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Social Implications of Scientific Revolution in Agriculture at two Different Stages of Capitalistic Development in Italy

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1. The technological variable is not neutral for the sociologist: it is sociologically interesting because it contains within itself a certain social potential. Two principal meanings, which, however differ considerably, can be attributed to this claim:

a) Technology in itself does not interest the sociologist. He is interested rather in phenomena which the development of technology produces: phenomena on the level of information, values and behavior, which characterize the relationships between the social units which compose a given system.

b) For the sociologist, technological development should be considered, a social phenomenon in itself, which results from decisions made in the past. This technological development afterwards becomes an element of social interaction in its own right. The decisions are taken in order to resolve certain problem of the system on the basis of a body of information, values and attitudes already present in the system.

2. In order to develop the views presented in this paper, we have chosen the second position as the more suitable for formulating hypotheses. The principal reasons for this choice can be clarified briefly.¹⁾

Social phenomena exist in closed systems.²⁾ Evaluation of the role and function of a given phenomenon and of interactional processes into which it enters requires, therefore, consideration of the social system within which it is hypothesized that the phenomenon has a determinate relevance. Technology does seem to be exempted by this general rule.³⁾

Let us take a specific rural social phenomenon: a change in the composition of the occupational structure and in the mobility of manpower. When the relationships between these variables and the rate and type of the current technological development in agriculture is considered, it is difficult to reach a

¹⁾ It must be pointed out that this paper does not contain the first outcomes of an already performed research. It consists only in the presentation of some elements, which seemed to be very helpful in approaching, although in a partial way, the problem.

²⁾ See Zaniecki, F.: *The cultural sciences*. Urbana III., 1952, pp. 162-164.

³⁾ See Bloch, M.: *La società feudale*. Einaudi, Torino 1949.

satisfactory explanation taking account only of these two terms.⁴⁾ Both the composition of the occupational structure and the mobility of manpower, and the technological development can be divided into a certain number of functional positions. These positions, put into relationship with other functional positions, compose a phenomenon of a more general level (i. e. the rate of commercialization of agriculture). Only in this more general level is it possible to explain the particular type of connection between the variables (namely manpower and technological development) and their action within the system at a given moment.

3. Given the context to which these observations in general refer, that is the national social system of Italy, the above discussion has an obvious relevance. With regard to this point, it is necessary to clarify some facts before approaching the specific subject.⁵⁾

In a large part of the historical, political, and other kinds of literature about the Italian situation after Unification, there prevailed the tendency to consider this Unification, in a more or less explicit way, as a compulsory union of two very different social systems, which were, in fact, scarcely comparable. This literature describes the confrontation of one system remaining substantially feudal with an other system entirely capitalistic. More exactly it speaks of the mechanical and compulsory union of a society in which pre-capitalistic socio-economical characteristics prevailed, with another society more advanced in capitalistic development.⁶⁾

This general view of the problem has produced notable works particularly on the part of the spokesman for the South (meridionalisti), playing a decisive role in formation of political education. However, this interpretation seems to us today to be insufficient for the satisfactory interpretation of the full range of our national history, including the most recent developments.

In the light of these recent developments it appears to us more useful to adopt the general hypothesis that the year 1870 was the culminating moment of the formation of the Italian social system as an unified system. Such unification comes, in the first stage, as the extension to the entire country of the institutional structure native to the areas of the most intense capitalistic development existing in the country. In the second stage, the consequences of this choice are reflected in turn in the further development of these areas, accelerating its rhythm. In the third stage, this rhythm of capitalistic development having been consolidated, the tendency for its expansion to the entire country is revealed. This tendency, at this point, takes the form of national economic planning and of "rationalization" of the socio-economic assets of the depressed areas.

On the basis of these observations, we can set forth the following hypothesis: after 1870 it is possible to think of Italy as a unified social system characterized by: a) the presence of a project for transforming the various subsystems of which it is composed (and their interrelations), so that acceleration

⁴⁾ This observation is present more than once in *Rural Life in USA* by C. Taylor, New York, 1949 (in particular see cap. n. 30 pp 522-533).

⁵⁾ For this and other basic points this paper owes very much to *Changes in Rural life and the reintegration of a Social System* by I. A. Spaulding, *Rural Sociology*, 1959, XXVI, 3, pp. 215-225.

