientelar distribution of public resources, in the form of direct subsidies to the families, perceived as a favour from a 'well connected' friend, rather than a due right, has fostered, to a certain extant, a psychology of resignation and subordination. People know that they have rights but they are also aware that they are not granted to them. "If you don't have a Saint that protects you, you will never go to heaven".

Emigration has had a similar effect[33] : "though it is true that emigrant remittances contributed to the local creation of income, it is also true that they have fostered the psychological welfare model, which has negatively·articulated with the psychological performance of public expenditure" (Di Gennaro; 1992:191) In addition to that, the 'stories' of the emigrants contributed to create, in the collective imaginary, an idea of modernity (with its assumed implications of social justice, and economic welfare) as always 'there', somewhere else, but never possibly experienced 'here' at home.

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[33]It should be remided that between 1871 and 1951 4.414.000 Italians emigrated from the Southern regions. The same number results as migratiry balance between 1951 and 1971 (Loperato; 1990 p.54-57 in: Di Gennaro; 1992:191)

Allowing a little digression, it could be argued that, the national modern discourse has influenced the self-perception of the southern People in a similar way to that described by Said (1978) in Orientalism. That is to say, a certain level of internalisation of the orientalist discourse, on behalf of the 'Oriental'. This, has resulted in a lack of self confidence, particularly at inter-personal and community level, thus negatively affecting the strength of the Civil society.

Despite the pessimistic picture given so far, one should recognise that Civil society in the South of Italy is not completely anaesthetised. As shown by a recent research (1993) on "Culture & Development - The Associationism in the Mezzogiorno-" (carried out by the FORMEZ - IMES -Istituto Meridionale di Storia e Scienze Sociali-), from the eighties onwards, there has been a tremendous growth of associations of any kind, from sports clubs to professional category's or cultural associations, and a great number of voluntary associations engaged in grassroots activities. Moreover, the anti-mafia movement is growing, including more and more wide and diverse strata of the society. Nonetheless, it is difficult to assert that the overall situation has really got better, apart from small, very localised contexts. As a matter of fact, the above mentioned research, gives evidence that the number of associations in the South of Italy[34] is actually higher than in the North. It could therefore be assumed that, despite the fundamental role that Civil society has to play in the game of economic performance and social justice; the State, though in the need of a serious re-discussion of its institutional form, still remains a crucial actor.

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[34]With the natural regional differences

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4. AUTHENTICITY COOPTATION AND THE MEANING OF TRADITION

Throughout the previous chapters, 'tradition' and 'modernity' have been recurrent terms. It has been argued that the modern national discourse has depicted traditions as something which should be substituted by new values, in terms of goals, and behavioural codes to be adopted for their achievement, at inter-personal and public level; by this token, the mafia, in a cinical and disrespectful way has often been characterised as an element of the southern Italian folklore, let alone of the ethos of the population of these regions. Evidence has been given of the unsustainability of such argument.

In the first chapter, the question of the conceptualisation of culture has been addressed. The Weberian approach to culture, as a set of values defining the ultimate goals of individual's actions, has been criticised. As different from this static, deterministic, understanding, a non fixed conceptualisation of culture, as a 'software' of which individual dispose, to deal both with routine and the unpredictability of daily life has been proposed. The major theoretical reference has been the notion of 'habitus', deriving from Bourdieu's critical approach to contemporary social theory. In the light of the previous chapters and their narrative, analytical, structure, the 'habitus' has proved to be a valid analytical tool, in as much as it combines a historical materialist approach, with a symbolic understanding of power and human interactions.

With this in mind, the aim of this last chapter is to recall the theoretical discussion focusing more on the very conceptualisation of the two terms (tradition-modernity), discuss their constructed character and show their relation to the developmentalist discourse on the one hand, and the implication for intercultural communication on the other. Let alone their relevance to the concept of social capital

Two main questions, to which no final answer can be given here, might sum up the following discussion: those of authenticity and co-optation. They both relate to power dynamics, and their conceptualisation may have serious implications for a political discourse. The first relates to questions of 'purity', 'hybridity', 'syncretism'. The second, highly interconnected with the first, has to do with essentialism, the production of diversity, and its integration into geopolitical entities and into the global market. Ultimately, it could be argued, authenticity and co-optation have to do with layers of hypocrisy.