⁶⁾ A great number of political, social and economical scientists have emphasized the problems related to the backwardness of the southern regions. These scholars, whose political ideas are often very different, are known as "meridionalisti". Among the studies of more general character on the topic see *Il Sud nella storia di Italia* by R. Villari, Bari, La Terza 1961, and *Nuova Antologia della Questione Meridionale* by B. Caizzi, Milano, Comunità, 1962.

of capitalistic development will be favoured, and b) the presence in itself of a unified power structure capable of bringing to actuality this project.

4. Given our comments in the first paragraph, the mentioned hypothesis on the Italian socio-economic development must be understood as the application of a more general principle: that is, the study of each phenomenon considered as a significant variable within the national social system should lead to the production of significant data with respect to each other phenomenon on the same level of abstraction present in the system.

This assertion is particularly relevant for the study of the conditions and of the methods for introducing technological development into Italian agriculture, and for the study of the social phenomena which condition and characterize this development.

As we will show in the following pages, it is evident that during the diverse phases of the socio-economic development of the system, to which we have already referred, varied events have occurred regarding technological development. These events concern both the rate of employment and the spatial distribution of machinery and other technical features, with respect to the function they performed, and to the social significance they assumed within the different subsystems.

On the other hand, it seems possible — in order to limit the discussion — to emphasize the basic common character present in this multiplicity of phenomena, affirming that phenomena which appear on the level of subsystem as heterogeneity, appear instead as homogeneity at level of system. Thus within an adequate period of time the functionality of these variables to the social system itself can be demonstrated and in this light can be clarified. For instance, the reached level of technological development in a given period in Lombardia (North) will appear extremely superior to the reached level in Apulia (South-East) in the same period. Insofar as the two regions belong as subsystems to the same national system, it is possible to hypothesize that the social and economical implications of the technological development, which occurs in a region, are not limited to the region where it actually occurs. These implications can be also evaluated by referring to other processes, which occur in other subsystems.

Anyhow, in order to avoid further complications, we will consider in a more extensive way the role played by technological development in the regions where it actually occurs during the first phase of capitalistic development. Only some general reference will be made to the phenomena which happen in other regions in the same period of time. Moreover, according to what has been said in the preceding paragraphs, technological development shall not be considered as an autonomous social phenomenon, but as a basic element which gives an impulse to the capitalistic development at this stage.

5. In the first decades following Unification, Italian agriculture suffered a crisis derived fundamentally from the inability of its structure to confront the new situation occurring in the international agricultural market.⁷⁾

But just in these years in which the effects of the crisis in the national agrarian economy were the most grave, there was formed in the North an agri-

⁷⁾ See R o m a n i, M.: *Um secolo di vita agraria in Lombardia*. Milano Giuffrè, 1963, pp. 77-78.

cultural middle-class, substantially conservative at the political level.⁸⁾ In a space of about twenty years this agricultural middle-class brought about transformations such that in 1908 "land use had already become an asset not different from today" and "had already provided the basis for a stable agricultural structure".⁹⁾

This transformation consisted in:

- a) extensive land reclamation,
- b) development of dairy production,
- c) development and distribution of industrial crops,
- d) changes in the character of cereal production.

These changes were made possible by two fundamental factors:

1. the high availability of capital owing to a particular bank policy and to a genuine policy of reclamation;
2. the notable level reached by technological development.

The influx of capital to agriculture occurred during this period both through the direct intervention of the State, which with the land-reclamation laws of 1882 and 1900¹⁰⁾ assumed the greater cost of intervention, and through the diffusion of popular banks, cooperatives for the most part, which gave an incentive to agrarian credit. In the same period, by action of the same political forces,¹¹⁾ the "consorzi agrari" (buying and selling co-operatives for agricultural product) came to be developed. These "consorzi", allowing the associates to acquire technical means and other kind of variable capital with particularly easy means of payment, favoured the employment of capital in agriculture.¹²⁾

The role of technical factors must be considered within this framework in this first stage of capitalistic development in Italy.

It is, moreover, important to observe that their role in determining new assets in Italian agriculture, with the implied consequences on a social level is not only direct, but also and above all indirect.

During this period, in fact, the technological factor acted in a more relevant manner in industry, and in particular, in the machine tool industry and in industries for processing agricultural products. The reflection in agriculture of this general technological transformation consisted in:

- a) The employment of more powerful and modern means for land reclamation, thanks to which greater acreage was brought under new types of cultivation.¹³⁾ This intervention required large numbers of laborers, who would settle for the most part on the recently reclaimed land.

⁸⁾ During these years (1878-1884) a great parliamentary inquiry on the conditions of Italian agriculture, lead by Stefano Jacini was carried out. The history of this inquiry can testify the validity of our assertion. In fact, during the execution of the inquiry the technical problems of agriculture were faced in a very serious way, while the social problems of the rural population were completely left over. For a more detailed information on the subject, see A. Caracciolo: *L'inchiesta agraria Jacini*, Torino, Einaudi, 1958.

⁹⁾ See Bandini, M.: *Cento anni di storia agraria italiana*. Roma, Cinque lune, 1957, p. 84.

¹⁰⁾ See Bandini, M.: *Op. cit.*, pp. 65-68.

¹¹⁾ See Luzzatti, L.: *I problemi della terra*, Bologna, Zanichelli, 1933, pp. 379-380.

¹²⁾ See Rossi, Doria, M.: *Rapporto sulla Federconsorzi*, Bari, La Terza, p. 78.

¹³⁾ The use of electric motors and of diesel motors is an important innovation, which changed, after 1880, completely the character of the work of land reclamation.

b) Requirement of a larger and more varied productive basis for the processing of agricultural products, mainly the dairy industry. This industry, in fact, during this period completely modified its structure thanks to technological innovations, beginning production on a completely different scale.¹⁴⁾ The implications of this fact for agriculture are notable changes in cultivation consisting of an increase of forage and industrial crops,¹⁵⁾ with consequent changes in the character of agricultural business.

With reference to what has been previously said, this "indirect" action of the industrial technological development on agriculture is an evident manifestation of the interactional processes, which the system as a whole, generates within itself overcoming the conventional distinction between sectors of economic activity.

These processes do not seem to occur without control. As we will try to demonstrate in the following pages, they occur in such a way, that the existence of a precise project is easily argued. A particular power structure, moreover, seems to be related to this project, in order to bring it to actuality. In this regard, the role played by the State in this phase is extremely clear, although at on official level the liberalistic ideology is dominating.

Also in the "direct" action of scientific revolution in agriculture can be found this general rule. The increase of technological level of the agrarian production during this period of time has been determined by:

- a) the ever greater use of fertilizers along with the development of the chemical industry, without which the new type of land use would not have been possible;
- b) the use of more powerful and efficient new tools;
- c) real mechanization.¹⁶⁾

At the beginning of the new century northern Italian agriculture definitely overcame its traditional character and consolidated its capitalistic structure. It is to this general end that the scientific revolution has made its contribution. That which characterized this new structure was an even larger involvement in a market economy, an advanced technical level, and above all new relationships between property, enterprise and manpower.

Regarding this last point the progressive disappearance of the old forms of participation should be noted, which, although in extremely subordinate manner, linked the peasant to the conduct of the business, furthermore there was an even greater diffusion of the direct conduct of the business by medium and large capitalistic entrepreneurs, either owners or more generally renters.¹⁷⁾

¹⁴⁾ See *Esposizione Agraria di Melegnano, Relazioni della Giurie*, Milano, Tipografia Agraria, 1900, pp. 20-21.

¹⁵⁾ Detailed data on the diffusion of these crops are in M. Bandini, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

¹⁶⁾ The use of fertilizers increased ten times during the last decade of the last century and the first years of this century. 90 per cent of the total use of fertilizers was concentrated in Po-Valley, where were settled also most of the chemical factories. In the same years a massive importation of farm machinery took place in these regions too. For more detailed information and exact data on the topic see M. Romani, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-122.

¹⁷⁾ See: *Miglioli-Greco* (a debate on the peasant of the Po-Valley) by A. Zanibelli, Rizzoli, Milano, 1956. The predominant type of Land tenure in Po-Valley in those years is large scale tenancy. In the district (provincia) of Cremona, Lombardia, the tenancy interested 80 % of the total agrarian surface.

As has been stated more than once, all these transformations affect in a more heavy way only a part of the country, namely the northern and some of the central regions.

It would on the other hand not be correct to say that these transformations have not had relevant effects also in the southern regions.

In order to summarize the effects, one could say that the process of fast development and of capital concentration in northern regions sets in motion in southern regions an opposite process, whose final effect is the socio-economical depression.

Instead of an active process, the literature on this subject has rather described the functional survival of an ancient *Gemeinschaft* structure. Concerning agriculture it has been told about the stubborn attachment to archaic types of land tenure and land use and backward cultural practices.

But beneath this "rousseauian enamel", the socio-economic disgregation of a society occurs. Data concerning migrations and appointment of police forces in southern regions can testify this disgregation and its effects.