The authentic is often equated, in an ethnocentric, paternalistic view, to that which is naive, exotic, genuine. Moreover, the authenticity of cultural production is normally evaluated through its relational position to the market. Though at first stake, one might tend to accept the latter as a viable proposition, at a deeper analysis it entails some problems, particularly, in relation to the capacity of late capitalism to reproduce itself through the consumption of difference, which seems to be one of its main features. Virtually 'everything' is commodified. Whether through aesthetic taste, such as particular clothing styles or artistic preferences, the choice of particular books (though 'alternative' they might be), the spending of free leisure time or, simply in a negative co-relation, by not buying particular products, the affirmation of individual identities and subjectivities passes through an act of consuming, or better, is expressed through selective consumption. Where do we place agency in such a perspective? Moreover, how do we deal with the question of the 'audibility of dissent'?

By accepting that relation as the yardstick of authenticity (it is authentic that which is naive, exotic, genuine non-commercialised) there would be no space for social change and counter-hegemonic voices, if not in the form of those that Ashis Nandy (1989) has called 'Shaman's voices'. He refers to the "narrow specific form dissent has to take, to be audible or politically non co-opted" (ibid:263). Though it is difficult to disagree on the fact that "radical dissent today constantly faces the danger of getting organized into a standardised form", that is co-opted, (ibid:265) a distinction will be proposed here between 'active' and 'passive' co-optation. The active or passive character relates to the dynamism of the process of co-optation. That is to say: it is not always possible to determine exactly that which is co-opted. Such distinction, may help to widen the range of 'audibility', to rescue agency from the paralysing acceptance of a pre-ordinate and self regulated system, as well as escape romantic idealisations. In fact, the problematisation of co-optation is inherent in a dynamic understanding of tradition.

On the contrary a, culturally pessimistic discourse, would assume culture to be territorialised and tradition as static in time and space. Its renovation through a syncretic articulation with 'other' cultures and its diffusion out of a localised context, mediated by the market, would be seen as a loss of meaning, of authenticity. This approach could partly be traced back to the Frankfurt School, and its critical theorists.
In a book on Adorno's aesthetic of modernism and his conception of mass culture, focusing on the sociology of music, Max Paddison has argued:

> Taking the range of interests of the Frankfurt School, two are of special relevance to a critical

theory of music: *theory of art* (particularly as the aesthetic of modernism) and *theory of mass culture* (or, to use the term favoured by Adorno, the 'culture industry'). The problematic character of a critical theory of music can be seen as inseparable from these two apparently divergent areas of inquiry. On the one hand, aesthetic modernism, like Critical Theory itself, was occupied with the relentless drive towards self-reflection, the questioning of handed down conventions, the engagement with fragmentation and loss of meaning, the revelation of contradictions and the search for the 'New'. On the other hand, mass culture can be seen in two distinctly different ways. It can be understood either as the excluded other, that which, in the absence of 'self-reflection', becomes mere material for manipulation of consciousness by the culture industry. Or it can be seen as representing a democratisation of culture, the effects of development in technology and communication being not to constrain and manipulate consciousness, but to release creativity through the enormous increase in access to the technical means of production and distribution." (1996:18)

Within the same School, the first position is represented by Adorno, the second by Walter Benjamin. The latter trend, being that which has partly informed the so called post-structuralist turn, through which the concern with 'culture as a terrain of politics', already present also in Gramsci's writings, has been elaborated by authors such as Focault and Said.(Nederveen Pieterse, 1992:23).

Another major contribution in this line of reasoning, going beyond romanticism and the enlightenment and escaping the cultural pessimism of Adorno's aesthetic, is to be found in the work of Martin Barbero (1987). The Colombian scholar, has critically addressed the question of the negative connotation given to mass culture, from an elitist perspective, as something else than both 'popular' and 'high' culture. Indeed, "only an enormous distortion of historical interpretation and a powerful class ethnocentrism which refuses to accept the popular as a culture has made it possible to hide the relation between the old popular culture and mass culture and to consider mass culture as nothing more than a vulgarisation and degradation of high culture. (ibid:122).