It is therefore possible to affirm that all these events cause at the social level the complete change of the way of life, of the attitudes and of the values of the rural population, both in the developed and in the underdeveloped areas.

What regards the first, the workers involved in the land reclamation enterprises came in contact with a reality in which it was evident that social and economic power no longer derived from the ownership of land, but from other sources. They were able, moreover, to realize that work could furnish an income not only superior to that deriving from participation in the agricultural enterprises, but also from the ownership of the land itself.

What we have said above is important for explaining the consciousness that the wage worker has of his condition as a proletarian. This consciousness lies at the basis of the behaviour of the new peasant, whose political and labour battles characterised the first years of the new century.

This tendency towards a proletarianization of the peasant was favoured by two main political forces acting in those in the Po-valley: the class of the capitalistic entrepreneurs and the peasant trade unions.

The first required a larger autonomy for decisions concerning farm-management. This autonomy would not have been possible with the old type of land tenure, in which the old forms of participation linked the peasant to conduct the enterprise bound at the same time the type of land use.

The new form of large-scale tenancy, based on the employment of salary workers, enabled to this autonomy which was essential to the new type of industrialized farming.

The new trade union forces, on their own right, considered the new conditions of the peasants, who from participants became salary workers, offered better opportunities for the political and labour battles.

6. After the first world war we had a period of about twenty years in which the leading industrial and agrarian classes tried successfully to maintain the power relations and the social and territorial patterns which have been imposed on the country in the first years of the century.

Concerning the agriculture, Rossi-Doria has summarized the conse-

quences of the protectionist policy ("autarchy") which has been adopted during the period of time:¹⁸⁾

a) Privileges of small producer groups, which were more fortunate and better organized, at the expense of consumers and other producers (particularly of those which would have been interested to export their own products.

b) Reduction of food stuff consumption and discouragement of the expansion of production.

c) Slight reduction of the cost and irrelevant increase of productivity.

d) Stop of the general technological development.¹⁹⁾

We have to point out, however, this very important fact: the attempt spreading among the rural masses the ideology of the small land-owner farming as "spinal chord" of the national economic structure. This ideology has been put up during the first world war with the promise of land-distribution for veterans, has been taken up again also after the second world war, in spite of the overturn at political level. The success of this attempt can not be determined on account of data of that time, because of the laws which were in force then, about immigration and urbanisation. But if we consider the dynamics of the national man power composition during the first ten years after the second world war, we can remark how the value given to land property is far from representing a real obstacle to the increase of the number of industrial labour force.²⁰⁾ Moreover the extend of technological development, which has been achieved by the most advanced industries, has facilitated the absorption of non-skilled workers, coming from agriculture. This gave mostly the possibility to be selected on the basis of characteristics different from those required in the past (ability and technical competence). Now emphasis is given to qualities as resistance to the operational repeatability, the adaptation to shifting, the facility to adapt themselves to the very rapid changes in the working conditions.

It is therefore possible to state that the effort which has been made to revive the ideology of the small land owner did not succeed neither at farmers' nor at salary workers' level. Nevertheless this topic kept having a considerable importance on the national agricultural policy in the following years, and particularly on the definition of the land reform, which has been realized in various areas during the fifties.²¹⁾

¹⁸⁾ See Manlio Rossi - Doria "Agriculture and Europe". Deadalus Winter 1963.

¹⁹⁾ It is suitable to recall that autarchy at the beginning has been presented as "policy to defend the national agriculture". In this way the exchange is drastically reduced and both migration abroad and internal migration are limited. It is evident that this situation, especially in underdeveloped areas, has reduced completely the opportunity and the profit to expel labour forces from agriculture. All these facts have strongly hindered mechanization.

²⁰⁾ The percentage of active population working in agriculture decreases, during the period 1951-1961, from 42,2 % to 29,9 %.

²¹⁾ During a meeting on farm mechanization in Italy, in 1954, the minister of agriculture, talking about the American situation affirmed: "In the most mechanized country of the world the agricultural structure is based upon small and medium sized land-ownership farming...". (G. Medici, *La meccanizzazione dell'agricoltura nella economia italiana*, Edagricole, Bologna, 1954, p. 10). The theorization which this affirmation implies, seems to forget, with regard to the Italian situation, that the acreage of the farms, which are defined small and medium in America, is much larger than the acreage of the farms which are defined in the same way in Italy. In this country, in fact, 51 % of the total number of the farms have less than 2 ha of surface.