The romantic idealisation of 'the people' and of traditions as something to be preserved in its 'purity' and protected in a museum like attitude, as well as the positivist rationality, addressing them as backward, superstitious, irrational, therefore to be overtaken by the nation and by modernity, are both embedded in a dichotomic view, which entails a highly conservative socio-political meaning. Either a preservation of the *status quo*, or a transformation that can only assume the form of integration, co-optation on behalf of the

technically, rationally superior, modern or high culture. Though in a perverse way, the mafia, going beyond its original function of mediation within the Italian Nation State, has proved the opposite. It has based its strength both, on traditional cultural codes and on the rationalising anxiety of the modern State, though it has not been co-opted by the latter, as much as it cannot be seen as an element of tradition.

A more 'sustainable' example of the fictious character of labels such as 'local traditional culture' might be the following: Just as nations are 'imagined as old' (Anderson, 1983), traditions are constructed and internalised as 'pure' or 'original'. As argued in the study of the American ethnomusicologist C. Watrerman (1995), on the production of Yoruba's tradition through popular music in Nigeria, tradition can be retrospectively constructed. Local rhythmic patterns, already product of a historical evolution through a process of ongoing mixing, are combined with western popular melodies. The lyrics nevertheless proclaim the glories of Yoruba's 'traditions' and of the Prophet Mohammed. Moreover, in the videos the appeal of images with typically western symbolic tokens are used to strengthen the message of the lyrics, promoting and reinforcing a Yoruba identity.

Is such music authentic? It probably is to those who enjoy (through its commercialisation) listening and dancing to it, though a 'purist' music lover, might find it completely fake, especially if out of its localised context.

By this token one could wonder what is authentic in classical compositions such as Bach's 'Matthew's Passion' when they are reproduced in a CD, more than two hundred years later in a comfortable, 'secular', living room in Paris or Amsterdam?

Such example, may shed some light on the questions being addressed in this section. Authenticity, as such, cannot be alienated from subjective feelings, from emotions. The problem therefore lies in the commodification of feelings. Something which can only occur through *a priori* categorisations such as classical, traditional, modern, 'popular' or 'high' culture. What is at stake, therefore, is not commercialisation or popularisation *per se*, rather the categorisation through which it may occur, resulting in a pre-codification of meanings.

Another example might help to ground the discussion within a political perspective. Among the so called 'new social movements', that originating from the Chiapas rebellion in Mexico, is one of the most widely known. This movement expresses and synthesises the dialectic between dissent and co-optation, diversity and homogenisation. Its declared aim is to struggle against the globalization of liberal capitalism, and its homogenising pressure. At

the same time the strategies through which it operates are part and parcel of the process of globalization. They make wide use of computer communication, produce a great number of videos, to be distributed world wide, gadgets to be sold, both to popularise their cause in the international arena, and for fund raising. Such strategies, are subject to different interpretations. On one hand, one could argue, they are contradicting themselves by using the same means of the system they want to fight. They are co-opted in the process of popularisation. The world-wide diffusion of their message occurs at the expense of a dilution of its original meaning. This might be true, to a certain extent, nonetheless, such strategies, still make their voice heard, though not so loudly as on the front-line, through an echoing which might be more effective than an isolated armed struggle. It might not bring radical systemic changes, but it can succeed in a process of conscientisation which, ultimately, results in a political pressure on behalf of the international public opinion which cannot be completely ignored by the Mexican Government. From this angle, the questions of popular cultures, as 'popularised traditions' and that of the audibility of dissent, are faced with a similar kind of problem. The very fact of depicting popularised traditions, necessary as fake, co-opted, confines them in a position of marginality, which becomes the precondition of the authenticity of traditions as such. Appreciated until they don't come into play.

The pre-codification of meanings referred to in the previous paragraph, can have highly destructive effects on social relations, in as much as it seems to clash with the contradictory nature of human beings, which could be deduced by the understanding of culture proposed in this research. If the practice of identity, as Freedman would have it, is about "the attribution of meaning to the world, to objects and relations...a highly motivated practice rooted in the way immediate experience is structured in definite social contexts" (1995:87), such pre-codification might erect fictious but problematic boundaries. Such boundaries are big obstacles to the deployment of participatory social capital. They can foster highly antagonistic relations between individuals and groups and undermine the possibilities of mutual trust, if not as the outcome of a calculated interest, granted by a potential violent retaliation.