In the years between 1950 and 1965, we can emphasize on the level of the national social system two phenomena, which may seem contradictory: on the one side an enormous increase of the demand for industrial man power,²²⁾ on the other side the agricultural policy according to the official declarations — based on the creation and the defence of small and medium land owner direct farming. The problem which arises from this statement could lead to deny the reliability of the hypothesis of the unitary logic which is to be found in every aspect and in every step of the systems development. A rather helpful approach for this problem seems to be just the study of the function carried out by the technological development in the different rural subsystems. To illustrate this statement we can give the following examples, concerning rather different situations which coexist actually together with many others in Italian country side.

A. In the Turin province, which is one of the most industrially developed provinces of Italy, the agricultural structure of rural areas is traditionally based on the small and medium sized property, family-managed.

Mainly after 1952—53 the increase and expansion of the industrial sector shows the evident tendency to utilize just those areas as man power reservoir. In the same time appear in agriculture three interrelated phenomena: increasing of part-time farming; tendency to reduce the medium size of the enterprises and to simplify extremely the productive processes;²³⁾ abnormal diffusion of the agricultural mechanization.²⁴⁾

The social phenomena related to this situation are rather typical. On the value scale we can remark a rather absolute obsolescence of the value of guarantee given to the property of land. It is going to be substituted by the "stable and safe employment", while also in the new contest the value given to property remains constant as concerned to the house.²⁵⁾ On the contrary absolutely new and in full development is the identification of the use of machines with progress. This topic is an argument of both defence and self-assertion of the young peasant against the same-aged industrial worker.

Regarding the social organisation, we can register a great increase of the women's number which are directing and managing farms. At community level the "commulative group" is shattering in different special "interest groups", which often show different level of consume.

As consequence of this, in the turn of about fifteen years took place a big change in the social-ecological asset in the province of Turin.

²²⁾ For example, only in the districts of Torino and Aosta, which are the most important regarding the mechanical and metallurgic industry, the total number of people working in these industries increased from 106 371 to 142 242. Data concerning FIAT are: increase in production 488 %, increase in employed manpower 25 %, increase in salaries 100 % during the period 1951—1961. (Source: IRES, La provincia di Torino, Torino, 1960.)

²³⁾ See IRES, op. cit. As regards changes in Land Use, the increase of forage (+7 % of the total agrarian surface) and of the arboreal cultivation, as hazel-tree and poplars (+3,6 %) must be noted. A relevant increase appears also in the number of cattle, pigs and poultry.

²⁴⁾ Data regarding the under-employment of farm-machinery are striking. In the district of Torino the rate of farm-mechanization (measured in hp/ha) increased by 432,3 % between the years 1951 and 1960. In the same time fuel consumption increased only by 163 %.

²⁵⁾ Observations made by A. Pizzorno in *Comunità a razionalizzazione*, Einaudi, Torino, confirm these views in more detail.

In this process we can find different degrees of intensity which seems not so much related to the more or less absolute distance from the big urban centres, as to two other circumstances:

- a) the presence of more frequent and/or faster transport connections with centres, also smaller ones, which have industry;
- b) the presence of industry in loco or in close vicinity.²⁶⁾

In this situation the farm mechanization presents itself under a new aspect — when it has been pushed beyond the limits of a "rational utilization", if we consider the agricultural problems in a segmented way. This seems as an essential function for the success of a particular pattern of integration between industrial and agricultural activity at provincial level, which is mostly based on part-time and the attempt to avoid the dysfunctions deriving from a too fast growth of the cities.

B. In the same time, in other plane agricultural areas in the north and in the centre of Italy are developing rather different situations. It could be interesting to refer briefly to the events which occurred in Marsica (the area on the borders between Abruzzi and Lazio), going on after the land reforms in the fifties. It is characterized at economic level of the attempt to apply a pattern of integration based on monocultures (sugar beet) and the local presence of two processing plants (sugar refinery), which absorb the total production.²⁷⁾

The land reform has changed completely the aspect of the area, regarding as well the prevalent kind of farm as the average of agricultural productivity.²⁸⁾ Moreover, the big increase of the productivity can be traced back mostly to rapid achievement of a big extent of farm mechanisation and to a generalized use of selected seeds particularly for beets. On social level the most relevant change is the one concerning the status of the peasant which from depending and not owning workers (share tenants, tenants, daily workers) became owners. Besides that we have also remarked the big demographic decrease which occurred after the land reform period.²⁹⁾ Unlike the situation mentioned above, in this context

²⁶⁾ The social situation of the most part of the smaller towns of the district, also those who show apparent rural characteristics, is similar to the situation of the "metropolitan village", how it is described by R. E. Pahl, "The Ruralurban continuum", *Sociologia Ruralis*, VI (1966), 3-4, pp. 303-306.

²⁷⁾ See M. Miegge, "La politica di riforma agraria nella Marsica" *Quaderni Rossi*, VI (1966), 1, p. 151. Attempts of the same kind occur in other areas, mainly northern, although with many different aspects. Mostly, a big private processing industry absorbs the whole agrarian production of region. As a consequence of this, a real planning of the agrarian production of the region, made by the industry starts. The industry furnishes to the farmers also seeds, fertilizing and other technical features. As regards Marsica, one of the two sugar refineries belongs to the great landowner, who had been dispossessed by land reform.

²⁸⁾ The 13,376 ha of dispossessed land were distributed among 9,110 peasants. The medium size of the farms is ha 1,47. The Entè per il Fucino (the land reform agency) took care of the settlement of the exceeding working forces in other areas or abroad. Following the land reform a constant increase of the farm productivity took place. The average production of sugar beet rose from 260 quintals per hectare to 527 quintals per hectare. See M. Miegge, op. cit., and G. Donandi, *La riforma agraria nel Fucino*, Roma, 1960, and G. Cappuccini, *Enti di Sviluppo a Progresso Agricolo*, Avezzano 1961.

²⁹⁾ During the decade 1951-1961 a "spontaneous" migration of 6,005 people occurs. In the same time the number of active population working in agriculture decreases by 5,637. The number of people employed in industry and in other activities increases by 1,684 and 1,631 respectively.

the mechanisation, although it means a big increase of farming costs, would be justified by the big extent of the commercialization of the products and by the low costs of transportation because of the existence in loco of the processing plants.

Actually this potential advantage is hindered by the small size of the farms which disturbs seriously the existing equilibrium of the area. In consequence of this and of the impossibility not to emigrate, to carry out other activities, the mechanization has an indirect effect to reduce in the conscience of the peasants their faith in land property, as we have pointed out before.

It is interesting to emphasize that just the introduction of a new technological factor in such a delicate situation has produced the outbreak of one of the most remarkable agricultural-claiming fights of the last years.³⁰⁾ This factor was the introduction of a new machine capable to accelerate the harvest and tare-ascertaining work. So that the traditional ascertaining of the tare of the sugar beet, through a direct debate between buyer and seller, disappeared. This machine is adequate to situations where the crops are homogeneous. That is a situation quite different from this, which is characterized by fragmentation and heterogeneity in the production. Therefore the introduction of that machine caused a complete mess.³¹⁾

7. Of course these notes are not sufficient to demonstrate that the extremely general hypotheses, which we have enunciated at the beginning of this paper, have been verified. But that was not our aim. On the contrary, we wanted to show that according to us, it is impossible to define in an univocal way the role performed by technological development in agriculture without referring to the events which occur in other sectors. That is, it is impossible to define the role performed by technological development in agriculture, when agriculture is considered in a sectorial way (both spatially and economically).

On the basis of the given examples we think to have been able to demonstrate the reliability of two general hypotheses:

A. That the problem of evaluating exactly the role of the technological development, in a given situation in agriculture, sends back to the consideration of the general social system in which it is inserted;

B. That the problem requires the analysis of the mechanism of political decisions proper to the system and of the model of economic development and equilibrium, which are carried to actuality on the basis of those decisions.

³⁰⁾ See M. Miegge, op. cit., part n. 2.

³¹⁾ The farmers who were used to see the percentage of shared product on the total product varying from 8% to 10%, were faced with percentages of discarded product, which varied from 0 to 85%. As a consequence of that, a violent protest broke out, which ended with the presence of long columns of tractors driven toward the refinery. The strength and the characteristics of the fight, which had been generated by an elementary "reaction to a theft", showed that the original occasion had been completely overcome and put in evidence two basic facts: a new kind of socio-political homogeneity among the farmers, and the consciousness of an increasing collective subordination to the decisions of the industrial entrepreneurs. (For the changes that this situation can affect at a community level see the observation made, in a quite different context, by S. W. Minz, The folk-urban continuum and the rural proletarian community, *American Journal of Sociology*, LIX [1952-53], 2, p. 136.)

³²⁾ In particular it appears that the general criterion, which regulates the putting into effect of these socio-economic models, is that of reaching the highest rate of productivity, which, at each moment, is consistent with the lowest rate of dysfunctionality to the social system as a whole, considered in its capitalistic power-structure.