On the contrary 'traditional' and 'modern' values are not mutually exclusive, rather they coexist and interplay in shaping individual and collective action. The awareness of this and its recognition at a public discursive level, allow for a more fluid relation between identities and boundaries and gives space for synergetic rather than antagonistic forms of interaction among different groups and individuals. Indeed, "culture cannot be localised

because it is not in itself a spatially bounded category. If culture is territorialised as in national culture and local culture, the boundaries are, ultimately, *political* frontiers which require political analysis. Culture is intrinsically translocal because human learning is". (Nederveen Pieterse; 1995:187)

Tiding up these reflections to the specific case analysed in this research, it could be argued that the chronological and qualitative dichotomisation of tradition and modernity and the territorialisation of culture in an essentialist way, have resulted in a diffuse sense of displacement on behalf of those who have not been the protagonists of the process of modernisation, at least, not in the form it has been proposed to them. A displacement which has affected both, the strength and consistency of civil society and an economic dynamism within peaceful; socially sustainable constraints. This sense of displacement, which is partly inherent in any process of transformation, does not necessarily have to result in negative consequences, rather it could be, in a different cultural political discourse, a incentive for a constructive articulation of traditional and modern relational models. For example by combining a familistic, clientelar model, with competence and a sense of responsibility for a mandate. One such example can, be drawn by the highly productive family firms in Hong Kong. "If the family plays such a positive role in Hong Kong, why did it fail to realise its potential in the past on the Chinese mainland? For Wong, the explanation lies in the external socio-political melieu of the family. Although the family is and was an economically active force, in the past it was probably checked by a state preoccupied with the task of integration and a peculiar ecological and economic environment which constituted a "high-level equilibrium trap. In Hong Kong, these external constraints of the state and environment are removed, as Hong Kong is governed by a colonial state that does not compete with the family for talent. Consequently the family in Hong Kong has realised potential as the motor of economic development". (Wong, 1988; in: So, 1990:65).
This is not of course an apology of colonialism, rather it shows the different roles the state can play with respect to social capital. Despite the great limitations of comparative analysis, the conclusion to which Wong gets to, might fit the case analysed here. "Their tendency to see only sharp dichotomy between European universalism and Chinese particularism resulted in their inability to understand the family's role". (ibid:65)

CONCLUSION

Two seem to be the major trends in the current reproblematisation of development, which starting from the 'ivory towers' of academia, is now part of the mainstream development discourse. The regional turn and the cultural turn. The macro, structural approach, which has for long time dominated the scene, using the Nation State as a unit of analysis, has given way to local and regional approaches. This is probably a reflection of the increasing fragmentation of the geopolitical and geo-economic world order into 'autonomous' regions, whose ties are directly linked to supra-state institutions, such as the E.U., APEC or NAFTA. The dialectic between the 'local' and the 'global' characterises the political imaginary of the last decade of this century. An imaginary in which 'cultural' differences are replacing 'ideological' differences.

Nonetheless, such dialectic turns out to be problematic. 'Local' and 'global, are themselves cultural constructions which ought to replace another, now old fashion construction, that of the Nation State. By addressing culture as an independent variable, in a regional analytical frame, the meso level, in which power dynamics are more ambiguous and complex, is skipped. Regional development cannot replace National development, simply as a linguistic change or as a physical reduction of the unit of analysis; as well as Regional or Local cultures cannot replace National cultures in a similar territorial, essentialist understanding. The concern with social capital, has to be part of this wider problematic.

From the analysis of the Southern Italian regions, which have undergone through a highly destructive process of economic development some lessons can be drawn, particularly concerning a future research agenda, that might help in the process of policy making not only in the so called 'Developing Countries', but also in those that are 'over-developed'.
Comparative analysis on the basis of an essentialist, territorialised understanding of culture, do not help in unfolding the complexity of reality. The State, though not in its classical centralised form, still has a crucial role to play in the process of economic development and democratisation. Serious and contextually focused research is needed on the relation between culture, public institutions and civil society, in order to re-conceive the state in a re-newed political and institutional form.

What needs to be unfold, is the hypocrisy that pervades power relations. This, is probably one of the main tasks of sociology as an academic science. Echoing Bourdieu, "it's

by rising the degree of perceived necessity and giving a better knowledge of the laws of the social world that social science gives more freedom. All progress in knowledge of necessity is a progress in *possible* freedom" (25:1993).

Those highlighted in this research, are the hypocrisies through which the modern Italian Nation-State has been built, and which characterise much of the developmentalist discourse. Not only in the initial obsession with economic growth but also, in the more recent 'cultural turn', which, with its infatuation with the 'power of culture', seems to miss or overlook, the 'culture of power'.

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